

The Emergence of the Science of Religion in the Netherlands

Arie L. Molendijk



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The Emergence of the Science of
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by
Arie L. Molendijk



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In Memory of my Father Adrianus Dirk Molendijk
(1925–2004)

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PREFACE

“The Science of Religion is a new science which has assumed an independent existence during the last decades only”. This is the opening line of Pierre Daniël Chantepie de la Saussaye’s influential manual on the history of religions of 1887. The early practitioners of the field were firmly convinced that they had started something entirely new. In their view, the old surveys of religions were antiquated because they lacked critical acumen, treated foreign religions as mere curiosities, and were without scientific rigour. Therefore, scholars such as Max Müller, Cornelis Petrus Tiele and Chantepie de la Saussaye wanted to put the study of religion on a new, solid footing. This also explains why the term “science (in the broad sense of *Wissenschaft*) of religion” was often preferred when referring to the “comparative historical study of religions” (Tiele). The new field covered historical as well as theoretical (“philosophical”) approaches, and was by many contemporaries divided into the history of religions and the philosophy of religion.

This book explores the emergence of the science of religion in the Netherlands in the second half of the nineteenth century. Although many historians have stressed the importance of early Dutch science of religion, a full treatment of this subject has until now been missing. This monograph is intended to fill that gap. Various topics and questions will be addressed: How and where did the institutionalization of the study of religion take place? What characterized the new discourse on religion? How did different disciplines arrive at a comparative approach to religion? What interests were at stake in these developments? What (international) networks of scholars existed at the time? I start with some remarks on the rise of the scientific study of religion in general, and a critical discussion of the historiography of the field (Chapter I). In the second chapter the *communis opinio* concerning the reputation of Dutch science of religion is examined. Most historians see the Higher Education Act of 1876, by which the history of religions and the philosophy of religion were introduced into the curriculum of the Dutch faculties of theology, as a milestone in the establishment of an autonomous science of religion. Next, the process of institutionalization—inside as well as outside

academia—is addressed (Chapter III), followed by a discussion of the views held by Tiele and Chantepie de la Saussaye, these two men being the towering Dutch scholars in this new field (Chapter IV). Chapters V & VI offer analyses of Tiele’s concepts of religion and religious development, which form the foundation of his science of religion. Chapter VII sketches the broader, scholarly—especially ethnological—study of religion in the Netherlands at the time. To put the emerging field of ethnology and the study of religion in general further into perspective, Chapter VIII focuses on one particular example of religious representation, viz. the Amsterdam Colonial and Export Trade Exhibition of 1883. By introducing Michel Foucault’s concept of heterotopia I show that in this case at least the study of religion has to be an integral part of the study of culture. Finally, the last chapter suggests some explanations of the success of the Dutch study of religion within an international context.

Not being a historian of religion by training myself, it struck me that the historiography of the field to a large extent seems to take place within the categories provided by the *current* scientific practices of history of religions. Scholars are still very much intent on separating the new field from its old arch-enemy theology. Did Tiele argue for a clear line of demarcation between the science of religion on the one hand and religion and theology on the other, or was he driven by theological purposes? Either way, one overlooks the fact that, basically, Tiele wanted to transform theology into science of religion, and that the opposition construed by present-day scholarship would not have been very meaningful to him. Of course, one can ask these questions, but is this the best way to understand what early scholars of religion were aiming at? Stefan Collini, Donald Winch and John Burrow commented on teleological interpretations as follows: “Past authors are inducted into the canon of the discipline as precursors or forebears, and passed in review as though by a general distributing medals—and sometimes reprimands—at the end of a successful campaign, with the useful implied corollary that if medals can be distributed the campaign must have been brought to a satisfactory conclusion and the discipline duly established”.¹ By way of multiple contextualizations I try to avoid this type of “disci-

¹ Stefan Collini, Donald Winch & John Burrow, *That Noble Science of Politics. A Study in Nineteenth-Century Intellectual History*, Cambridge 1983, p. 4.

pline history". The present book highlights processes of institutionalization, professionalization, and internationalization, together with discussions about methods and conceptualization in the emerging field.

This book has taken quite some time to materialize. My appointment in 1999 as a professor in the History of Christianity at the Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies of the University of Groningen brought new obligations, and I was happy that in the autumn of 2003 I was able to finish the first draft of the book. I started to work on this subject in 1996–1997, as a Research Fellow at the Faculty of Theology in Leiden. The project was funded by the Stimuleringsfonds of the Leiden University. A generous grant of the Vera Gottschalk-Frank Foundation (The Hague) permitted the appointment of a research assistant, Tessel Jonquière, who studied the letters and manuscripts in the C.P. Tiele Collection of the Leiden University Library. I am deeply indebted to all institutions and people who facilitated my work, especially the Leiden and Groningen Theological Faculties, which funded various research trips and the revision of my English. I also had the opportunity to present my views to various audiences and to publish papers on my research. Many of these articles have been used for this book in some form or another (a list is included below). I wish to thank the colleagues and friends who read, commented upon, and in other ways aided this project: Han Adriaanse, Nikolaj Bijleveld, Jan N. Bremmer, Peter Broekema, Frits Broeyer, Michel Despland, Udo Doedens, Aza Goudriaan, Julia Harvey, Sigurd Hjelde, Tessel Jonquière, Hans G. Kippenberg, Arie van der Kooij, Mattie Kuiper, Saskia van Lier, Peter Pels, Dan Powers, Peter van Rooden, Petruschka Schaafsma, Ineke Smit, Ivan Strenski, Jan Vellekoop, Ernestine van der Wall and Hetty Zock. I dedicate this book to the memory of my father, Adrianus Dirk Molendijk (1925–2004), who always warmly supported me along the sometimes winding roads of my academic career.

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At the Cross-Roads. Early Dutch Science of Religion in International

- Perspective, in: Sigurd Hjelde (ed.), *Man, Meaning, & History. Hundred Years of History of Religions in Norway. The Heritage of W. Brede Kristensen*, Leiden etc. 2000, pp. 19–56 (Chapters II and IX).
- The Principal Religions. A Landmark in the Early Study of Religion in the Netherlands, in: *Nederlands Theologisch Tijdschrift* 54 (2000) 18–34 (Chapter III).
- Transforming Theology. The Institutionalization of the Science of Religion in the Netherlands, in: Arie L. Molendijk & Peter Pels (eds), *Religion in the Making. The Emergence of the Sciences of Religion*, Leiden etc. 1998, pp. 67–95 (Chapter III).
- The Heritage of C.P. Tiele, in: *Nederlands Archief voor Kerkgeschiedenis/Dutch Review of Church History* 80 (2000) 78–114 (Chapter IV).
- Cornelis Petrus Tiele en de Godsdienstwetenschap, in: E.H. Cossee & H.D. Tjalsma (eds), *Geloof en Onderzoek. Uit het leven en werk van C.P. Tiele (1830–1902)* (Stichting Historische Publicaties Roterodamum, 145), Rotterdam 2002, pp. 23–41 (Chapter IV).
- “Tweede-hands werk”. Pierre Daniël Chantepie de la Saussaye als godsdiensthistoricus, in: P.J. Knegtman & P. van Rooden (eds), *Theologen in ondertal. Godgeleerdheid, godsdienstwetenschap, het Athenaeum Illustre en de Universiteit van Amsterdam*, Zoetermeer 2003, pp. 141–157 (Chapter IV).
- Tiele on Religion, in: *Numen* 46 (1999) 237–268 (Chapter V).
- Religious Development: C.P. Tiele’s Paradigm of Science of Religion, in: *Numen* 51 (2004) 321–351 (Chapter VI).
- Religion at the 1883 Colonial and Export Trade Exhibition in Amsterdam, in: *Zeitschrift für Neuere Theologiegeschichte/Journal for the History of Modern Theology* 11 (2004) 215–245 (Chapter VIII).

Abbreviations

- BLGNP *Biografisch Lexicon voor de Geschiedenis van het Nederlandse Protestantisme*, 5 vols [thus far], Kampen: Kok, 1978–2002.
- NNBW *Nieuw Nederlandsch Biografisch Woordenboek*, ed. by P.C. Molhuysen, P.J. Blok (& K.H. Kossmann), 10 vols, Leiden: Sijthoff, 1911–1937.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

In the older historiography of the scholarly study of religion there was an on-going discussion about who “founded” comparative religion or—as I prefer to call the field—science of religion.¹ The two main competitors at the time were the German-British scholar Friedrich Max Müller (1823–1900) and the Dutchman Cornelis Petrus Tiele (1830–1902). The first one to raise the issue was P.D. Chantepie de la Saussaye (1848–1920), who himself was sometimes reckoned among the “founding fathers”.² He gave Müller the credit for founding the science of religion and for “convincing a larger public of the importance of the subject”. “His [Müller’s] call for a study of the science of religion has been obeyed by almost every nation, nowhere more quickly than in Holland, where Tiele devoted his great powers to this subject”. Chantepie de la Saussaye pointed out how chairs had been founded in the Netherlands, Paris, Brussels, “and lately in Rome also”.³ Thus, the spread of the field was described in geographical and national terms.

Tiele had his supporters, too. The Canadian Louis Henry Jordan, who in 1905 published a very instructive overview of the state of the art, found it at the time “surprising that, in some quarters, it should still be maintained that the Oxford savant [= Müller] was

¹ For the sake of convenience, I will use “science of religion” as a covering term for the new field in all its ramifications. This does not imply that there existed (or, for that matter, exists) a consensus about the name or the content of this scholarly endeavour. Many other terms were used, for instance “comparative religion”, “religious studies”, “science of religions”, “history of religion”, “history of religions”, “philosophy of religion”, “phenomenology of religion”, “psychology of religion”, “hierology”, and “hierography”. Terminology was not fixed, and the relationship between the various branches was a matter of discussion.

² Cf. J.D.J. Waardenburg, *Classical Approaches to the Study of Religion. Aims, Methods and Theories of Research*, 2 vols, the Hague 1973–1974 (reprint 1999).

³ P.D. Chantepie de la Saussaye, *Manual of the Science of Religion*, London 1891, p. 6f. This is the translation of the first volume of his *Lehrbuch der Religionsgeschichte*, 2 vols, Freiburg i.B. 1887–1889.

unquestionably *the* Founder of Comparative Religion".⁴ Although Jordan considers the question who founded the field relatively unimportant, he added an appendix to his book to refute Müller's claims.⁵ Further, Jordan praised the courteous way in which Tiele himself dealt with this delicate subject. It is doubtful, however, whether Tiele was that courteous to Müller. In fact, he was rather sensitive concerning his own prestige, but made an apt observation when he noted that a new branch of study can hardly be said to be "founded". Comparative religion—Tiele argued—"was called into being by a generally felt want in different countries at the same time and as a matter of course".⁶ The field was perceived by all proponents at the time as an international affair.⁷

Certainly, if one compares this field with traditional theological disciplines such as dogmatical theology (a comparison which makes sense, especially in the Dutch context), the international character of the science of religion was striking. Chantepie de la Saussaye's manual—written by him in German and translated into English and French—illustrates this international tendency very nicely.⁸ Another example is the career of William Brede Kristensen (1867–1953). He started his studies at the University of Oslo, went to Paris and Leiden to continue his education under scholars such as Gaston Maspero, Hendrik Kern, Abraham Kuenen, and Tiele, and eventually succeeded Tiele in 1901.⁹ The shortlist for this chair in the Leiden

⁴ L.H. Jordan, *Comparative Religion. Its Genesis and Growth*, Edinburgh 1905 (reprint 1986), p. 151 (italics original).

⁵ *Pace* Jordan the view that Müller was the "founder" of the new field has been very influential. In his still much-consulted history of the field, Eric Sharpe gave Müller the title of "father of comparative religion", because he was an ardent advocate of the new science (but then this is also true of Tiele); cf. E.J. Sharpe, *Comparative Religion. A History* (1975), second edition, London 1986, p. 35.

⁶ C.P. Tiele, "On the Study of Comparative Theology", in: John Henry Barrows (ed.), *The World's Parliament of Religions*, 2 vols, London 1893, vol. I, pp. 583–590, p. 586.

⁷ Cf. [Friedrich] Max Müller, *Introduction to the Science of Religion*, London 1873, p. 35; cf. Albert Réville's Preface to C.P. Tiele, *Histoire Comparée des Anciennes Religions de l'Égypte et des Peuples Sémitiques*, Paris 1882, p. ix: "L'histoire des religions n'est pas faite, elle se fait. C'est une vaste enquête, préparée au siècle dernier par quelques travaux partiels, poursuivie depuis lors surtout en Allemagne et, dans ces dernières années, en Hollande et en Angleterre. Elle est encore loin d'avoir abouti". According to Réville, the contribution of France to this international endeavour was rather restricted.

⁸ Cf. note 3 above; Chantepie de la Saussaye's views will be discussed extensively in chapter IV below.

⁹ Cf. Sigurd Hjelde, "From Kristiansand to Leiden. The Norwegian Career of

Theological Faculty contained, in addition to Kristensen's, the names of the Swede Nathan Söderblom and the Dane Edvard Lehmann. Moreover, at Tiele's own request¹⁰ Söderblom revised the German edition of Tiele's handbook on the history of religions. Before going into the Dutch contribution to this new endeavour that emerged as a distinct field of research in the second half of the nineteenth century, I would like to make some remarks on the rise of the scientific study of religion in general (1) and its historiography (2).

1. *The Rise of the Scientific Study of Religion*

The historian of the study of religion is well advised to begin by taking a quick look at the current debate on the concept of religion. One will then swiftly discern that the notion is highly controversial among students of religion nowadays. Even the usefulness of the concept as such is questioned. Does the notion not presume a one-sided focus on the inner religious sentiment? Is it not a typically Eurocentric notion?¹¹ Do we not need another, more specific vocabulary?¹² On the other hand, the question may be asked whether terminological changes are of much help. Is it not a naturalistic illusion to think that our categories fit reality as such? Jonathan Z. Smith has claimed that religion is invented by the scholar and that it "has no independent existence apart from the academy". Although few scholars will agree that "there is no data for religion",¹³ the conviction

W. Brede Kristensen", in: Hjelde (ed.), *Man, Meaning & Mystery. Hundred Years of History of Religions in Norway. The Heritage of W. Brede Kristensen*, Leiden 2000, pp. 205–222.

¹⁰ Tiele had first asked Lehmann, who refused; cf. E.J. Sharpe, *Nathan Söderblom and the Study of Religion*, Chapel Hill–London 1990, p. 235, note 113.

¹¹ Kurt Rudolph, "Inwieweit ist der Begriff 'Religion' eurozentrisch?", in: Ugo Bianchi (ed.), *The Notion of "Religion" in Comparative Research. Selected Proceedings of the XVIIth Congress of the International Association for the History of Religions, Rome, 3rd–8th September, 1990*, Roma 1994, pp. 131–139.

¹² Ernst Feil, "Zur Bestimmungs- und Abgrenzungsproblematik von 'Religion'", in: *Ethik und Sozialwissenschaften. Streitforum für Erziehungskultur* 6/4 (1995) 441–455 (the whole issue is devoted to Feil's views on religion); cf. W.C. Smith, *The Meaning and End of Religion. A New Approach to the Religious Traditions of Mankind*, New York 1963.

¹³ Jonathan Z. Smith, *Imagining Religion. From Babylon to Jonestown*, Chicago 1982, p. xi. (the second quotation is italicized in the original). Cf. Hans G. Kippenberg, *Discovering Religious History in the Modern Age*, Princeton–Oxford 2002, pp. vii and 187; Arie L. Molendijk, "In hoc signo vinces. De geschiedschrijving van de godsdienstwetenschap", in: *Nederlands Theologisch Tijdschrift* 57 (2003) 291–307, p. 296f.

has gained ground that the concept of religion is framed by the scholar. There is a growing awareness that categories such as religion, democracy, genocide, or the Middle Ages are not just “out there”, waiting to be discovered by diligent observers, but are produced in historical and cultural contexts.

Besides giving rise to all sorts of methodological and hermeneutical reflections, such considerations also prompt historical research into the formation of concepts. Several studies have traced the genesis of the concept of religion.¹⁴ In Latin Antiquity, “religion” meant scrupulous observance (especially towards the gods); the formula *religio naturalis*—natural knowledge of God—was first used in the seventeenth century, and the location of religion in an inner feeling was an invention of late eighteenth-century Protestantism. Several studies have stressed the importance of the legacy of deism for the rise of the scientific study of religion in the nineteenth century. Since religion was constructed by the deists as a natural phenomenon, it was consequently understood that it needed to be researched by natural means. Facing the grave conflict among European religions (with mutually exclusive truth claims all allegedly based on divine revelation) thinkers such as Jean Bodin (1530–1596) and Herbert of Cherbury (1583–1648) “dared to put Christianity on the same level as the other religions, subjecting it to the same critical and rational standards”. According to J. Samuel Preus their work represented a “paradigm shift”, because “they put reason above the alleged revelations as the norm for religious truth, and they rejected the authority of

¹⁴ W.C. Smith, *The Meaning and End of Religion*; Michel Despland, *La religion en occident. Évolution des idées et du vécu*, Montréal–Paris 1979; Ernst Feil, *Religio. Die Geschichte eines neuzeitlichen Grundbegriffs vom Frühchristentum bis zur Reformation*, Göttingen 1986; Feil, *Religio. Die Geschichte eines neuzeitlichen Grundbegriffs zwischen Reformation und Rationalismus (ca. 1540–1620)*, Göttingen 1997; Feil, *Religio. Die Geschichte eines neuzeitlichen Grundbegriffs im 17. und frühen 18. Jahrhundert*, Göttingen 2001; Falk Wagner, *Was ist Religion? Studien zu ihrem Begriff und Thema in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, Gütersloh 1986; Despland & G. Vallée (eds), *Religion in History. The Word, the Idea, the Reality*, Waterloo, Ontario 1992; U. Dierse et al., “Religion”, in: *Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie*, ed. by J. Ritter & K. Gründer, vol. VIII, Basel 1992, col. 632–713; Jan N. Bremmer, “‘Religion’, ‘Ritual’ and the Opposition ‘Sacred Vs. Profane’. Notes towards a Terminological ‘Archaeology’”, in: Fritz Graf (ed.), *Ansichten griechischer Rituale*, Stuttgart–Leipzig, pp. 9–32; cf. Talal Asad, *Genealogies of Religion. Discipline and Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam*, Baltimore–London 1993; Russell T. McCutcheon, “The Category ‘Religion’ in Recent Publications. A Critical Survey”, in: *Numen* 42 (1995) 284–309.

confessional groups”.¹⁵ Peter Harrison emphasizes the new secular interpretative framework which appeared in late seventeenth-century England.¹⁶ In addition, he refers to the important role of older traditions—the Reformation, the Renaissance, and the Classical Age—in the process of making religion into “a natural object constituted primarily by propositional knowledge”.¹⁷

Without a doubt, the aforementioned studies of Preus and Harrison document the framing of religion as a natural phenomenon. Moreover, Harrison in particular aims to show how “‘religion’ entered the realm of the intelligible” and, therefore, began to be constructed “along essentially rationalistic lines”.¹⁸ Harrison views this as an important condition for the rise of the scientific study of religion, which, according to him, began at an earlier time than is usually assumed in historiography. Admittedly, endless discussions are possible about the question when a particular intellectual endeavour started. What is problematic in this account, however, is that at least one important aspect is missing. The science of religion in the nineteenth century defined itself—vis-à-vis earlier scholarship—as a more or less radically empirical affair, informed by sound philological and historical method. Therefore, it is necessary to distinguish the rationalistic construction of religion from its empiricist re-invention. From the present-day point of view, many things can and must be said against the alleged empirical character of early science of religion. These scholars did no field work and had a predilection for speculation. Yet, one cannot deny that on the basis of archaeological excavations, the deciphering of texts, the reconstruction of ancient languages, and the analysis of travel reports, the study of religion was given an empirical foundation during the nineteenth century.

This leads to the following point, which is unfairly neglected if one focuses solely on deism and the Enlightenment; namely, the contribution of Romanticism to the rise of the scientific study of religion.¹⁹ The deists and the Enlightenment philosophers primarily

¹⁵ J.S. Preus, *Explaining Religion. Criticism and Theory from Bodin to Freud*, New Haven–London 1987, p. 205f.

¹⁶ Peter Harrison, “Religion” and the Religions in the English Enlightenment, Cambridge etc. 1990, p. 3.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 4; cf. p. 7.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

¹⁹ Cf. Hans G. Kippenberg, “Einleitung. Religionswissenschaft und Kulturkritik”, in: Kippenberg & B. Luchesi (eds), *Religionswissenschaft und Kulturkritik. Beiträge zur*

offered a rational reconstruction of religion as such. Although they eventually turned to foreign—Oriental—religions (as a medium to criticize Christian church authority), they were not so much interested in religious divergence *per se*. In contrast, the young theologian Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768–1834), who moved in the inner circle of German Romanticism, took a rather different point of view. In his addresses to the “cultured despisers of religion”, he explicitly rejected the notion of “natural religion”. One of his typical comments ran as follows: “The essence of natural religion consists almost entirely in denying everything positive and characteristic in religion and in violent polemics”.²⁰ In his book on deism, Peter Byrne writes about Schleiermacher: “His aim is to offer an account of the essence of religion which leads to the conclusion that religion is pre-eminently to be discovered in the . . . positive religions of the world’s history”.²¹ Schleiermacher’s account of religion established a reevaluation of the positive, historical character of religion. Such views were of great importance to the rise of the scientific study of religion, because they awakened the awareness that religions are to be studied in their own right and not as instances of either superstition or natural (rational) religion.

The above lines have not been written in the belief that the question concerning the intellectual roots of the scientific study of religion can be settled once and for all in an academic, disinterested manner. Present-day predilections and standpoints inevitably play a role here.²² To put my cards on the table: I believe that the rise of a historical or—to use a more recent term—“culturalist” approach that takes into account historical and cultural differences is of great importance in this respect. This perspective, which was shaped by Romanticism, is a necessary condition for the modern study of religion. We need it in order to understand such different developments

Konferenz “*The History of Religions and the Critique of Culture in the Days of Gerardus van der Leeuw (1890–1950)*”, Marburg 1991, pp. 13–28, p. 20: “Die Religionswissenschaft war . . . eher ein Kind der romantischen Kritik an der Aufklärung als der Aufklärung selber”.

²⁰ F.D.E. Schleiermacher, *On Religion. Speeches to its Cultured Despisers*, translated by J. Oman, New York 1958 (first German edition of 1799: *Über die Religion. Reden an die Gebildeten unter ihren Verächtern*), p. 233; quoted after Peter Byrne, *Natural Religion and the Nature of Religion. The Legacy of Deism*, London–New York 1989, p. 157.

²¹ Byrne, *Natural Religion*, p. 157.

²² Much also depends on the disciplinary setting from which the history of the field is approached; cf. section 2 of this introduction.

as the pillarization of Dutch society, cargo cults in Melanesia, or New Age religion in present-day California. Ahistorical explanations of religion *tout court*, for instance, in terms of priests' deceit or infantile wishfulfilment, are mostly not very helpful due to the fact that particular religions usually have long histories, in which they have assumed widely different forms and functions in extremely varying social and political contexts. In my view, such general explanations play a secondary role at most. Perhaps I am a bit too sceptical in this regard, and I admit that those who prefer an explanatory approach to religion in terms of a critique of ideology will be inclined to attach greater importance to the Enlightenment tradition.²³ It is not my intention to exclude explanations from the study of religion. On the contrary, both approaches to the study of human phenomena—"one seeking to subsume a variety of them under a general law, the other seeking to penetrate the secrets of the individual phenomenon"²⁴—have to be combined in factual research. What I oppose is the global, ahistorical kind of explanation in which the historical context of the phenomena under scrutiny is overlooked.

The historicist or culturalist perspective in modern Western thought is inconceivable without Romanticism, and is miles away from deist rationalism. It has to be viewed against the backdrop of the new concept of scientific knowledge, which arose in the nineteenth century. Science was no longer conceived in Aristotelian terms as universal knowledge of necessary being, but in a procedural, dynamic way. Science turned into *Forschung*, which was viewed as a never-ending process. The sciences were based on disciplined experience, and, as such, gradually evolved away from metaphysics and speculative philosophy in general. The empirical turn of nineteenth-century science also implied that the historical character of human phenomena was taken into account.²⁵

²³ Preus, *Explaining Religion*; Kurt Rudolph, "Die 'ideologiekritische' Funktion der Religionswissenschaft", in: *Numen* 25 (1978) 17–39; Rudolph, *Historical Fundamentals and the Study of Religions*, New York–London, p. 23: "The history of religions, like so many neighboring disciplines, is a child of the Enlightenment. Curiosity aroused by the discovery of exotic cultures and the fight against religious intolerance assisted at its birth".

²⁴ George W. Stocking, *Victorian Anthropology*, New York–London 1987, p. xvi.

²⁵ Cf. Herbert Schnädelbach, *Philosophie in Deutschland 1831–1933*, Frankfurt a.M. 1983 (English edition: *German Philosophy 1831–1933*, Cambridge 1983), chapter 3 ("*Wissenschaft*").

So far in this introduction our attention has been focused primarily on the shifts in conceptual and methodological apparatus. Important as these may be, other factors also contributed to the rise of the scientific study of religion. We already touched upon the role of new discoveries. The deciphering of cuneiform tablets and of *hieroglyphs* (the word itself is a telling example of how specimens of foreign culture were incorporated in Western language), the study of Oriental languages such as Sanskrit, and archaeological excavations opened up new horizons for the empirical study of religions. The process of ongoing European expansion and colonization had stimulated the documentation of foreign cultures and religions. European concepts were tested and developed at the colonial frontier.²⁶ The influence in India of Max Müller, who never visited the country but who contributed to Hindu identity through his edition of ancient Hindu texts, especially of the Rig-Veda,²⁷ and the role of the Dutch Islam specialist Snouck Hurgronje as an adviser of the Dutch government in the East Indies are examples of the intricate connections between scholarship and colonization.²⁸ The ways in which the emerging science of religion was related to the intensification of political colonization deserve further study. Before the second half of the nineteenth century, the exploit of the colonies was mainly economical, and it is quite conceivable that the rising wish for political control of the indigenous populations furthered the study of their religions.²⁹

What seems to have been most important, however, was a new way of looking at religions. Information about foreign cultures and religions was collected well before the nineteenth century. The fol-

²⁶ David Chidester, *Savage Systems. Colonialism and Comparative Religion in Southern Africa*, Charlottesville–London 1996, argues that “the discovery of an indigenous religious system on southern African frontiers depended upon colonial conquest and domination” (19); cf. Chidester, “Anchoring Religion in the World. A Southern African History of Comparative Religion”, in: *Religion* 26 (1996) 141–160.

²⁷ Peter van der Veer, *Imperial Encounters. Religion and Modernity in India and Britain*, Princeton–Oxford 2001, chapter 5.

²⁸ See P. Sj. van Koningsveld, *Snouck Hurgronje en de Islam. Acht artikelen over leven en werk van een oriëntalist uit het koloniale tijdperk*, Leiden 1988.

²⁹ Many authors have argued in favour of a connection between the establishment of bureaucratic colonial administrations and the development of anthropology in general; cf. Talal Asad (ed.), *Anthropology and the Colonial Encounter*, London 1973; Woodruff D. Smith, *Politics and the Sciences of Culture in Germany 1840–1920*, New York–Oxford 1991, pp. 162–173; cf. chapter VII below. The question here, however, is in which way the rise of the scholarly study of religion can also be (partly) explained in these terms.

lowing comment by C.P. Tiele is revealing in this respect: “There were huge collections, containing descriptions of all the religions in the world, so far as they were known, laboriously compiled, but without any critical acumen, and without the least suspicion that unbiblical religions are not mere curiosities”.³⁰ The new way of looking at these “curiosities” implied that they possessed value in themselves and were worthy of scientific investigation. In this way, foreign religions became meaningful to Western scholars and their own religious convictions. In time, all religions, including Christianity, were incorporated within one comprehensive framework.³¹ The rise of an evolutionary approach to religion, which takes for granted that a universal pattern of religious development can be established, presupposes such a comprehensive scheme. This approach makes it possible to combine the idea of the unity of mankind with that of the diversity of human cultures. “The specific attraction of evolutionary social theories was that they offered a way of reformulating the essential unity of mankind, while avoiding the current objections to the older theories of a human nature everywhere essentially the same. Mankind was one not because it was everywhere the same, but because the differences represented different stages in the same process”.³²

At the basis of all this was the conviction that *religion as such* can and should be an object of study.³³ The perception of religion as a distinct sphere of human culture is related to major developments in the modern Western world. The revolutions of the late eighteenth century eventually led to the separation of church and state in most Western countries. The creation of the modern nation of equal and free citizens was only possible when religious differences no longer played a dominant role in the public sphere. From this point of view the disappearance of the old status quo, in which religion and political authority were intimately connected with each other, in time led

³⁰ C.P. Tiele, “Religions”, in: *The Encyclopedia Britannica*, 9th edition, vol. XX, Edinburgh 1886, pp. 358–371, p. 358.

³¹ On the place of the study of Christianity within science of religion, see Sigurd Hjelde, *Die Religionswissenschaft und das Christentum. Eine historische Untersuchung über das Verhältnis von Religionswissenschaft und Theologie*, Leiden 1994.

³² J.W. Burrow, *Evolution and Society. A Study in Victorian Social Theory*, Cambridge 1966, p. 98; cf. chapter VI below.

³³ Karl-Heinz Kohl, “Geschichte der Religionswissenschaft”, in: *Handbuch religionswissenschaftlicher Grundbegriffe*, ed. by Hubert Cancik et al., vol. I, Stuttgart 1988, pp. 217–262, this quotation on p. 218f.; Byrne, *Natural Religion*, pp. x–xi.

to some sort of autonomization of religion, which consequently could be studied in its own right. One could argue that the creation of the modern nation state at least to some extent brought about a relocation of religion from the visible social and hierarchical order to “the inner selves of the members of the moral community of the nation”. Friedrich Schleiermacher’s concept of religion as an overwhelming inner experience of dependence upon the whole universe must be seen against this background.³⁴

The place of religion in society was to some extent destabilized. This development is much more complicated than can be outlined here. The role of dissenting and emancipating Christian groups, which undermined the alleged unified religious identity of the nation, should be mentioned as well as the fact that—as the nineteenth century advanced—the plausibility of Christianity itself came under attack. The findings of geology, Darwinist biology, and German higher biblical criticism threatened the credibility of sacred history.³⁵ The growing uneasiness about the transition from the rural community to the modern, industrial, urban society also played a role here. The study of religion could be used as a means to criticize “undesirable” effects of modernization. In addition, the old, positivist conviction that religion was a phase in history that would gradually be overcome by science, waned. With respect to the sociology of religion, for instance, it can be doubted whether there is a straight line from the critique of religion to the scientific study of it. There seems to be a discontinuity between Auguste Comte and Karl Marx, on the one hand, and Émile Durkheim and Max Weber, on the other.³⁶

³⁴ This paragraph owes much to Peter van Rooden, “Secularization and the Trajectory of Religion in the West”, in: Henri A. Krop, Arie L. Molendijk & Hent de Vries (eds), *Post-Theism. Reframing the Judeo-Christian Tradition*, Leuven 2000, pp. 169–188, who sketches this transformation on a fairly general level. To understand it in greater detail, the various national histories have to be taken into account.

³⁵ Cf. Peter Byrne, “The Foundations of the Study of Religion in the British Context”, in: Arie L. Molendijk & Peter Pels (eds), *Religion in the Making. The Emergence of the Sciences of Religion*, Leiden etc. 1998, pp. 45–65.

³⁶ Volkhard Krech & Hartmut Tyrell, “Religionssoziologie um die Jahrhundertwende. Zu Vorgeschichte, Kontext und Beschaffenheit einer Subdisziplin der Soziologie”, in: Krech & Tyrell (eds), *Religionssoziologie um 1900*, Würzburg 1995, pp. 11–78, pp. 15–19; cf. Heinz-Jürgen Dahme & Otthein Rammstedt, “Die zeitlose Modernität der soziologischen Klassiker. Überlegungen zur Theoriekonstruktion von Emile Durkheim, Ferdinand Tönnies, Max Weber und besonders Georg Simmel”, in: Heinz-Jürgen Dahme & Otthein Rammstedt (eds), *Georg Simmel und die Moderne. Neue Interpretationen und Materialien*, Frankfurt a.M. 1984, pp. 449–478, this quotation on p. 461f.

Durkheim does not view religion as a product of the human imagination or as a means to oppress the labourers, but as a necessary element of social life. The persistence of religion in the modern world had to be accounted for, and this called for a different perspective.³⁷ To borrow Hans Kippenberg's formulation: a theory of modernity "in which past religion still has a future" was developed.³⁸ This view did not preclude dramatic changes in modern religious history, but the hypothesis that religion in modernity is in constant decline and will finally disappear lost much of its plausibility. In this way, religion could be seen as an object worthy of scientific treatment rather than something to be exterminated by science.

Religion was seen as a phenomenon of considerable intellectual interest at the time. The work of Max Müller, for instance, aroused quite a bit of excitement. He had to read his Hibbert Lectures twice because the auditorium did not offer enough room for all who wanted to attend.³⁹ Furthermore, various pirated editions of his *Introduction to the Science of Religion* were published at the time. Müller himself was not unduly modest about what was to be achieved: "The Science of Religion may be the last of the sciences which man is destined to elaborate; but when it is elaborated, it will change the aspect of the world, and give new life to Christianity itself".⁴⁰ The narrowness of our own religious horizon will disappear, if we are willing to conduct the study of religion "in a bold, but scholar-like, careful, and reverent spirit".⁴¹

Müller combined a romantic view of the value of religious divergences with a firm belief in the possibility of a sound scientific investigation of these phenomena. If we are willing to study "positive facts" and to "read . . . the history of the world", we will see "that, as in geology, so in the history of human thought, theoretic uniformity does not exist, and that the past is never altogether lost".

³⁷ Cf. Sharpe, *Comparative Religion*, p. 30.

³⁸ Hans G. Kippenberg, *Die Entdeckung der Religionsgeschichte. Religionswissenschaft und Moderne*, München 1997, p. 10; Kippenberg, *Discovering Religious History*, p. xiv.

³⁹ Cf. Max Müller, *Lectures on the Origin and Growth of Religion as Illustrated by the Religions of India*, London 1878, p. vii; on Müller, see Lourens P. van den Bosch, *Friedrich Max Müller. A Life Devoted to the Humanities*, Leiden 2001.

⁴⁰ Max Müller, *Chips from a German Workshop*, vol. I: *Essays on the Science of Religion*, London 1867, pp. xix–xx.

⁴¹ Müller, *Introduction to the Science of Religion*, London 1873, p. ix.

The oldest formations of thought crop out everywhere, and if we dig but deep enough, we shall find that even the sandy desert in which we are asked to live, rests everywhere on the firm foundation of that primeval, yet indestructible granite of the human soul,—religious faith.⁴²

The analogy with the work of the geologist who digs up old layers and materials, which are the fundament of our existence, is striking. The findings of nineteenth-century geology and archaeology had contributed to the overthrow of the biblical chronology of world history. This was an important step in the development of a naturalistic science, which allowed the very origin of humankind to be studied without reference to supernatural intervention.⁴³ What is also remarkable in the above quotation is the metaphor of the “sandy desert”, which betrays a nostalgia for the religious past. Most pervasive, however, is the implied global view, which frames unity within religious difference. The preferred way to unearth the treasure is the comparative method: “all higher knowledge is acquired by comparison, and rests on comparison”.⁴⁴ This insight also pertains to “our religion”. “[I]n order to understand fully the position of Christianity in the history of the world, and its true place among the religions of mankind, we must compare it, not with Judaism only, but with the religious aspirations of the whole world”.⁴⁵ In the end, this endeavour, according to Müller, will be to the benefit of Christian belief. What such research would imply for Christianity and other religions as well was a contentious issue. Tylor proposed anthropology as a “reformer’s science” which would do away with superstition.⁴⁶ Evans-Pritchard, in his work on the history of anthropology, has claimed that its founders were all atheists who saw religious belief as an illusion.⁴⁷

In the foregoing paragraphs I have tried to list the factors that underlie the rise of the scientific study of religion in the nineteenth century. It is difficult to combine them all into one picture. The interplay between socio-political, intellectual, and more strictly method-

⁴² Müller, *Chips from a German Workshop*, vol. I, p. xxxii.

⁴³ Cf. Stocking, *Victorian Anthropology*, pp. 69ff.

⁴⁴ Müller, *Introduction to the Science of Religion*, p. 12.

⁴⁵ Müller, *Chips from a German Workshop*, vol. I, p. xxviii.

⁴⁶ Edward B. Tylor, *Primitive Culture. Researches into the Development of Mythology, Philosophy, Religion, Language, Art, and Custom*, 2 vols, third edition, London 1891 (original edition 1871–1873), vol. II, p. 453.

⁴⁷ E.E. Evans-Pritchard, *Theories of Primitive Religion*, Oxford 1965, p. 14f.

ological factors is difficult to gauge. We probably have to be content with a multi-sided approach, without being able to locate the relationships of interdependence exactly. On a general level, socio-political changes—the end of the confessional state and the rise of the nation state (which implied a transformation of religion from the visible social order to the inner selves of the members of the moral community of the nation) and the intensifying political colonization in the second half of the nineteenth century—were important. One's own religion was no longer the only and obvious one. Religion was perceived as a more or less separate entity, which could and should be studied in a global perspective.

Deism, the Enlightenment, and Romanticism all proposed their own intellectual answers to the changing conditions. Was religion essentially a set of moral prescripts? Could Christianity be reduced to a minimal, but universal, religious creed? Or was religion essentially an illusion (perhaps beneficial to the masses)? Or was religious diversity good for its own sake? The reconceptualization of religion as a separate sphere of human activity, the waning of the belief that there was no place for religion in modernity, the availability of relevant material, and the application of historical and empirical methods all contributed to the rise of the scientific study of religion. In addition, the awareness of the importance of religious diversity, on the one hand, and the rising conviction that it was meaningful to compare religions, on the other, were no doubt crucial. Comparison was thought to be the golden road to a scientific approach to phenomena at the time. From a methodological point of view, the rise of the science of religion can be described in terms of the encounter between the comparative approach, which in a more speculative fashion had been the prerogative of the philosophy of religion,⁴⁸ and the historical-empirical methods of the cultural sciences of the nineteenth century.

⁴⁸ On the beginnings of the philosophy of religion, see Konrad Feiereis, *Die Umprägung der natürlichen Theologie in Religionsphilosophie. Ein Beitrag zur deutschen Geistesgeschichte des 18. Jahrhunderts*, Leipzig 1965; cf. Kippenberg, *Discovering Religious History*, chapter 1 (“From the Philosophy of Religion to the History of Religions”).

2. *The Historiography of the Sciences of Religion*

Current paradigms, methodological issues, and different disciplinary settings influence the way in which the history of the study of religion is written. The disciplinary setting within which one is working is especially hard to overcome. It makes quite a difference whether Max Müller and C.P. Tiele, or Wilhelm Wundt and William James, or Sigmund Freud and C.G. Jung, or E.B. Tylor and Émile Durkheim, or Georg Simmel and Max Weber—to mention just these—are considered to be the key figures in the scientific study of religion. Historians are generally well aware of the danger of writing history from a teleological perspective. The recommended remedy is to contextualize. But how should this be done?

In principle, I plead for a broad approach to the emerging sciences of religion, as I call them for the sake of convenience. From a historian's point of view, this wide perspective is necessary, because otherwise one cannot make sense of the highly diverse and confused landscape of the study of religion at the time. Symptomatic in this respect is the problem as to who is to be included and who is to be left out in such discipline histories. Under which discipline should scholars such as William Robertson Smith or Abraham Kuenen be classed? Thus, it is no coincidence that we see a key figure as for instance Émile Durkheim appear not only in the historiography of the sociology of religion, but in that of the anthropology of religion and the science of religion as well.⁴⁹ This is not the result of carelessness on behalf of the historiographer. The underlying problem is that discipline boundaries had not yet been established. Of course, in retrospect it is clear that some scholars preferred what we would nowadays call "social scientific" methods, and others historical-philological methods; however, it would be a misrepresentation to describe these different preferences in terms of mutually exclusive paradigms. In spite of all the polemics, more or less fruitful exchanges took place in those days. Because religion was at the centre of public interest, scholars from various disciplinary backgrounds—such as history, philology, archaeology, ethnography, anthropology, sociology, psychology, theology, philosophy, classical and oriental studies—were attracted

⁴⁹ Cf. Krech & Tyrell, *Religionssoziologie um 1900*; Brian Morris, *Anthropological Studies of Religion. An Introductory Text*, Cambridge 1987; Sharpe, *Comparative Religion*.

to research on this topic. The ongoing debate on what religion is about—is it essentially a social or psychological, a moral or a distinct (religious) phenomenon?—produced different approaches in the various (emerging) disciplines.

How, then, had the history of the scientific study of religion best be written? I will limit myself to three suggestions here. *First*, with regard to the discipline of historiography (which as such is a legitimate undertaking), one has to be aware of the danger of doing “ice-berg” research, by again and again repeating the contributions and failures of the towering figures, whilst forgetting their less eminent colleagues and the institutional frameworks within which they worked. A drawback of much discipline history is “that it offers an account of the alleged historical development of an enterprise the identity of which is defined by the concerns of the current practitioners of a particular scientific field”.⁵⁰ This teleological approach is hard to avoid, because of the widely shared belief in the progressive character of scholarship, which is often seen as an accumulative advancement of rationality and insight. What is needed is what I would like to call a *reflected historicism*. The term “historicism” comes from George W. Stocking (whose own work on the history of anthropology is in my view paradigmatic for how discipline history should be undertaken), who uses it to point to the necessity of giving a careful reconstruction and contextualisation of the past.⁵¹ I add the adjective “reflected” to emphasize two points. The first is that we have to reflect upon the presuppositions and categories used by the early scholars of religion.⁵² Even more important in my view is the second

⁵⁰ Stefan Collini, “‘Discipline History’ and ‘Intellectual History’. Reflections on the Historiography of the Social Sciences in Britain and France”, in: *Revue de Synthèse* 109 (1988) 387–399, this quotation on p. 388. For a critique of such historiography, see Stefan Collini, Donald Winch & John Burrow, *That Noble Science of Politics. A Study in Nineteenth-Century Intellectual History*, Cambridge etc. 1983, esp. p. 4: “In essence it consists in writing history backwards. The present theoretical consensus of the discipline, or possibly some polemical version of what that consensus should be, is in effect taken as definitive, and the past is then reconstituted as a teleology leading up to and fully manifested in it”.

⁵¹ Cf. George W. Stocking, “On the Limits of ‘Presentism’ and ‘Historicism’ in the Historiography of the Behavioral Sciences” (1965), in: Stocking, *Race, Culture and Evolution. Essays in the History of Anthropology*, London–New York 1968, pp. 1–12.

⁵² Cf. Van der Veer, *Imperial Encounters*, p. 11: “My critique of both the Weberian culturalist approach and the Marxist materialistic approach makes it clear that in order to describe the history of global modernity from 1800 one must focus not only on historical interaction and the field of power in which they play themselves out *but also on the categories with which one studies them*” (italics ALM).

point, which concerns the need to reflect on the history of historiography. Who were included in early surveys of the field? What were the explicit or implicit criteria the early historiographers used? How did these criteria change over time? What are the important “lines of descent” in historiography? A reflected historicism analyzes the way previous historiography has influenced, and partly even shaped, our own stance as historians of the science of religion. In the next chapter I will present a case study that shows how fruitful this approach can be.

Secondly, one has to acknowledge the importance of biographical work on the “great scholars” of early science of religion (for instance Müller, Tiele, A. Réville, W. James, W. Brede Kristensen, Tylor, Frazer, J. Harrison, Durkheim, and Max Weber). On the condition that it is not confined to an exposition of the influential concepts and theories they developed, such research can uncover the ramifications of the field. *Thirdly*, a discussion of the emergence of the discourse of religion in a broad academic context in terms of general socio-historical developments is needed. The emergence of the academic study of religion can only be adequately understood if not only the factors that made such study urgent at the time, but also the particular character of the field are taken into account. For lack of a better term, I would characterize the field as “protodisciplinary”. Various disciplines were still in an embryonic state (or less than that), and students from different (disciplinary) backgrounds could join—so to speak—the new field. This makes the early science of religion appear a somewhat diffuse field of study. By using the term “protodisciplinary”, I do not want to suggest that the formation of disciplines is a theme of secondary importance in the history of science. But the establishment of disciplines was a long-term process and at the time there was much uncertainty concerning where this would lead.

However, there is only one discipline that until now has defined itself by reference to the term “religion”, and that is the “science of religion” *stricto sensu*. Other disciplines, such as anthropology, sociology, psychology, and philosophy, possess subdisciplines with the term “religion” in their titles, but apparently these fields have other ways to justify their existence. Of course, it is noteworthy that religion played such an important role in the formative phase of some of these fields. In general terms, this indicated that religion was—again—on the agenda of the modern cultural sciences. But the identity of

these other fields does not depend (solely) on the study of religion, as is the case with the science of religion. This science is—to quote Clifford Geertz, referring to cultural anthropology—“a conflicted discipline, perpetually in search of ways to escape its condition, perpetually failing to find them”.⁵³ This is already evident in the ongoing debates about the proper name for the field. Should it be “science of religion”, “history of religion”, “history of religions”, “comparative religion”, “religious studies”, or “religion studies”, to mention just these English designations? The problem was there from the beginning. Louis Henry Jordan, one of the major early chronologists of the field, in 1905 listed the following names, which had all been suggested by “representative leaders in this study”: “hierology”, “pistolology”, “the science of religions” (in the plural), “the comparative science of religion”, “comparative theology”, and “comparative religion”.⁵⁴ Other designations such as “hierography” or “phenomenology of religion” could be added without difficulty.

By way of contrast it is interesting to see which disciplines are listed by Jordan as “auxiliary sciences”. He mentions six: anthropology, archaeology, psychology, mythology, ethnology, and sociology.⁵⁵ Almost two decades earlier P.D. Chantepie de la Saussaye had written, in the first edition of his famous manual on the history of religion(s): “The science of religion owes its steady growth to the discoveries and advances that have been made in the science of language, in archaeology, philology, ethnology, psychology of nations, mythology, and folk-lore”.⁵⁶ Archaeology is not found in the German edition (and not in the later editions of the manual either), and, then, the stress on the importance of the study of languages is even more striking. Chantepie de la Saussaye not only referred to the deciphering of unknown languages in this context, as was to be

⁵³ Clifford Geertz, “Culture War”, in: *The New York Review of Books* 42/19 (November 30, 1995), pp. 4–6; reprinted in Geertz, *Available Light. Anthropological Reflections on Philosophical Topics*, Princeton 2000, p. 97.

⁵⁴ Jordan, *Comparative Religion*, pp. 24–28.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 256ff. Anthropology was defined here (with reference to Cassell’s *Encyclopaedic Dictionary*) as “the Comparative study of the Arts of different races, in different degrees of culture” (258); as outstanding representatives Jordan mentioned E.B. Tylor, A. Lang, J.G. Frazer, and F.B. Jevons. Ethnology was in Jordan’s view akin to anthropology, and was mainly cited because of the importance of its sub-discipline of folklore (Jakob L.K. Grimm and Andrew Lang, among others).

⁵⁶ Chantepie de la Saussaye, *Manual*, p. 5.

expected, but he also drew the attention to the following fact: “It was the comparative study of language which threw light on the real relationship of nations, and thus supplied the principal means for a proper classification of mankind”.⁵⁷ The focus on world history is a presupposition for the rise of the new field, according to Chantepie de la Saussaye.

On the one hand, the science of religion apparently depended on the advances in other sciences concerned with religion, but, on the other, it claimed (and claims) to be a discipline in its own right. The struggle for academic recognition testifies to this. From the very beginning, however, there was a discussion on whether the science of religion was a specific discipline in itself, or rather a term covering the field of the study of religion in all its ramifications. At the end of the nineteenth century, Abraham Kuenen, now famous for his studies of the Old Testament, was included among the “scientists of religion”. In my view, there is no fundamental reason to exclude Old Testament scholarship from the field of the “science/history of religion”. Science of religion, therefore, is an ambiguous term, depending on whether it is seen as a special discipline or as a comprehensive designation for every kind of scholarly study of religion. Michel Despland’s great study of the emergence of the sciences of religion in France takes the last view and presents a history of the growth of all knowledge concerning religion.⁵⁸ In principle, I agree with this approach. In this book I will try to outline the rise of the scientific study of religion in the Netherlands in a broad context, without however giving a full overview of all research concerning religion. Instead, I will highlight some specific issues, contexts and case studies; in particular, given the importance of the subject, the enormous struggle over the science of religion *stricto sensu* in the Netherlands has to be treated in some detail.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Michel Despland, *L'émergence des sciences de la religion. La Monarchie de Juillet: un moment fondateur*, Paris–Montréal 1999, p. 11: “Notre objectif est de rassembler, de tenter de construire une histoire de l'accroissement de *toutes* connaissances en matière de religions” (italics original). Despland makes a—historically motivated?—distinction between authors who treated their subject in a historical manner and those who had religious or more general edifying purposes, and concludes, as was probably to be expected, that on both sides this line was often crossed: “la plupart des auteurs passent souvent d’un côté à l’autre de cette ligne (idéale) de démarcation” (15).

Most research on the history of *Religionswissenschaft* takes the view that it is a discipline in its own right. Walter Capps' monograph *Religious Studies: The Making of a Discipline* seems to be a good example. He starts by saying that "to call religious studies an intellectual discipline is to recognize that it employs established rules and methods of inquiry".⁵⁹ This suggests more uniformity than actually happens to be the case. Later in his introduction, Capps offers the following diagnosis: "The large variety of interests, methods, intentions, convictions, materials, subjects, issues, and skills already referred to should indicate that religious studies is a dynamic subject-field within which selected topics are approached *by means of numerous disciplines* under the influence of multiple attitudes and methodological sets of interest".⁶⁰ One wonders whether the book is not rather about the making of (a variety of) disciplines. No doubt, Capps is right when he states that collective intellectual endeavours only qualify as disciplines if they "exhibit a second-order tradition"—"a coordinated account of the primary schools of interpretation, methods of approach, traditions of scholarship, and, most significantly, a shared living memory of the ways in which all of these constitutive factors are related to each other".⁶¹ Still, as he has to admit, this second-order tradition is not yet clearly identifiable in religious studies. Capps' goal is to compose such a tradition, which sets parameters for the future. This is the drift of much historiography motivated by the wish to establish a respectable intellectual *histoire de mémoire* for its own academic field.

It is difficult to locate the beginnings of the scientific study of religion because—to make the point just one more time—so much depends upon one's own viewpoint and where the emphasis is put. Various positions are represented in the historiography.⁶² Eric Sharpe

⁵⁹ Walter Capps, *Religious Studies. The Making of a Discipline*, Minneapolis 1995, p. xiv.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. xxi (italics ALM).

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, pp. xv–xvi.

⁶² Cf. Chantepie de la Saussaye, *Manual*; E. Hardy, "Zur Geschichte der vergleichenden Religionsforschung" (I–VI), in: *Archiv für Religionswissenschaft* 4 (1901) 45–66, 97–135, 193–228; Jordan, *Comparative Religion. Its Genesis*; Jordan, *Comparative Religion. Its Adjuncts and Allies*, London etc. 1915; E. Lehmann, "Religionsgeschichte", in: Albert Hauck (ed.), *Realencyklopädie für protestantische Theologie und Kirche*, begründet von J.J. Herzog, third edition, vol. 24, Leipzig 1913, pp. 393–411; Lehmann, "Zur Geschichte der Religionsgeschichte", in: P.D. Chantepie de la Saussaye, *Lehrbuch der Religionsgeschichte*, fourth edition, 2 vols, Tübingen 1925, pp. 1–22; H. Pinard de la

is very outspoken in this regard: “In short, comparative religion (at first a synonym for the science of religion) did not exist in 1859; by 1869 it did”. The evolutionary method marks its start, according to Sharpe.⁶³ But studies on the “science/history of religion” appeared well before that time. A famous example is Bernard Bolzano’s *Manual of the Science of Religion* of 1834.⁶⁴ Even earlier, the German theologian Christian Wilhelm Flüge gave a course on the history of religion at the University of Göttingen in 1797.⁶⁵ Bolzano tried to establish the perfection and superiority of the Roman Catholic religion; an attempt that would nowadays be classified under the philosophy of religion. In Flüge’s books we find little evidence of an evolutionary, comparative perspective. Hence, I would be inclined to say that such a work belongs to the “prehistory” of the field, but the distinction between “history” and “prehistory” is admittedly contestable.⁶⁶

It is certain, however, that scholars such as Müller and Tiele thought of themselves as establishing a new field of research. Tiele

Boullaye, *L’ Étude comparée des Religions*, third edition, 3 vols, Paris 1929–1931; Kurt Rudolph, *Die Religionswissenschaft an der Leipziger Universität und die Entwicklung der Religionswissenschaft. Ein Beitrag zur Wissenschaftsgeschichte und zum Problem der Religionswissenschaft*, Berlin 1962; Evans-Pritchard, *Theories of Primitive Religion*; Waardenburg, *Classical Approaches*; Jan de Vries, *Perspectives in the History of Religions*, Berkeley etc. 1977; Frank Whaling (ed.), *Contemporary Approaches to the Study of Religion*, 2 vols, Berlin etc. 1983–1985; J. van Baal & W.E.A. van Beek, *Symbols for Communication. An Introduction to the Anthropological Study of Religion*, second, revised edition, Assen 1985; Sharpe, *Comparative Religion*; Morris, *Anthropological Studies*; Kohl, “Geschichte der Religionswissenschaft”; Byrne, *Natural Religion*; Harrison, “*Religion*” and the Religions; Kippenberg & Luchesi, *Religionswissenschaft und Kulturkritik*; Hjelde, *Die Religionswissenschaft*; Capps, *Religious Studies*; Krech & Tyrell, *Religionssoziologie*; Chidester, *Savage Systems*; Clinton Bennett, *In Search of the Sacred. Anthropology and the Study of Religions*, London 1996; David M. Wulff, *Psychology of Religion. Classic and Contemporary*, New York etc. 1997; Kippenberg, *Die Entdeckung der Religionsgeschichte* (= *Discovering Religious History*); cf. Stocking, *Victorian Anthropology*; Stocking, *After Tylor. British Social Anthropology 1888–1951*, London 1996; Friedrich Wilhelm Graf, *Die Wiederkehr der Götter. Religion in der modernen Kultur*, München 2004, esp. pp. 133–178.

⁶³ Sharpe, *Comparative Religion*, p. 27f. (quotation on p. 28). On the evolutionary “method”, see chapter VI below.

⁶⁴ Bolzano, *Lehrbuch der Religionswissenschaft*, Sulzbach 1834; cf. Pinard de la Boullaye, *L’Étude comparée des Religions*, vol. II, p. 548.

⁶⁵ The German title was “Allgemeine und besondere Religionsgeschichte”; cf. R.F. Merkel, “Beiträge zur vergleichenden Religionsgeschichte”, in: *Archiv für Religionswissenschaft* 36 (1939) 193–215, who discusses other late eighteenth and early nineteenth century German examples as well.

⁶⁶ The opposition between “prehistory” and “history” is, of course, to be distinguished from that between “protodisciplinary” and “disciplinary”. Seen from our present-day point of view, much of the early scholarly study of religion in a comparative perspective was “protodisciplinary” in character, but should be classed under the “history” of the field.

stated: “Although in former centuries its advent was heralded by a few forerunners, as Selden in ‘De Diis Syriis’, de Brosses in ‘Le Culte des Dieux Fetiches’, the tasteful Herder and others, as a science it reaches back not much further than to the middle of the nineteenth century”.⁶⁷ For the most part the old books are said to have hardly any value.⁶⁸ Seen in terms of the encounter between comparativism and empiricism mentioned above, much is also to be said for locating the beginnings of science of the religion in the second half of the nineteenth century. A look at the institutional aspects also points in this direction. The first specialized journals, lectures, congresses, and professorships go back to this period. The Hibbert (1878) and Gifford (1888–1889) Lectures,⁶⁹ the World’s Parliament of Religions in Chicago (1893),⁷⁰ the “scientific” congresses on the history of religion (starting with those in Stockholm 1897 and Paris 1900),⁷¹ and the establishment of the first chairs in the field in Switzerland⁷² and Holland in the 1870s, are all examples of this development.

The process of institutionalization is of great importance in writing the history of science. In its weak sense, the term concerns the “relatively dense interaction of persons who conduct [an intellectual, ALM] activity within a social arrangement which has boundaries, endurance, and a name”. If the interaction is extended, this loose structure “makes place for authority which makes decisions regarding assessment, admission, promotion, allocation”.⁷³ In the strong sense, the formation of academic disciplines is involved. No doubt, a history-of-ideas approach can offer valuable insights regarding the

⁶⁷ Tiele, “On the Study of Comparative Religion”, p. 583.

⁶⁸ Tiele, “Religions”, p. 358.

⁶⁹ Stanley L. Jaki, *Lord Gifford and His Lectures. A Centenary Retrospect*, Edinburgh–Macon, Georgia 1986.

⁷⁰ Barrows, *The World’s Parliament of Religions*; cf. Eric J. Ziolkowski (ed.), *A Museum of Faiths. Histories and Legacies of the 1893 World’s Parliament of Religion*, Atlanta, Georgia 1993; Dorothea Lüddeckens, *Das Weltparlament der Religionen von 1893. Strukturen interreligiöser Begegnung im 19. Jahrhundert*, Berlin–New York 2002.

⁷¹ Sharpe, *Comparative Religion*, chapter 7, esp. p. 140.

⁷² A study of early Swiss history of religion is still a desideratum; cf., however, Sharpe, *Comparative Religion*, p. 120, and Fritz Stolz, “Der Gott der Theologie und die Götter der Religionswissenschaft”, in: Ingolf U. Dalferth et al. (eds), *Die Wissenschaften und Gott* (Ringvorlesung Universität Zürich), Zürich–Freiburg i.B., pp. 155–173, esp. pp. 156–165.

⁷³ Edward Shils, “Tradition, Ecology, and Institution in the History of Sociology” (1970), in: id., *The Calling of Sociology and Other Essays on the Pursuit of Learning* (Selected Papers, vol. III), Chicago–London 1980, pp. 165–256, p. 168f.

conceptual changes that underlie the rise of fields of study, but it has to be complemented by an approach that focuses on institutional aspects. Discipline formation is a matter not only of method and theory, but first and foremost of power and recognition. The focus on institutionalization is probably also the most appropriate way to approach the question of when a particular field of study appeared on the scene. Affinity of ideas is not enough—to mention a rather extreme example from another branch of science—to establish Democritus as the founding father of modern atom theory. In the case of the emergence of the scientific study of religion, we face an especially complex situation because scholars from different backgrounds were involved in the project of making religion into a subject of academic research.⁷⁴ Disciplines and protodisciplines cooperated to some extent, but there was also animosity because of the diverging interests in the struggle for (academic) recognition. This particularly concerns the science of religion in the strict sense, since its identity depended on the topic it researched. Before turning to these processes of institutionalization in the third chapter of this book, I will address another and to some extent preliminary topic: what exactly is the reputation of Dutch science of religion in the historiography of the field?

⁷⁴ On this subject, see Hans G. Kippenberg, “Constructing Modernity by Writing Religious History”, in: *Nederlands Theologisch Tijdschrift* 57 (2003) 280–290; Molendijk, “*In hoc signo vinces*”; Jan N. Bremmer, “Methodologische en terminologische notities bij de opkomst van de godsdienstgeschiedenis in de achttiende en negentiende eeuw”, in: *Nederlands Theologisch Tijdschrift* 57 (2003) 308–321.

CHAPTER TWO

REPUTATION

By way of introduction to early Dutch science of religion I will first discuss the question of its international standing. In this respect, historians mainly consider the following three factors: (a) the institutionalization of the field within the Dutch university system, (b) the international prestige of scholars such as C.P. Tiele, P.D. Chantepie de la Saussaye, W. Brede Kristensen (who became a Dutch citizen in 1913) and Gerardus van der Leeuw, and (c) the Dutch contribution to the “phenomenology of religion”. In the first section these three issues will be addressed briefly, after which I will delve more deeply into the question how the origin of the phenomenology of religion is to be perceived in a historically adequate manner. As I will show, the work of Van der Leeuw is of immense importance in this respect.

1. *The Standing of Early Dutch Science of Religion*

(a) The Higher Education Act of 1876 established science of religion as a subject in the Dutch universities of the time. In Leiden and Amsterdam, special chairs in the history of religions were even created. These positions were occupied by Tiele and Chantepie de la Saussaye, respectively. Together with the first professorships in Switzerland in the 1870s and the foundation of the Religious Studies section at the *École Pratique des Hautes Études* in Paris in 1886, this development in the Netherlands is generally seen as a first and important step in the establishment of an autonomous science of religion. Thus, the history of the field is conceived of as a gradual emancipation from the patronizing influence of theology. As indicated above, there is a danger that the agenda of present-day scholarship determines the way in which the history of the discipline is written. When we take a closer look (as we will in the next chapter) at the debates in the Netherlands in the 1860s and 1870s, we will see that they focus not so much on the introduction of a new discipline as upon the organization of the theological faculties as such. The science

of religion was expected to fulfil (most of) the tasks of the old theology and to show the superiority of Christian religion.

(b) Prestige is certainly the most important asset of a scholar, but it is hard to objectify. We admire the academic who produces a new book every year, publishes articles in every conceivable journal, or is invited to deliver the keynote lecture on important occasions. Yet, high output, as it is called nowadays, is not enough. Prestige ultimately has to do with the quality of scholarly production and performance. Quality, however, is a somewhat elusive property. The quality attributed to a scholar or an article depends at least to some extent on the preferences of one's peers. What, then, is more important—that there are no mistakes in a book, that it is well-written, or that it offers new perspectives and hypotheses? Both quality and prestige are socially constituted properties which depend upon the recognition of one's work by the academic community. Honours such as honorary doctorates, prizes, fellowships, memberships of important boards and venerable academies, etc., determine the value of a scholar.

I will not try to list all the honours bestowed on Tiele, Chantepie de la Saussaye, Kristensen, and Van der Leeuw. They were highly respected in the Netherlands; they were all elected members of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences and, with the exception of Chantepie de la Saussaye, received honorary doctorates.¹ Tiele was elected into various foreign academies, was invited to give the Gifford Lectures, and at his retirement received congratulations from all over the world. He and Max Müller, who were both unable to attend the First International Congress on the History of Religions in Paris in 1900, were made honorary presidents of this congress. Chantepie de la Saussaye chaired this congress at its first convention in the Netherlands (Leiden) in 1912.² Kristensen, however, did not play such a prominent international role. He published most of his work in Norwegian and Dutch, and it was only after

¹ Chantepie de la Saussaye refused an honorary doctorate from the University of Glasgow at the beginning of the twentieth century because of the anti-Dutch role of the British in the Boer War in South Africa; cf. M.J. Aalders, *Ethisch tussen 1870 en 1920. Openbaring, Schrift en ervaring bij J.J.P. Valeton Jr., P.D. Chantepie de la Saussaye en Is. van Dijk*, Kampen 1990, p. 105. In chapter IV I will go more deeply into the careers and work of Tiele and Chantepie de la Saussaye.

² Cf. *Actes du IV^e Congrès International d'Histoire des Religions, tenu à Leide du 9^e–13^e septembre 1912*, Leiden 1913.

the publication of *The Meaning of Religion* in English by John Carman in 1960 that he became better known outside Norway and the Netherlands.³ Kristensen's pupil, Gerardus van der Leeuw, was definitely more prominent on the international scene. His fame is founded on his *Phenomenology of Religion*, which originally appeared in German in 1933, and in an English translation in 1938. He was approached to succeed Friedrich Heiler in Marburg in 1931,⁴ and, shortly before his death in 1950, presided over the Seventh Congress on the History of Religions in Amsterdam.⁵

Although prestige is a very real thing, it is hard to determine exactly. Perhaps it is easier to look at the influence that a particular scholar exerts. Influence is not the same as prestige, which is not to deny that a prestigious scholar is more likely to be influential. The two qualities are undoubtedly correlated. For example, the writing of textbooks, encyclopaedia articles, let alone popular books does not automatically earn one the acclaim of one's fellow specialists, but it can play a significant role. For the sake of brevity, I will specify two markers of influence: one is being widely read and known, and the other is being able to place one's students in the right academic positions, where they in turn can exercise influence.

Were the Dutch science of religion pioneers influential in this last sense? The question of whether they succeeded in creating academic *Nachwuchs* is the most difficult to answer. In the beginning, at least, there was no specific Dutch science of religion school. We know that Tiele's courses were not very well attended, and both Tiele and Chantepie de la Saussaye were succeeded by scholars with different interests and approaches.⁶ Whether Kristensen can be said to have worked in Tiele's spirit seems doubtful, although he studied

³ On Kristensen, see Sigurd Hjelde (ed.), *Man, Meaning & Mystery: Hundred Years of History of Religions in Norway. The Heritage of W. Brede Kristensen*, Leiden etc. 2000.

⁴ Willem Hofstee, *Goden en Mensen. De godsdienstwetenschap van Gerardus van der Leeuw. 1890–1950*, Kampen 1997, p. 81.

⁵ Cf. C.J. Bleeker et al. (eds), *Proceedings of the 7th Congress for the History of Religions. Amsterdam, 4th–9th September 1950*, Amsterdam 1951; this also includes a necrology by Pettazzoni (pp. 5–6).

⁶ Tiele was succeeded by the Norwegian Kristensen, and Chantepie de la Saussaye left his Amsterdam chair to Wilhelm Brandt (1855–1915), who was of German descent and whose previous teaching assignment had been in New Testament Studies at the same faculty. Brandt published on Mandaean religion. Brandt was succeeded in 1913 by the German *Religionsgeschichtlicher* Heinrich Hackmann (1864–1935).

with Tiele in the early 1890s. Kristensen downsized the original Tielean programme of the science of religion to a considerable extent. His renown is based on a careful and respectful analysis of the data on ancient religions. In the course of time all traces of an evolutionary view of religion were wiped out, and Kristensen developed his own phenomenology of religion, which aimed at a discussion of religions and religious phenomena in their own right and not as stages in some presumed development of religion as such.⁷ The grand schemes and high hopes of his “master” Tiele were gradually abandoned.⁸ One could claim that the deaths of Müller (1900) and Tiele (1902) marked the end of an era, and the work of Kristensen marked the beginning of a new period in history of religions, which gradually emancipated itself from philosophy of religion.⁹

On the other criterion—that of being widely read—the four “great men” mentioned above score rather well, with the exception of Kristensen, who was hesitant about publishing the fruits of his work and did not write a major textbook.¹⁰ Van der Leeuw’s *Phenomenology*, Chantepie de la Saussaye’s *Manual*, and Tiele’s *Outlines of the History of Religion* doubtless set the standards in the field. Chantepie de la Saussaye’s *Manual* went to four editions between 1887–1889 and 1925, and parts of it were translated into English and French.¹¹ Tiele’s *Outlines*, originally published in Dutch in 1876, was translated into English (1877; the fifth English edition appeared in 1892), Danish (1884), French (1880), Swedish (1887), and German (1880, 1887). The subsequent editions (1903, 1912, 1920, 1931) were revised and enlarged by Nathan Söderblom. Van der Leeuw’s *Phenomenology* was also published in several European languages. The German-language

⁷ W.B. Kristensen, *Het verband tusschen godsdienst en de zucht tot zelfbehoud* (inaugural address Leiden), Leiden 1901, p. 16 (“different stages of development”); Kristensen, *Inleiding tot de godsdienstgeschiedenis*, Arnhem 1955, p. 23 (religions can only be measured by their own standards).

⁸ Cf. Kristensen, *Het verband*, p. 19.

⁹ I am not sure if this thesis is correct. The actual history of comparative religion seems to be a bit more complicated. The tendency of some scholars of religion to do “just” history and leave aside philosophy and cross-cultural comparison stems from a more recent date.

¹⁰ For bibliographical information, see Waardenburg, *Classical Approaches to the Study of Religion. Aims, Methods and Theories of Research*, 2 vols, Den Haag 1973–1974, vol. II, pp. 137–139, and Kristensen, *The Meaning of Religion. Lectures in the Phenomenology of Religion*, The Hague 1960, pp. 497–500.

¹¹ P.D. Chantepie de la Saussaye, *Manual of the Science of Religion*, London 1891; *Manuel d’histoire des religions*, Paris 1904.

handbooks were largely produced in the Netherlands up till the 1930s.

(c) Finally, Dutch science of religion is famous—or, as others would say, notorious—for its contribution to the phenomenology of religion. Although in more recent times the value of a phenomenological approach has come under attack,¹² it was once an influential force in the field of the study of religion. It all began with Chantepie de la Saussaye's manual on the history of religions. The first edition of 1887 included a phenomenological section, which was located somewhere between history of religion and philosophy of religion, all these disciplines being part of the overarching science of religion. In the English translation, the phenomenological section takes up about 175 pages, covering such topics as "idolatry", "sacred stones, trees, and animals", "the worship of nature", "the worship of men", "magic and divination", "sacred places", "religious times", "sacred persons", "religious communities", "the sacred writings", and "the relation of religion to morality and art". According to Chantepie de la Saussaye, this section is "the first more comprehensive attempt to arrange the principal groups of religious conceptions in such a way that the most important sides and aspects should appear conspicuously from the material itself".¹³ Because it was supposed to be a "border discipline",¹⁴ the section was dropped in later editions of the manual. In the manual we find only scant indications of the venture of the phenomenology of religion, and likewise in other writings there is no information that can help us any further.

Recently, much energy has been spent on the question from where the concept of phenomenology of religion originated.¹⁵ The term

¹² Jacques Waardenburg, himself a proponent of phenomenology of religion, wrote in 1997: "Ein Wissenschaftler, der von sich überzeugt ist und der sich in der akademischen Szene bewähren will, würde es zur Zeit kaum wagen, als Religionsphänomenologe in Erscheinung zu treten"; cf. Waardenburg, "Religionsphänomenologie", in: *TRE*, vol. 28, Berlin–New York 1997, pp. 731–749, p. 731.

¹³ Chantepie de la Saussaye, *Manual*, p. vi (translation slightly corrected).

¹⁴ Chantepie de la Saussaye, *Lehrbuch der Religionsgeschichte*, 2 vols, second edition, Leipzig–Tübingen 1897, vol. II, p. vi.

¹⁵ Baumgartner et al., "Phänomenologie", in: *Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie*, vol. VII, Darmstadt 1989, col. 486–505; G. Lanczkowski, "Religionsphänomenologie", in: *Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie*, vol. VIII, Darmstadt 1992, col. 747; George Alfred James, *Interpreting Religion. The Phenomenological Approaches of Pierre Daniël Chantepie de la Saussaye, W. Brede Kristensen, and Gerardus van der Leeuw*, Washington D.C. 1995, pp. 22–46; Hofstee, *Goden en Mensen*, Kampen 1997, pp. 173–178.

“phenomenology” can, no doubt, be traced back to Hegel (*The Phenomenology of the Spirit*, 1806) and even further back to J.H. Lambert (1728–1777). Lambert was a not too well-known correspondent of Kant, who used the word “phenomenology” in the last section of his *New Organon* (1764) to refer to a theory of optical appearance in relation to the (in)correctness of human knowledge. But does this genealogy yield much insight into the origin of the concept of phenomenology of religion? Why did Chantepie de la Saussaye choose exactly this term? Of course, there had been scholarly overviews of religious phenomena from a comparative perspective for a long time. C. Meiners’ *Critical History of Religions* of 1806 is often mentioned in this respect.¹⁶ However, in these supposed predecessors the term “phenomenology” is not used.

Another relevant issue involves the question which scholars should be considered within the field of the phenomenology of religion. Opinions differ considerably here. Eric J. Sharpe devotes an entire chapter to phenomenology in his book on the history of comparative religion. He discusses a variety of authors, but in the period up to the Second World War the main characters in his story are probably P.D. Chantepie de la Saussaye, Nathan Söderblom, Edvard Lehmann, William Brede Kristensen, Gerardus van der Leeuw, C.J. Bleeker, Joachim Wach, Joseph M. Kitagawa, and Mircea Eliade. Although Sharpe also mentions the British scholars E.O. James and A.C. Bouquet, the predominance of the Dutch and Scandinavians, at least at the beginning, is undeniable. Sharpe is prudent enough not to give a precise definition of phenomenology. Instead, he introduces the subject as follows: “a method was sought which would eliminate . . . value judgements, allow the believer to speak clearly for himself, and in this way to arrive at an objective assessment of the role of religion in human life”.¹⁷ By summarizing some of the main contributions of these scholars, Sharpe retrospectively suggests a more strictly circumscribed approach in the study of religion. I

¹⁶ C. Meiners, *Allgemeine kritische Geschichte der Religionen*, Hannover 1806–1807; cf. Edvard Lehmann, “Religionsgeschichte”, in: Albert Hauck (ed.), *Realencyklopädie für protestantische Theologie und Kirche*, begründet von J.J. Herzog, third edition, vol. 24, Leipzig 1913, pp. 393–411; Lehmann, “Zur Geschichte der Religionsgeschichte”, in: Chantepie de la Saussaye, *Lehrbuch der Religionsgeschichte*, 2 vols, fourth edition, Tübingen 1925, vol. I, pp. 1–22, p. 7; Van der Leeuw, *Phänomenologie der Religion*, Tübingen 1933, p. 654.

¹⁷ Eric J. Sharpe, *Comparative Religion. A History* (1975), London 1986, p. 220.

am not sure if this is the best way to deal with the subject. The reason for my reservation is given by Sharpe himself in his illuminating study on Söderblom. In a chapter entitled “Toward a Phenomenology of Religion”, Sharpe notes that Söderblom does not use the word “phenomenology”. He calls Söderblom “a phenomenologist of religion before the label had even been invented”.¹⁸ The label, of course, had already been invented, but had not yet gained currency.

To circumvent such problems, one may take another approach: the one that seems to be favoured by Jacques Waardenburg. In his overview of a century of phenomenology of religion in the Netherlands, published in 1972, he states: “By phenomenologist we mean here those who considered themselves to be so and who have developed an explicit phenomenology of religion or who have devoted part of their studies to explicitly phenomenological work”.¹⁹ He ends his overview by distinguishing five, to some extent rather different, strands in the field of Dutch phenomenology of religion over this period. The starting point is Chantepie de la Saussaye’s Ph.D. thesis of 1871, which is not, as far as I know, explicitly phenomenological. Waardenburg also includes Tiele in his article, whereas a recent study on the beginnings of Dutch phenomenology of religion limits itself to Chantepie de la Saussaye, Kristensen, and Van der Leeuw.²⁰

In older historiography we encounter still other “phenomenologists of religion”. Eva Hirschmann includes in her thesis on this subject (which she defended just before the outbreak of the Second World War at the Theological Faculty in Groningen under the supervision of Van der Leeuw) Chantepie de la Saussaye, Tiele, Söderblom, Lehmann, Friedrich Pfister, Max Scheler, Georg Wobbermin, Robert Winkler, Joachim Wach, Rudolf Otto, Heinrich Frick, Gustav Mensching, and Van der Leeuw himself. Oddly enough, Van der Leeuw’s own teacher—Kristensen—is missing here. What could be the reason for this? To answer this question we will have to take a closer look at the actual history of the phenomenology of religion in the Netherlands.

¹⁸ Sharpe, *Nathan Söderblom and the Study of Religion*, Chapel Hill–London 1990, p. 167.

¹⁹ Waardenburg, “Religion Between Reality and Idea. A Century of Phenomenology of Religion in the Netherlands”, in: *Numen* 19 (1972) 128–203, p. 128f.

²⁰ Strenski criticises G.A. James for not dealing with Tiele: Ivan Strenski, Review of James, *Interpreting Religion* (1995), in: *Journal of Religion* 77 (1997) 672–673.

2. *Phenomenology of Religion Revisited*

There is a distinct difference between our retrospective view of the phenomenology of religion, and the way the alleged “phenomenologists” saw themselves. To clear the ground, we have to suspend (a typical phenomenological device) our idea of what phenomenology (actually) is about. For a start, we have to conduct our historical research in a nominalist way. It is important to look at the actual usage of the term “phenomenology” in this context. Who advocated a phenomenological programme or method in the study of religion? If we do not ask such precise questions, the danger exists that in its historiography we will only reproduce our own ideas on phenomenology. In the following I cannot give a full-scale analysis (much research still has to be done), but I will dig up some pieces of information and venture some thoughts on the subject.

As we saw above, *Chantepie de la Saussaye* was the first to use the term “phenomenology of religion”, in 1887. He did not intend to introduce some new method, but apparently found it important to provide the readers of his manual with an “outline of religious phenomena”, including phenomena from the Jewish and Christian traditions.²¹ In the works of *Cornelis Petrus Tiele* the term appears rather late.²² Only in the second edition of his Gifford Lectures, which appeared in Dutch in 1900, and in his last book, *Main Features of the Science of Religion*, did he use the word to clarify the outline of his work. Tiele distinguished between the “morphological” and the “ontological” investigation of religion.²³ Morphology treats the development of religion and provides a classification of religions; ontology concerns the essence of religion, the *ousia* as distinguished from the ever-changing *morphai*.²⁴ Ontology is subdivided into “phenomenological-analytical” and “psychological-synthetic” parts,²⁵ which examine

²¹ Chantepie de la Saussaye, *Manual*, p. 8f.

²² Originally, he favoured other terms—“hierography” and “hierology”—to designate the new endeavour; cf. Tiele, *Outlines of the History of Religion to the Spread of the Universal Religions*, London 1877.

²³ Tiele, *Hoofdtrekken der Godsdienstwetenschap*, Amsterdam 1901.

²⁴ Cf. Tiele, *Elements of the Science of Religion*, Part I: Morphological, Part II: Ontological, Edinburgh–London 1897–1899, vol. II, p. 188; Tiele, *Inleiding tot de godsdienstwetenschap*, 2 vols, vol. I, second revised edition, Amsterdam 1900, p. 165 (italics original).

²⁵ Tiele, *Hoofdtrekken*, p. 61. The second Dutch edition of the Gifford Lectures

the “manifestations” and the “constituents” of religion, respectively.²⁶ The phenomenological research deals with religious concepts, deeds, and institutions; it aims at a description and analysis of their essential elements.²⁷ Here Tiele discussed, to some extent, the same phenomena (worship and sacrifice, for instance) as Chantepie de la Saussaye. But Tiele’s coverage was much less extensive, because he was interested in the unchanging core of religion as such and not in “transient” developments such as fetishism, which are discussed in the morphological part. Tiele’s phenomenological research was not so much a grouping of religious phenomena as a critical evaluation of what in his view, on the highest level of development, were the essential manifestations of religion.

In his inaugural lecture, “The Relationship between Religion and the Urge for Self-Preservation” of 1901, *William Brede Kristensen* addressed the subject that would be of great importance to his scholarly and personal life: the theme of life and death in connection with religion.²⁸ On this occasion, in the presence of Tiele, Kristensen tried to follow in the footsteps of his honoured teacher and to show how, in his own view, the philosophy of religion and the history of religion may be related to each other. This connection was not obvious to Kristensen, and therefore he looked for a way to link the two approaches. Since the main objective of the philosophy of religion is to determine the essence of religion, the two disciplines come closest to each other, according to Kristensen, when the historian investigates how believers themselves perceive the essence of their religion. Taking up Tiele’s terminology, Kristensen assured his audience that such an investigation is of a “completely phenomenological-analytical” nature. While philosophy has to take good notice of the results obtained by phenomenology, Kristensen allowed for the possibility

complicates matters by introducing the asymmetrical contrast between “phenomenological-analytical” and “synthetic-psychological” (Tiele, *Inleiding tot de godsdienstwetenschap* (1900), vol. II, p. 2).

²⁶ Tiele, *Elements of the Science of Religion*, vol. II, p. 6f.

²⁷ These phenomena express the underlying “constituents”, which are treated in the psychological-synthetic part. For a more detailed analysis of Tiele’s views on this subject, see chapter V.

²⁸ Kristensen, *Het verband tusschen godsdienst en de zucht tot zelfbehoud*. His thesis is that religious people opt for life and believe in the ultimate victory of life over death; cf. Jan N. Bremmer, “W. Brede Kristensen and the Religions of Greece”, in: Hjelde, *Man, Meaning & Mystery*, pp. 115–130.

that, philosophically speaking, religious persons did not always understand their own religious feelings correctly. It could hardly have escaped the attention of his audience, however, that he considered the faith of believers most precious and something to be taken very seriously. In a critique of “evaluative comparison” and evolutionism as such, aimed at Tiele some 15 years after his inaugural lecture, Kristensen was still more explicit in this respect. He wrote that we have to become “Persians in order to understand Persian religion, Babylonians to understand Babylonian religion, and so forth”.²⁹ Here Kristensen already voiced the hermeneutics of sympathetic love toward the object of understanding, for which he would later become famous.³⁰ The phenomenological principles he formulated later in his career are well-known and need not be summarized here.³¹

But was Kristensen a phenomenologist from the start? His more programmatic statements in this regard date from a rather late period. The main sources for his position are the *Introduction to the History of Religions*, based on his Oslo lectures of 1946, and, of course, the work that made him known in the English-speaking world, *The Meaning of Religion*, published posthumously in 1960.³² Although Kristensen gave lectures on phenomenology before 1940, I have not been able to

²⁹ Kristensen, “Over waardeering van historische gegevens”, in: *Onze Eeuw* 15/3 (1915) 415–440, reprinted in: Kristensen, *Symbol en werkelijkheid: een bundel godsdienst-historische studien*, Arnhem 1954, pp. 66–84, p. 77. Translations are my own, unless otherwise indicated.

³⁰ Cf. Kristensen, *Inleiding tot de godsdienstgeschiedenis*, p. 22: “If we want to learn to know them [historical religions] as the believers conceived and judged them, we must first attempt to understand their own evaluation of their own religion. . . . Let us not forget that there exists no other religious reality than the faith of the believers. If we want to learn to know genuine religion, we are exclusively assigned to the expressions of the believers. What we think from our standpoint about the essence or value of foreign religions bears witness to our own faith, or to our own conception of religious belief, but if our opinion deviates . . . from the opinion and the evaluation of the believer himself, we are no longer dealing with their religion. In that case we overlook historical reality, and are exclusively concerned with ourselves”. My translation is based on that of Richard J. Plantinga, “Romanticism and the History of Religion. The Case of W.B. Kristensen”, in: Hans G. Kippenberg & Brigitte Luchesi (eds), *Religionswissenschaft und Kulturkritik. Beiträge zur Konferenz “The History of Religions and the Critique of Culture in the Days of Gerardus van der Leeuw (1890–1950)”*, Marburg 1991, pp. 157–176, p. 170.

³¹ Cf. Waardenburg, “Religion Between Reality and Idea”; Waardenburg, *Reflections on the Study of Religion*; Richard J. Plantinga, “W.B. Kristensen and the Study of Religion”, in: *Numen* 36 (1989) 173–188; G.A. James, *Interpreting Religion*.

³² Kristensen, *Inleiding tot de godsdienstgeschiedenis*; *The Meaning of Religion. Lectures in the Phenomenology of Religion*, The Hague 1960.

find any actual publications of his in which “phenomenology” in whatever form was advocated. This could be because he preferred the actual work in the history of religions to the exposition of methodological issues. Yet, it is characteristic that the only text in which the issue received some attention was a review of the inaugural lecture of his student Gerardus van der Leeuw, who obtained the Groningen chair in the history of religions in 1918. Kristensen stresses the importance of religious difference, and criticizes Van der Leeuw for his subjectivism and his belief that the phenomenology of religion should define the essence of religion. In this text there is no evidence that Kristensen claimed the term “phenomenology” for his own approach. It is not necessary to dig any deeper here into the differences between their views on phenomenology that emerged in their later work.³³ From his publications one gains the impression that Kristensen defined himself as a phenomenologist of religion in a later phase of his career.

Early historiographers do not mention Kristensen as a phenomenologist. One could try to account for this omission by pointing to Van der Leeuw’s influence on this early historiography, and by suggesting that Van der Leeuw was not willing to accept a competitor with a substantially different view of the approach that he had made popular. But I am not sure that this suggestion is very helpful, because in other respects Van der Leeuw gave Kristensen the credit he deserved, and also did much to construe a respectable line of intellectual descent for the phenomenological study of religion.³⁴ If Kristensen had really developed a full-blown phenomenology of religion of his own at the time, I find it hard to believe that Van der

³³ Cf. Hofstee, *Goden en mensen*, p. 170f. (who cites Kristensen’s letter of 20 November 1933 in which he thanks Van der Leeuw for sending him the *Phänomenologie der Religion*). Also quoted in English translation in Willem Hofstee, “Phenomenology of Religion Versus Anthropology of Religion? The ‘Groningen School’ 1920–1930”, in: Hjelde, *Man, Meaning & Mystery*, pp. 173–190, p. 173f.

³⁴ Van der Leeuw, *Plaats en taak van de godsdienstgeschiedenis in de theologische wetenschap* (inaugural address Groningen), Groningen–Den Haag 1918, p. 4; Van der Leeuw, “Confession Scientifique” (1946), in: *Numen* 1 (1954) 8–15, p. 9. Speaking about phenomenology proper, Van der Leeuw only mentions Chantepié de la Saussaye and E. Lehmann; cf. p. 10: “I realized that in carrying on the magnificent, but essentially unphilosophical, work of Chantepié and Lehmann, I was in the centre of the great phenomenological stream which was at that time flowing through philosophy, psychiatry and other sciences” (translation in Sharpe, *Comparative Religion*, p. 231).

Leeuw would have neglected this contribution so ostentatiously. Van der Leeuw did refer to Kristensen several times to illustrate the importance of a psychological approach for the study of religion, which, although related to phenomenology, is yet to be distinguished from it.³⁵

Another important witness is *C.J. Bleeker*, who in 1934 published his *Introduction to the Phenomenology of Religion* in Dutch, which aimed at a classification of religious phenomena that would show their inner structure and deeper reality.³⁶ Bleeker stated that his approach owed most to his teacher Kristensen, and did not pay much attention to Van der Leeuw. On another occasion, however, Bleeker wrote that Kristensen hardly cared for methodological questions,³⁷ and in later historiographical overviews he stressed the importance of Van der Leeuw and hardly mentioned Kristensen.³⁸ This can perhaps be explained by the fact that Kristensen did not do much, at least not in public, to develop and proclaim a new method of inquiry.

Nonetheless, Kristensen was probably the first Dutch scholar of religion who officially taught “phenomenology of religion”. By Royal Act of Queen Wilhelmina³⁹ of 23 September 1922, his teaching

³⁵ Van der Leeuw, *Plaats en taak van de godsdienstgeschiedenis*, p. 7, refers to Kristensen, “Dualistische en monistische denkbeelden in den egyptischen godsdienst”, in: *Theologisch Tijdschrift* 38 (1904) 233–255, p. 237, where the term phenomenology is not used; “Confession Scientifique”, p. 9: “L’enseignement de Kristensen était d’allure plutôt psychologique et faisait ressortir les traits qui se retrouvent partout et de tous temps plus que le développement historique. Cette préférence m’a influencé beaucoup . . .”. The relationship between phenomenology and psychology of religion seems to me to be a very important topic for further research. This relationship has not been cleared up as yet.

³⁶ C.J. Bleeker, *Inleiding tot een phaenomenologie van den godsdienst*, Assen 1934, pp. 9–11.

³⁷ Bleeker, “De huidige stand van het phaenomenologisch onderzoek”, in: *Vox Theologica* 13/2 (1941) 33–38, p. 37f.

³⁸ Bleeker, *De structuur van de godsdienst. Hooflijnen ener fenomenologie van de godsdienst*, Den Haag 1956; “The Phenomenological Method”, in: *Numen* 6 (1959) 96–111; reprinted in: Bleeker, *The Sacred Bridge. Researches into the Nature and Structure of Religion*, Leiden 1963, pp. 1–15; cf. Geo Widengren, “Professor C.J. Bleeker. A Personal Appreciation”, in: Bleeker, *Liber Amicorum. Studies in Honour of Professor Dr. C.J. Bleeker*, Leiden 1969, pp. 5–7, p. 5f.: “When I first met Bleeker—more than twenty years ago—it was obvious that the influence of G. van der Leeuw had outweighed the influence of his own teacher in Leyden, W. Brede Kristensen. He was more attracted by the phenomenological study of religion in general than by the historical investigation of some special religion”. On Bleeker’s views, see Waardenburg, “Religion Between Reality and Idea”, pp. 183–190.

³⁹ Kristensen was one of her teachers when she studied in Leiden.

assignment was redefined as “the history of religions in general and the phenomenology of religion”; the “philosophy of religion” was transferred to his colleague Karel Hendrik Roessingh (1886–1925). This change suggests that Kristensen promulgated phenomenology in his courses much earlier than appears from his publications. One would expect that Kristensen’s lecture notes, which are kept in the Leiden University Library,⁴⁰ would be of great help. Several courses are in fact entitled “phenomenology” (1904, 1908–1926, 1907–1927). But when exactly did Kristensen start calling his approach “phenomenological”? There are reasons to suppose that these titles were written on the outside cover of the lectures at a later date,⁴¹ and, furthermore, there are many corrections in the manuscripts (which have been written on loose-leaf paper) suggesting that this terminology was introduced at a later date. However, the collection contains a lecture from the year 1926, in which phenomenology is defined as the comparison of separate elements of various religions. In what probably are earlier lecture notes, Kristensen several times refers to the work of Georg Wobbermin⁴² and specifies the phenomenological approach as an attempt to do justice to the self-understanding of believers. The “inner power” of religious phenomena, Kristensen claims, has to be brought to the fore. Phenomenology is focused on typical phenomena, which it tries to understand in their religious determination. This sounds familiar to the student of Kristensen’s work, although these early lecture notes also display a clear interest in more philosophical issues. Only a meticulous analysis of the

⁴⁰ Under the signature BPL 2587. I would like to thank Sigurd Hjelde (Oslo) for sending me the bibliography of Margo Koene’s thesis, “William Brede Kristensen. Norges Første Religionshistoriker” (Host 1995), which includes an inventory of the Kristensen manuscripts in the Leiden University Library; cf. Hjelde, *Man, Meaning & Mystery*, pp. 287–293.

⁴¹ On the cover, “phenomenology” is spelled as a Dutch word, “phenomenologie”, whereas the text has “phaenomenologie”.

⁴² G. Wobbermin, *Die religionspsychologische Methode in Religionswissenschaft und Theologie*, Leipzig 1913. Wobbermin advocated the importance of a psychological approach for theology, an approach he equated to phenomenology; cf. Wobbermin, “Religionspsychologie”, in: *Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, second edition, vol. IV, Tübingen 1930, col. 1921–1927, col. 1922. Both Wobbermin and Kristensen admired Schleiermacher for his (in their view) decisive contribution to a renewal of the study of religion; cf. Kristensen, “Schleiermachers opvatting van de godsdienstgeschiedenis”, in: *Vox theologica* 5/4 (1934) 97–101 (March), reprinted in: Kristensen, *Symbol en Werkelijkheid*, pp. 24–30.

manuscripts might reveal the exact time at which Kristensen introduced the term “phenomenology” to describe his way of doing things. Kristensen’s teachings form an important undercurrent in the genesis of Dutch phenomenology of religion. His pupil Gerardus van der Leeuw, however, was the first one to work out a special method of phenomenology of religion.

Probably the best thing to do, therefore, is to start writing the history of the phenomenology of religion with Gerardus van der Leeuw, who really put it on the map. The fact that the older historiography of comparative religion does not touch upon the “phenomenology of religion” supports this approach.⁴³ The first more or less *historiographical* article on this subject that I have been able to uncover is Van der Leeuw’s contribution “Phenomenology of Religion” to the second edition of the encyclopaedia *Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart* of 1930.⁴⁴ The objective of the phenomenology of religion, Van der Leeuw wrote, is to classify religious phenomena such as sacrifice, mysticism, and prayer (non-cultic phenomena are explicitly included), and to understand their meaning and essence. Contributions aiming at a survey of religious phenomena as such come from Chantepie de la Saussaye, Lehmann, and Van der Leeuw himself.⁴⁵ Although Van der Leeuw admitted that this might seem a somewhat

⁴³ Cf. E. Hardy, “Zur Geschichte der vergleichenden Religionsforschung” (I–VI), in: *Archiv für Religionswissenschaft* 4 (1901) 45–66, 97–135, 193–228; L.H. Jordan, *Comparative Religion. Its Genesis and Growth*, Edinburgh 1905; Jordan, *Comparative Religion. Its Adjuncts and Allies*, London etc. 1915; H. Pinard de la Boullaye, *L’Étude comparée des Religions*, third edition, 3 vols, Paris 1929–1931.

⁴⁴ Van der Leeuw, “Phänomenologie der Religion”, in: *Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, second edition, vol. IV, Tübingen 1930, col. 1171–1172. The encyclopaedia was published in instalments; the instalments of volume IV, of which this entry is one, all appeared in 1930. On the history of the publication of RGG², see Alf Özen, “‘Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart’ als Beispiel für die Hochzeit und Niedergang der ‘Religionsgeschichtlichen Schule’”, 2 parts, in: Gerd Lüdemann (ed.), *Die ‘Religionsgeschichtliche Schule’. Facetten eines theologischen Umbruchs* (Studien und Texte zur Religionsgeschichtlichen Schule, vol. I), Frankfurt a.M. etc. 1996, pp. 149–206, 243–298. Van der Leeuw contributed 51 articles, mainly in the field of the study of religion, to this influential reference book.

⁴⁵ Van der Leeuw, “Phänomenologie der Religion” (1930) refers to the following contributions: P.D. Chantepie de la Saussaye, *Lehrbuch der Religionsgeschichte*, 2 vols, Freiburg i.B. 1887–1889; Edvard Lehmann, “Erscheinungswelt der Religion (Phänomenologie der Religion)”, in: *Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart* [first edition], vol. II, Tübingen 1910, col. 497–578; Lehmann, “Erscheinungs- und Ideenwelt der Religion”, in: P.D. Chantepie de la Saussaye (ed.), *Lehrbuch der Religionsgeschichte*, fourth edition, 2 vols, Tübingen 1925, vol. I, pp. 23–130; Van der Leeuw, *Einführung in die Phänomenologie der Religion*, München 1925.

meagre result, he was quick to point to some of the older introductions to the history of religion (Tiele, F.B. Jevons, Albert Réville), which, he alleged, also covered the field. Besides, one should not forget Wilhelm Wundt's *Völkerpsychologie* and special studies such as Söderblom's *Werden des Gottesglaubens*, Friedrich Heiler's *Das Gebet*, and Rudolf Otto's *Das Heilige*. Van der Leeuw concluded his two-column entry by stating that a general phenomenology on a firm methodological basis still had to be written. We now know that he was on his way to fill this lacuna. The "Great Phaeno" was to appear in 1933.

At the time when Van der Leeuw wrote this encyclopaedia article, it was hard to detect any phenomenological method in the study of religion. After the initial achievement by Chantepie de la Saussaye, only *Edvard Lehmann* had given a classificatory overview of religious phenomena. He contributed the substantial article "Erscheinungswelt der Religion" to the first edition of *Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart* (1909–1913), which ran over 84 columns and was the main systematic contribution to the field of the science of religion in this handbook. The phenomena were arranged under the headings "holy customs", "holy words", and "holy people", with further subdivisions. Interestingly enough, this article was subtitled "phenomenology of religion", but the term was not explained or used in the contribution itself. Yet we do know that there was a lot of discussion about how the section on the history of religions of this encyclopaedia was to be shaped. The encyclopaedia was, to a large extent, the product of representatives of the German "History of Religions School",⁴⁶ who were mainly concerned with the Old and New Testament and its *Umwelt*. Some of them thought they could deal with the remaining fields of the history of religions in passing. Ernst Troeltsch (1865–1923), who was responsible for the articles on dogmatical theology, feared that in this way no justice was done to non-Christian religions and suggested naming the encyclopedia "*Our Religion in Past and Present*".⁴⁷

To return to the main line of the story: Lehmann was on the original list of suggested contributors,⁴⁸ and in the end it was he who wrote the article mentioned above. This still leaves the occurrence

⁴⁶ Gerd Lüdemann & Alf Özen, "Religionsgeschichtliche Schule", in: *TRE*, vol. 28, Berlin–New York 1997, pp. 618–624.

⁴⁷ Özen, "Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart", p. 165 (italics original).

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 157.

of the term “phenomenology of religion” unexplained. Was the term introduced in this context because the outline of the article was reminiscent of the work of Chantepie de la Saussaye? Or were there other factors at work? Further research into the relationship between Chantepie de la Saussaye and Lehmann may shed some light on the subject. However, it is not certain whether the usage of “phenomenology of religion” in the first edition of *Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart* is to be explained by a Dutch connection. The role of various Scandinavian scholars in the development of the phenomenology of religion needs to be examined in more detail.⁴⁹

In my view, it was *Van der Leeuw* who developed phenomenology into a characteristic, much discussed approach within the study of religions. But even he was a little hesitant about which name to choose for the new approach. Van der Leeuw referred to other names such as “allgemeine Religionsgeschichte” (H. Hackmann) and “Formenlehre der religiösen Vorstellungen” (H. Usener) that circulated at the time,⁵⁰ and he warned for the confusion that could arise from the proliferation of phenomenological methods in areas such as philosophy (Edmund Husserl) and psychiatry (Karl Jaspers). Friedrich Heiler, the editor of the series in which the German translation of Van der Leeuw’s *Introduction to the History of Religion* appeared in 1925 under the title *Introduction to the Phenomenology of Religion*, assured the readers in his preface to this booklet that “phenomenology” was not meant in the sense in which it was used by Husserl or Max Scheler.⁵¹ Van der Leeuw, in developing his own method of research,

⁴⁹ As far as I know, the article in RGG¹ is the first time we find the term in Lehmann’s work; cf. Sharpe, *Comparative Religion*, p. 226f.; Sharpe, *Nathan Söderblom and the Study of Religion*, Chapel Hill–London 1990, p. 151. It is not clear how much the term “phenomenology” meant to Lehmann. He wrote a new, extended version of his article for the fourth edition of Chantepie de la Saussaye’s manual without using the word; cf. Lehmann, “Erscheinungs- und Ideenwelt der Religion” (1925).

⁵⁰ Cf. Van der Leeuw, *Phänomenologie der Religion*, Tübingen 1933, p. 638, note 1; translated as: *Religion in Essence and Manifestation. A Study in Phenomenology*, London 1938, p. 674, note 1.

⁵¹ Van der Leeuw, *Einführung in die Phänomenologie der Religion*, preface [by Heiler]: “Zum rechten Verständnis des Titels sei beigefügt, daß der Verfasser dieses Buches das Wort ‘Phänomenologie’ nicht im Sinne der Philosophie von Husserl und Scheler gebraucht, sondern im Sinn der vergleichenden Religionshistoriker wie Tiele, Chantepie de la Saussaye, Edvard Lehmann, die darunter die systematische Darstellung der religiösen Einzelphänomene wie des Gebets, des Opfers, der Zauberei, Askese usw. verstehen”.

always maintained some distance from other sorts of phenomenology, although he often referred to them. These references also served to lend respectability to his own enterprise.

I will devote a few remarks to the origin of the concept in Van der Leeuw's work. The first important text in this respect is his inaugural lecture of 25 September 1918. On this occasion Van der Leeuw referred to Nathan Söderblom's booklet *Natural Theology and General History of Religion*,⁵² which had made a plea for the rehabilitation of the old *theologia naturalis*, reshaped as general history of religion. Van der Leeuw stated that he preferred to call this endeavour "phenomenology of religion" without specifying why. He made clear, however, what he had in mind. The phenomenology of religion aims to understand the phenomenon of religion as such, to penetrate "to the psychological bottom [ground]" of religion.⁵³ Van der Leeuw did not favour the term "history of religions", but preferred to speak of "history of religion". According to him, the religious phenomenon is a unity, originating in "the same function of our spirit".⁵⁴ This point of view, of course, was also shared by older scholars such as Tiele and Chantepie de la Saussaye.⁵⁵ Van der Leeuw did not present a full phenomenological method in this lecture, but provided all kinds of clues as to how one should proceed. The approach has a psychological character, considers religion an independent phenomenon, is not limited to foreign religions, but does include Judaism and Christianity, and tries to understand the phenomena in their own terms in order to arrive at the essence of religion. Some kind of intuition is needed to reach this goal, and scholars have to be religious themselves to be able to trace the similarities in other religions. The fact that religion has to be understood "by itself" does not exclude comparison because of the presupposed basic unity of religion.⁵⁶ The

⁵² N. Söderblom, *Natürliche Theologie und Allgemeine Religionsgeschichte*, Stockholm–Leipzig 1913.

⁵³ Van der Leeuw, *Plaats en taak van de godsdienstgeschiedenis*, p. 7 (referring to Kristensen, "Dualistische en monistische denkbeelden in den egyptischen godsdienst", p. 237).

⁵⁴ Van der Leeuw, *Plaats en taak van de godsdienstgeschiedenis*, p. 6.

⁵⁵ Tiele–Söderblom, *Kompendium der Religionsgeschichte*, vierte Auflage, Berlin 1912, p. 7f.; Chantepie de la Saussaye, *Manual*, p. 9.

⁵⁶ One of Van der Leeuw's favourite quotes is the statement by the classicist scholar Hermann Usener: "Nur durch hingebendes Versenken in diese Geistesspuren . . . vermögen wir uns zum Nachempfinden zu erziehen; dann können allmählich verwandte Saiten in uns mit schwingen und klingen, und wir entdecken im

Romantic strand in this hermeneutics of congenial understanding is unmistakable. Ultimately, Van der Leeuw's phenomenological study of religion is subservient to theology proper, which has its starting point in the revelation in Christ.⁵⁷

Van der Leeuw's most extensive statement on the principles of the phenomenology of religion is to be found in the last section of his *Phenomenology of Religion*.⁵⁸ These so-called "Epilogenena" are a rather complex whole. Van der Leeuw distinguishes several stages in the phenomenological process (for instance, naming the phenomenon, [re-]experiencing and understanding [the meaning of] the phenomenon, and giving testimony of that which is shown), and refers to a wealth of (methodological) literature.⁵⁹ Obviously, he wanted to show that phenomenology was a main trend in the intellectual life of the time, but this aspect makes it difficult to discern who was really important to him. Besides the sources of inspiration mentioned above (Chantepie de la Saussaye, Lehmann, Söderblom), it seems clear that from a methodological point of view a hermeneutical orientation was prevalent in Van der Leeuw's attempt to establish a "phenomenological" approach. His account of phenomenon and experience (*Erleb-*

eigenen Bewußtsein die Fäden, die Altes und Neues verbinden"; Van der Leeuw, *Plaats en taak van de godsdienstgeschiedenis*, p. 14; *Phänomenologie der Religion*, p. 639; *Religion in Essence and Manifestation*, p. 675; cf. H. Usener, *Götternamen. Versuch einer Lehre von der religiösen Begriffsbildung*, Bonn 1896, p. vii.

⁵⁷ Van der Leeuw, *Plaats en taak van de godsdienstgeschiedenis*, p. 21f. Cf. J. Waardenburg, *Reflections on the Study of Religion. Including an Essay on the Work of Gerardus van der Leeuw*, The Hague etc. 1978, pp. 187–247. His friend K.H. Roessingh considered Van der Leeuw, because of his Christian theory of knowledge, to be the exact counterpart of Kristensen; cf. Hofstee, *Goden en Mensen*, p. 38f. (who quotes from a highly interesting letter Roessingh wrote to Van der Leeuw, June 17, 1919). As far as his point of departure is concerned, Van der Leeuw seems more strongly influenced by the "ethical theology" with which he became familiar through his teacher P.D. Chantepie de la Saussaye (cf. the many references to the work of Gunning Jr.) than by Kristensen's approach, who stressed differences between religions and who highly valued objective knowledge, minimising the role of subjectivity in the process of knowing.

⁵⁸ The *Phänomenologie der Religion* was originally published in 1933; the English translation appeared in 1938 under the title *Religion in Essence and Manifestation*. A revised and enlarged edition appeared first in French and later, in 1956, in German.

⁵⁹ Waardenburg, *Reflections*, pp. 230ff. and Hofstee, *Goden en Mensen*, pp. 178–181, give summaries of the stages in the phenomenological process; cf. H.G. Hubbeling, *Divine Presence in Ordinary Life. Gerardus van der Leeuw's Twofold Method in his Thinking on Art and Religion* (Mededelingen der Koninklijke Nederlandse Akademie van Wetenschappen, Afd. Letterkunde, New Series, Part 49, Nr. 1), Amsterdam etc. 1986.

nis) draws on the work of Wilhelm Dilthey (1833–1911) and Eduard Spranger (1882–1963). The book ends with the observation that a hermeneutical history of religion, of which Van der Leeuw considers his own work to be part, is gaining more and more ground.⁶⁰

The importance of Husserl in this regard is much debated. I am inclined to side with those who say that he was, at most, of indirect importance to Van der Leeuw. Husserl is mentioned only once in the “Epilegomena”, in a quotation from Max Scheler.⁶¹ And Husserl’s wish to “bracket” or put aside the phenomena, aiming at an “objective” vision (*Schau*), seems to differ considerably from Van der Leeuw’s methodology, which stresses the “inner connection” between subject and object and the necessity to relate the phenomenon to one’s own life experience.⁶² The whole personality of the scholar is

⁶⁰ Van der Leeuw, *Phänomenologie der Religion*, p. 658: “Religionsgeschichte des Verstehens”; *Religion*, p. 694. For more extensive discussions of the later work of Van der Leeuw, see Waardenburg, “Religion Between Reality and Idea”; Sharpe, *Comparative Religion*, pp. 229–235; Plantinga, “W.B. Kristensen and the Study of Religion”; Plantinga, “Romanticism and the History of Religion”; G.A. James, *Interpreting Religion*; Hofstee, *Goden en Mensen*; Kippenberg & Luchesi, *Religionskritik und Kulturkritik*.

⁶¹ Van der Leeuw, *Phänomenologie der Religion*, p. 640, *Religion*, p. 676.

⁶² Van der Leeuw, *Phänomenologie der Religion*, p. 638, *Religion*, p. 674: “Einschaltung des Phänomens in das eigene Leben”—“The interpolation of the phenomenon into our own lives” (italics original). Cf. Fokke Sierksma, *Freud, Jung en religie*, Assen 1951, p. 16; Waardenburg, “Religion Between Reality and Idea”, pp. 161ff.; Hofstee, *Goden en Mensen*, p. 182. For Van der Leeuw’s concept of “epochè”, see Van der Leeuw, *Phänomenologie der Religion*, pp. 640, 647f., 652, *Religion*, pp. 675f., 684, 688. One of the most revealing descriptions of *epochè* can be found in Van der Leeuw, *Inleiding tot de theologie*, Amsterdam 1935, p. 68f. There he writes that in its negative sense, this methodological rule is nothing else than a mental reservation (*Einklammerung*); it means that reality as such cannot be understood: from the perspective of the phenomenologist all understanding is the building of bridges. However, *epochè* also has a positive sense: it designates a specific human action of attaching meaning (sense) to brute factuality. Moreover, he quotes the same words from Scheler’s *Die Stellung des Menschen im Kosmos* (1928, p. 62f. [Berlin–München 1983, p. 52f.]) he also partly quoted in his Phenomenology (*Phänomenologie der Religion*, p. 640, *Religion*, p. 676): “Das Tier lebt ganz im Konkreten und in der Wirklichkeit. Mit aller Wirklichkeit ist nun jenachdem eine Stelle im Raum und eine Stelle in der Zeit, ein Jetzt und Hier, und zweitens ein zufälliges Sosein verbunden, wie es die sinnliche Wahrnehmung je von einem ‘Aspekt’ aus gibt. Mensch sein heisst, *dieser* Art Wirklichkeit ein kräftiges ‘Nein’ entgegenschleudern . . . Das hat Plato gewusst, wenn er die Ideenschau an eine Abwendung der Seele von dem sinnlichen Gehalt der Dinge knüpft und an eine Einkehr der Seele in sich selbst, um [hier] die ‘Ursprünge’ der Dinge zu finden. Und nichts anderes meint auch E. Husserl, wenn er die Ideenerkenntnis an eine ‘phänomenologische Reduktion’, d.h. eine ‘Durchstreichung’ oder ‘Einklammerung’ des (zufälligen) Daseinskoeffizienten der Welt Dinge knüpft, um ihre ‘essentia’ zu gewinnen”. In the second edition of the Phenomenology, an

involved, who has to bring in his own (Christian) religious presumptions and experiences in order to be able to understand other religious phenomena.⁶³ The original experience cannot be re-experienced by the phenomenologist, because of the great gap between ourselves and the other. The only thing we can do is *reconstruct* the *meaning* of the phenomena. In this way, “‘reality’ is always *my* reality, history *my* history”.⁶⁴ But no arbitrariness is implied, because in the act of understanding *my* meaning and *their* meaning (the believers’ meaning) are ultimately one.⁶⁵ The fact that something is revealed to me means that subjectivity and objectivity are somehow united with each other. In the end understanding is being understood, Van der Leeuw claims, and this fits in perfectly well with his Christian theory of knowledge, which says that love (understanding) is being loved (understood) by God.⁶⁶ Because the formulations vary throughout Van der Leeuw’s work, it is difficult to summarize his relationship to Husserl

illuminating footnote (Van der Leeuw, *Phänomenologie der Religion*, 1956, p. 774, note 1) has been added: “Doch konnte letzterer [= Husserl] Dilthey nicht verstehen, weil er seine eigene Entdeckung auf eine rationalistische Weise interpretiert”.

⁶³ Van der Leeuw, *Plaats en taak van de godsdienstgeschiedenis*, p. 14; Van der Leeuw, *Phänomenologie der Religion*, p. 613 (“unsere Schau der religiösen Erscheinungen [beginnen wir] bewußt vom Christentum aus”); cf. the translation in Van der Leeuw, *Religion*, p. 645f.: “If . . . I . . . deliberately begin our survey of religious phenomena from the Christian viewpoint, I certainly by no means advocate any dogmatic treatment which, in all religions except Christianity itself, can perceive only spurious religion and degeneration. Rather do I retain the typical phenomenological intellectual suspense (*epoché*), while at the same time I bear in mind that this is possible only in the light of one’s own experience, and that this can never be freed from its own religious determinateness. It would therefore be quite possible, in itself, for a buddhist to set out the phenomenology of religion, with his own as the starting point; and then he would naturally discover the culmination of religion in Buddhism. Whether he would be ‘right’ in so doing is, however, not a matter for phenomenology itself to decide, but for theology or metaphysics”.

⁶⁴ Van der Leeuw, *Phänomenologie der Religion*, p. 638 (italics original), *Religion*, p. 674.

⁶⁵ Van der Leeuw, *Phänomenologie der Religion*, p. 636: “Das Reich des Sinnes ist ein drittes Reich, das über der bloßen Subjektivität, wie über der bloßen Objektivität liegt [. . .]. Die Zugangspforte zur an sich unnahbaren Wirklichkeit des Urerlebnisses ist der *Sinn*, **mein** Sinn und **ihr** Sinn im Akt des Verstehens unwiderrufflich zu Eins geworden” (various emphases in the original); *Religion*, p. 673: “Thus the sphere of meaning is a third realm, subsisting above mere subjectivity and more objectivity. The entrance gate to the reality of primal experience, itself wholly inaccessible, is *meaning: my* meaning and *its* meaning, which have become irrevocably one in the act of comprehension”.

⁶⁶ Van der Leeuw, *Phänomenologie der Religion*, p. 648, *Religion*, 684; cf. Van der Leeuw, “Strukturpsychologie und Theologie”, in: *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche*, N.F., 9 (1928) 321–349, p. 335f.

or his methodology as such. This is made even more complex by the fact that Van der Leeuw made use of the work of authors who were influenced by Husserl and Martin Heidegger, such as Karl Jaspers and Ludwig Binswanger.

This brings me to another point: the influence on Van der Leeuw of (hermeneutical) approaches developed in psychology and psychiatry. It is striking how many times Van der Leeuw refers to Karl Jaspers (1883–1969) and other authors who worked in the field of psycho-pathology. Jaspers' distinction between causal and intelligible relationships was taken up by Van der Leeuw⁶⁷ to outline his own new "method" of *Einfühlung* (empathy). The first time he backs up this new approach—in his *Introduction to the Phenomenology of Religion*—he refers to Jaspers' *Allgemeine Psychopathologie* (1913, ³1923) and Ludwig Binswanger's *Einführung in die Probleme der Allgemeinen Psychologie* (1922), and quotes a text from "the Dutch psychopathologist L. Bouman".⁶⁸ Curious reading matter for a Dutch theologian in the first quarter of the twentieth century! I can only think of one explanation:⁶⁹ Bouman was one of the teachers of H.C. Rümke, later a famous Dutch psychiatrist, who wrote his doctorate thesis on phenomenological psychiatry in 1923,⁷⁰ and an intimate friend of Van der Leeuw.⁷¹ It is highly probable that Van der Leeuw got to know these authors through his friend Rümke.

⁶⁷ Van der Leeuw, *Einführung in die Phänomenologie der Religion*, München 1925, p. 7; Van der Leeuw, *Phänomenologie der Religion*, p. 637, *Religion*, p. 673.

⁶⁸ Van der Leeuw, *Einführung in die Phänomenologie der Religion*, p. 8. It is not specified from which text the quotation is taken.

⁶⁹ This line of explanation is backed up by Hofstee, *Goden en Mensen*, p. 52; cf. Jürgen Kehnscherper, *Theologisch-philosophische Aspekte der religionsphänomenologischen Methode des Gerardus van der Leeuw*, Frankfurt a.M. etc. 1998.

⁷⁰ Rümke explicitly took Jaspers' point of view and claimed that Bouman introduced it in Dutch psychiatry; H.C. Rümke, *Phaenomenologische en klinisch-psychiatrische studie over geluksgevoel* (Ph.D. Thesis Utrecht), Leiden 1923, p. 27. On Bouman, see Rümke, "L. Bouman", in: id., *Studies en voordrachten over psychiatrie*, second, enlarged edition, Amsterdam 1948, pp. 333–346, and J.A. van Belzen, "Leendert Bouman en de gereformeerde psychiatrie" (1988), in: id., *Portretten en landschappen. Tekeningen uit de geschiedenis van de Nederlandse psychiatrie*, Baarn 1994, pp. 50–69.

⁷¹ Hofstee, *Goden en Mensen*; J.A. van Belzen, Rümke, *religie en godsdienstpsychologie*, Kampen 1991. Van der Leeuw and Rümke probably already became acquainted during their schooldays at the municipal "gymnasium" in The Hague; cf. Rümke, "Ter Herinnering" [in memoriam G. van der Leeuw], in: *De Nieuwe Stem* 6 (1951) 88–96. To the best of my knowledge, Van der Leeuw never referred to the writings of Rümke in the context of phenomenology of religion.

This connection also explains why Van der Leeuw had few hesitations to stress the psychological nature of the phenomenological approach. It is “an attempt to re-experience a certain unity as such, to transpose oneself into an object as an organic whole”.⁷² On one occasion, he almost equates the two labels: “Instead of speaking of science of religion and of phenomenological theology, one could also speak of psychology of religion, if only it could be certain that this psychology of religion has nothing to do, and can have nothing to do, with what is presented to us as psychology of religion from America and elsewhere. In other words, our concern is with psychology of structure in Dilthey’s sense”.⁷³ But because of the need to distinguish the new approach from this kind of psychology, Van der Leeuw prefers the term “phenomenology of religion”. In his “scientific confession”—a posthumously published lecture on the occasion of receiving an honorary doctorate from the Masaryk University at Brno in 1946—he explicitly links phenomenology and psychology of religion:

I realized that this phenomenology of religion consisted not merely in making an inventory and classification of phenomena as they appear in history, but also a psychological description which necessitated not only a meticulous observation of the religious reality, but also a systematic introspection; not only the description of what is visible from the outside, but above all the experience born of what can only become reality after it has been admitted into the life of the observer himself.⁷⁴

What Van der Leeuw exactly means here is rather hard to fathom. The way he elaborates his position theoretically by means of a multitude of methodological and philosophical digressions is somewhat eclectic. There is a tension between the constructive and the receptive side of his theory of knowledge. On the one hand, the phenomenologists must be capable of empathy, by which they can re-experience other experiences (*fremdes Erleben*), whose meaning is in the end “revealed” to them; on the other hand, some reconstruction work is presupposed. Notwithstanding the emphasis on the methodological aspects, Van der Leeuw could also write that phenome-

⁷² Van der Leeuw, “Strukturpsychologie und Theologie”, p. 322 (translation Waardenburg, *Reflections*, p. 227).

⁷³ *Ibid.*, pp. 324–325 (translation Waardenburg, *Reflections*, p. 227).

⁷⁴ Van der Leeuw, “Confession Scientifique” (1946), in: *Numen* 1 (1954) 8–15, p. 10 (translation Sharpe, *Comparative Religion*, p. 231).

nology was not so much a science as an art, or even an *Existential*. True humaneness, then, is defined by the fact that human beings make sense of their lives.⁷⁵ They attach “meaning” to the “raw facts” of life, and that activity distinguishes them from animals.⁷⁶ One cannot be a phenomenologist without being an anthropologist, reflecting on the nature of man, according to Van der Leeuw.⁷⁷

In this context he often refers to Jaspers’ “intelligible relations” (*verständliche Zusammenhänge oder Beziehungen*), which in Van der Leeuw’s view are not reality as such, but constructs helping to understand “reality”.⁷⁸ They are distinguished from factual or causal relations, which cannot be understood in the strict sense of the word. The intelligible relations are also called “ideal types”, which Van der Leeuw does not view as purely intellectual constructs, but as emerging out of the phenomenological experience. However, it is hard to say how exactly the phenomenological experience proper and the understanding of these “relations” are related to each other. I doubt whether a consistent reading of all the texts concerned is possible.⁷⁹

⁷⁵ Van der Leeuw, *Phänomenologie der Religion*, p. 639, *Religion*, p. 675; cf. *Phänomenologie der Religion*, p. 640f.: “Phänomenologie ist nicht eine ausgeklügelte Methode, sondern die echt menschliche Lebensbetätigung, die darin besteht, daß man sich weder an die Sachen noch an den Ego verliert, weder wie ein Gott über den Dingen schwebt, noch wie ein Tier unter ihnen verkehrt, sondern tut, was weder Tier noch Gott gegeben ist: verstehend zur Seite stehen und schauen, was sich zeigt”; *Religion*, p. 676: “Phenomenology . . . is not a method that has been reflectively elaborated, but is man’s true vital activity, consisting in losing himself neither in things nor in the ego, neither in hovering above objects like a god nor dealing with them like an animal, but in doing what it given to neither animal nor god: comprehendingly standing aside and contemplating what appears”. Although the translator, J.E. Turner, did a fairly good job, it remains difficult to render the “colour” of the German words into adequate English. “Ausgeklügelt” has the meaning of “smart” (even in a slightly pejorative sense) and “zur Seite stehen” has both the element of distance (which is kept in the translation) and relatedness (“stand by”).

⁷⁶ Van der Leeuw, *Phänomenologie der Religion*, p. 649 (*Religion*, p. 685); Van der Leeuw, *Inleiding tot de Theologie*, p. 69f.

⁷⁷ Cf. Van der Leeuw, “Confession Scientific”, p. 12.

⁷⁸ Cf. Van der Leeuw, *Einführung in die Phänomenologie der Religion*, pp. 5–10; *Phänomenologie der Religion*, p. 637 (*Religion*, p. 673); *Inleiding tot de Theologie*, pp. 68–70.

⁷⁹ One of the most difficult subjects is how exactly “experience” (*Erlebnis*) and “understanding” (*Verstehen*) are related to each other. To give one example: on the one hand, Van der Leeuw states, in his *Phänomenologie der Religion*, that the meaning (the intelligible connection) is not “experienced” (experiencing is not part of the phenomenological process proper); on the other hand, it is deemed possible to “experience” the meaning of a phenomenon “by understanding”; Van der Leeuw, *Phänomenologie der Religion*, p. 637 (*Religion*, p. 673; cf. p. 671f.).

Here it must suffice to conclude that Van der Leeuw's phenomenology moved beyond history and made it possible to discern the timeless essences of religious phenomena. Some of the necessary methodological tools for this move can already be found in Rümke's thesis from 1923, which contained a chapter on "intelligible relations".

By way of conclusion, Van der Leeuw's phenomenology can be described as a search for the meaning of religious phenomena.⁸⁰ The way to proceed is to relate religious phenomena to the personal religious life of the phenomenologist. Only by way of personal involvement, by the use of the psychological "methods" of introspection and empathy, is it possible to re-experience the religious phenomena one encounters and to understand their meaning and essence. Van der Leeuw was the first to develop an explicit phenomenological method in the study of religion, and not only in the Netherlands; in the international context, too, it was Van der Leeuw who—as far as I can see—made phenomenology into the influential current studied by historiographers today. Scholars such as Chantepie de la Saussaye, Lehmann, Kristensen, Söderblom, and Otto had no strong interest in phenomenological method. That is not to deny that they—together with scholars such as Joachim Wach and Mircea Eliade—contributed to the fame of this new endeavour. However, many of them were included with "phenomenology of religion" only in retrospect.⁸¹

In the above I have tried to trace the genesis of this approach by looking at authors who somehow advocate a programme of phenomenology of religion or, at least, use the terminology or consider themselves to be phenomenologists. In the present situation of confusion about who actually was a phenomenologist of religion, this is the right thing to do. Further research into the ways phenomenology was construed as a more or less respectable line of study could throw more light on the vicissitudes of the sometimes intricate and difficult connections between phenomenology as a philosophical approach in the footsteps of Husserl, on the one hand, and "special" phenomeno-

⁸⁰ Cf. Waardenburg, "Religionsphänomenologie", in: *TRE*, vol. 28, pp. 731–749, p. 737f.

⁸¹ The beginnings of the phenomenology of religion, especially the Scandinavian and German contributions (Joachim Wach), which I only touched upon here, deserve further study.

logies, such as the phenomenology of religion, on the other. These connections were, to some degree, evident to contemporaries. Husserl and some reviewers of Otto's bestseller *The Concept of the Holy* simply saw this book as congenial to phenomenology.⁸²

⁸² Cf. Georg Pfeleiderer, *Theologie als Wirklichkeitswissenschaft. Studien zum Religionsbegriff bei Georg Wobbermin, Rudolf Otto, Heinrich Scholz und Max Scheler*, Tübingen 1992, p. 114f., who quotes from a letter (5.3.1919) Husserl wrote Otto, in which he praised Otto for giving "a phenomenology of the religious" (*eine Phänomenologie des Religiösen*), which "goes beyond pure description and analysis of the phenomena".

CHAPTER THREE

INSTITUTIONALIZATION

The most obvious way to define an academic field of study is to look at its place in the university system. It is generally acknowledged that, from the institutional point of view, the Higher Education Act of 1876 has been a decisive factor in the history of the emergence of the study of religion in the Netherlands. Both the “history of religions” and the “philosophy of religion” were then introduced into the curriculum of the theological faculties. Before going into this issue (4), however, I would like to broaden my scope and show that early Dutch study of religion encompassed more than is suggested by the current list of “great names” (1). In particular, I will discuss the publication of a new series, *The Principal Religions* (2), and pay special attention to a new methodological awareness among its contributors (3).

1. *Early Dutch Scholars of Religion*

Not only Max Müller, but also C.P. Tiele was an ardent advocate of the new science. As early as 1860 he attacked J.H. Scholten’s teaching of the history of religion in Leiden. Scholten, whose *History of Religion and Philosophy* had first been published in 1853, had devoted some twelve pages to history of religion.¹ Compared to his meagre sketch, the work of Tiele and P.D. Chantepie de la Saussaye was, no doubt, a decisive step forwards. As regards the struggle for academic recognition the 1860s also marked a watershed for early Dutch science of religion. Periodizations can always be contested, and of course it is not my intention to deny that religious topics were studied in the Netherlands before 1860.² But if one focuses on

¹ J.H. Scholten, *Geschiedenis der Godsdienst en Wijsbegeerte* (1853), Leiden ²1859; C.P. Tiele. “Het onderwijs in de godsdienstgeschiedenis aan de Leidsche Hoogeschool”, in: *De Gids* 24/1 (1860) 815–830.

² Hardly any research into this period has been done; cf. Jan G. Platvoet, “Close

the comparative approach of religion, and not on a study of individual, historical religions, this picture is rather convincing.

What is missing is a broader spectrum, which would show that the movement of early Dutch science of religion included more scholars than men such as Tiele, Chantepie de la Saussaye, W.B. Kristensen, and Gerardus van der Leeuw. To fill this lacuna is by no means easy. Which scholars are to be included, and on what grounds? Only a tentative and partial answer will be attempted here. A first step in overcoming this problem is to examine contemporary views of the new field. An impressive source of information is the work of Louis Henry Jordan, who devoted a great part of his life to providing exhaustive surveys of the research in comparative religion. Jordan stressed the comparative approach to religion, which made his work perhaps a bit one-sided. On the other hand, he systematically collected material, and also paid attention to the various national contexts.³ Regarding the Netherlands, he judged the University of Leiden to be the centre of the new field, and mentioned Tiele, Chantepie de la Saussaye, and Abraham Kuenen (1828–1891) as the three main representatives. Kuenen's present fame is founded on his work in historical-critical biblical scholarship,⁴ which of course is nowadays considered a discipline distinct from the science or history of religion. At that time, however, disciplinary boundaries had not yet been sharply demarcated. Kuenen was not only well-known for his *The Religion of Israel*,⁵ but also for his Hibbert Lectures on national and world religions, which made this distinction famous, and which, no doubt, dealt with a theme from "comparative religion".⁶

Other scholars mentioned by Jordan, all of whom were academics, included Jan Hendrik Scholten (1811–1885), who supplied "to

Harmonies. The Science of Religion in Dutch *Duplex Ordo* Theology, 1860–1960", in: *Numen* 45 (1998) 115–162. The contributions by R.F. Merkel are highly eclectic: "Die älteste holländische Religionsgeschichte", in: *Nieuw Theologisch Tijdschrift* 22 (1933) 217–231, and "Beiträge zur vergleichenden Religionsgeschichte", in: *Archiv für Religionswissenschaft* 36 (1939) 193–215.

³ L.H. Jordan, *Comparative Religion. Its Genesis and Growth*, Edinburgh 1905; Jordan, *Comparative Religion. Its Adjuncts and Allies*, London etc. 1915.

⁴ P.B. Dirksen & A. van der Kooij (eds), *Abraham Kuenen (1828–1891). His Major Contributions to the Study of the Old Testament*, Leiden etc. 1993.

⁵ A. Kuenen, *De godsdienst van Israël tot den ondergang van den joodschen staat*, 2 vols, Haarlem 1869–1870.

⁶ A. Kuenen, *National Religions and Universal Religions*, London 1882.

many an entirely new point of view”⁷ on the study of (Christian) religion; Johan Hendrik Caspar Kern (1833–1917), a scholar of Sanskrit and author of a history of Indian Buddhism;⁸ Abraham Kuyper (1837–1920), who “always exhibited . . . in the course of his busy career—at once ecclesiastical, academic, and political—a fondness for the comparative method”, and who wrote a comparative essay on John Calvin and Johannes à Lasco;⁹ Jan J.M. de Groot (1854–1921), a scholar of Chinese religion, who carefully examined the question “Does the Chinese government recognise religious liberty within its dominions?”, and came to the conclusion that this was not the case;¹⁰ Lodewijk W.E. Rauwenhoff (1828–1889), who wrote textbooks on the history of Protestantism and the philosophy of religion;¹¹ Wilhelm Brandt (1855–1915), successor of Chantepie de la Saussaye in Amsterdam, who worked on Mandeian religion;¹² William Brede Kristensen; and, finally, Gijsbrecht Hendrik Lamers (1834–1903), who “has not left us as large results in the way of literary labours as might have been wished”, although he wrote a reference book of almost 1000 pages.¹³

As is clear from this list, to Jordan comparative religion included the study of Christianity, provided it was conducted in a scientific manner.¹⁴ Of the twelve Dutch religious scholars mentioned, only

⁷ The following quotations are taken from Jordan, *Comparative Religion* (1905), pp. 433–437.

⁸ J.H.C. Kern, *De Geschiedenis van het Buddhisme in Indië*, 2 vols, Haarlem 1882–1884.

⁹ Abraham Kuyper, *Disquisitio historico-theologica, exhibens J. Calvini et J. à Lasco de Ecclesia Sententiarum inter se compositionem* (Ph.D. thesis Leiden), Den Haag–Amsterdam 1862; cf. Jasper Vree, “The Editions of John a Lasco’s Works, especially the Opera omnia edition by Abraham Kuyper, in their Historical Context”, in: *Nederlands Archief voor Kerkgeschiedenis/Dutch Review of Church History* 80 (2000) 309–326; Vree, “Abraham Kuyper als Erbe a Lasco”, in: Christoph Strohm (ed.), *Johannes a Lasco (1499–1560). Politischer Baron, Humanist und europäischer Reformator*, Tübingen 2000, pp. 357–375.

¹⁰ Cf. chapter VII.2 below.

¹¹ Cf. the next section.

¹² A.J.H.W. Brandt, *Die mandäische Religion*, Leipzig–Utrecht 1883; Brandt, *Mandäische Schriften*, Göttingen 1893; Brandt, *Die evangelische Geschichte und der Ursprung des Christenthums*, Leipzig 1893.

¹³ G.H. Lamers, *De Wetenschap van den Godsdienst. Leidraad ten gebuike bij het hooger onderwijs*, 2 vols, Utrecht 1896–1898; on Lamers, see Molendijk, “Aan de grenzen van het weten. Het begin van de godsdienstwijsbegeerte in Groningen”, in: H.A. Krop, J.A. van Ruler & A.J. Vanderjagt (eds), *Zeer kundige professoren. Beoefening van de filosofie in Groningen van 1614 tot 1996*, Hilversum 1997, pp. 209–220.

¹⁴ Jordan, *Comparative Religion* (1905), pp. xi–xii: “It need scarcely be remarked . . . that, unlike Christian Apologetics of the older type, Comparative Religion holds no brief

two (Kern and De Groot) did not work in a theological faculty.¹⁵ It is remarkable that scholars from the field we nowadays term (cultural) anthropology or ethnography are missing in Jordan's survey. He considered these fields to be auxiliary disciplines,¹⁶ and seemed to be mainly interested in "higher" religions. In the bibliographical part of his *Classical Approaches to Religion*, Jacques Waardenburg included, besides Tiele, Kuenen, Chantepie de la Saussaye, Kristensen and Van der Leeuw, also the Dutchmen Nicolaus Adriani (1865–1926), Albertus Christiaan Kruyt (1869–1949), Anton W. Nieuwenhuis (1864–1953), and George A. Wilken (1847–1894).¹⁷ These four scholars worked largely on the language, culture, and religion of the Dutch East Indies. Conspicuously missing in both Jordan's and Waardenburg's lists is the famous Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje (1857–1936), an Islam scholar, who wrote influential reports on the East Indies for the Dutch government.¹⁸ Depending on how far one expands the field, many other scholars, mainly in the Faculties of Arts, could be seen as scholars of religion, especially those working on "Oriental" cultures and religions.

To broaden the perspective a little further, I will have a brief look at several journals that published contributions in the field of the

for the defence of Christianity. If, as the result of an unbiased comparison between that Faith and one or more other Religions, it should become manifest that the former must be pronounced more worthy than any of its competitors, that fact (and the proof of it) will certainly be welcomed and recorded. If, however, an opposite verdict should be necessitated by a summation of all the available evidence, Comparative Religion will never hesitate to discharge its full duty in the circumstances. The demands of truth are paramount, and they must at all costs be respected". On the inclusion or exclusion of the study of Christianity in the new field, see Sigurd Hjelde, *Die Religionswissenschaft und das Christentum. Eine historische Untersuchung über das Verhältnis von Religionswissenschaft und Theologie*, Leiden 1994.

¹⁵ E. Hardy, "Zur Geschichte der vergleichenden Religionsforschung" (I–VI), in: *Archiv für Religionswissenschaft* 4 (1901) 45–66, 97–135, 193–228, mentioned only theologians: Tiele, Chantepie de la Saussaye, Kuenen, Lamers, Rauwenhoff, A. Bruining, S. Hoekstra, and Hugenholz (it is not clear who of the Hugenholz brothers is meant).

¹⁶ Jordan, *Comparative Religion* (1905), pp. 253ff.

¹⁷ J.D.J. Waardenburg, *Classical Approaches to the Study of Religion. Aims, Methods and Theories of Research*, 2 vols, Den Haag 1973–1974; the work of the last four scholars will be touched upon in chapter VII, on the rise of the study of ethnology in the Netherlands.

¹⁸ Cf. P.Sj. van Koningsveld, *Snouck Hurgronje en de Islam. Acht artikelen over leven en werk van een orientalist uit het koloniale tijdperk*, Leiden 1988. Snouck Hurgronje received his Leiden professorship in 1906, which might explain why he is missing in Jordan, *Comparative Religion* (1905).

study of religion. An important source in this regard is the general monthly *De Gids* (The Guide), which first appeared in 1837.¹⁹ Its first index covers the period 1837–1876, and runs to some 200 pages. The main categories are Arts, Languages, and Literatures, but interestingly enough there is also a section Science of Religion, besides Philosophy and Ethnography, which covers several religion-related topics. Science of Religion is subdivided into “Science of Religion in General, Religion and Myth, and Oriental Religions” (2 pages) and “Christian Religion” (17 pages). The index was compiled by P.A. Tiele (1834–1889), who at the time was Librarian of the Leiden university library and who was a younger brother of C.P. Tiele. The decision to take science of religion (and not theology) as a general heading could be due to the latter’s influence. After 1876 the name “science of religion” was maintained in the indices, although it never figured as a section heading in the monthly itself. The number of articles, however, especially within the section Christian religion, decreased dramatically.²⁰

In all, there were 29 items classified as science of religion in the first index, excluding the contributions listed under Christian religion. Seven of them were published before 1860: two reviews on Greek and Roman religious doctrines (1853), one on the doctrine of the Edda (1838), two articles on Islam (one of them by P.J. Veth on “Mohammed and the Koran”, 1845),²¹ and, finally, two reviews, both published in 1837, of German books translated into Dutch (an anonymous travel story by a “civilised Roman Catholic” who tried to trace “True Religion”, and F.A.G. Tholuck’s book *The Essence and Moral Influence of Paganism*).²² In addition to the articles listed under Biblical Study, which was part of the Christianity section, another seven pieces in the Science of Religion section were about biblical

¹⁹ On *De Gids*, see Remieg Aerts, *De Letterheren. Liberale cultuur in de negentiende eeuw: het tijdschrift “De Gids”*, Amsterdam 1997.

²⁰ Index II (1887): Science of Religion: a) in general; non-Christian religions (p. 39f.), b) Christian Religion; study of the Bible (p. 40), c) Church History; Biographies (p. 41f.). Index III (1897): Science of Religion: a) in general; non-Christian religions (p. 46), b) Israel; Christianity; Church History (pp. 46–48).

²¹ P.J. Veth, “Mohammed en de Koran”, in: *De Gids* 9 (1845) 294–309, 346–357, 393–421, 461–478, 525–546.

²² Anon., *Nieuwe Reizen van een Beschaafd Roomsche Katholiek ter opsporing van eene Ware Godsdienst*, naar de hoogduitse vertaling van J.W.C. Augusti, 2 vols, Amsterdam 1836; Tholuck, *Het Wezen en de zedelijke Invloed van het Heidendom*, uitgegeven door Neander, naar de tweede uitgave vertaald door W.H. Munting, Leeuwarden 1836.

and pre-biblical “Israelite” religion.²³ A total of eight articles, mainly programmatic in character, were written by C.P. Tiele. Second to Tiele was P.A.S. van Limburg Brouwer (1829–1873), editor of *De Gids*, with four contributions. Brouwer was a Spinozist and greatly interested in Eastern religions, especially in Buddhism. He is famous for his historical novel *Akbar. An Oriental Novel*, in which “India” served as a medium to criticise the Christian church system.²⁴ Brouwer was a representative of a “free religiosity” that at the time flourished in literary circles.

Two other scholarly periodicals that published articles on the field of science of religion had their basis in theology: *Theological Studies*, representative of an “evangelical” group of theologians (the most prominent being P.D. Chantepie de la Saussaye),²⁵ and *Theological Journal* (since 1867), the organ of the modern theologians. Except for some important contributions by Chantepie de la Saussaye,²⁶ the first journal did not devote much attention to non-Christian religions. I will concentrate here on the *Theological Journal*. The main division used in the index of 1892 was that between historical (and literary) studies, on the one hand, and philosophical contributions, on the other. The historical section dealt with: (a) History of Religions, with the exception of the “Israelite” and Christian religion (2 pages), (b) “Israelite” religion (and Judaism) (5 pages), and (c) Christianity (9 pages). Of the 19 articles listed under History of Religions 11 were written by Tiele.²⁷ If we look at the reviews under this heading, we note that Tiele’s contribution is even more prominent. Out of some 230 reviews published in the first 25 years of its existence, approximately 90 percent were by Tiele. He even announced his own books.

²³ Apart from one anonymous contribution, one article was written by C.P. Tiele, two by the philosopher and orientalist J.P.N. Land (1834–1897), and three by the orientalist and Arabist M.J. de Goeje (1836–1909).

²⁴ P.A.S. van Limburg Brouwer, *Akbar. Een Oostersche Roman*, ’s-Gravenhage 1872 (reprint Amsterdam: Elsevier, 1941); see the introduction to the 1941 edition of *Akbar*. Another Spinozist and scholar of religion was Johannes van Vloten (1818–1883).

²⁵ First published as *Studiën. Theologisch Tijdschrift* (1875–1881), ed. by Chantepie de la Saussaye and J.J.P. Valetton, (Jr.), who wrote the section on “The Israelites” in the later editions of Chantepie de la Saussaye’s *Manual*; from 1883 onward it was continued as *Theologische Studiën*.

²⁶ On Chantepie de la Saussaye, see chapter IV below.

²⁷ Among the other contributors were the archaeologist W. Pleyte (1836–1903), M.A.N. Rovers, Kern, the classical philologist J. van Leeuwen Jr. (1850–1924), J.P.N. Land (1834–1897), and M.Th. Houtsma (1851–1943).

His contributions were not limited to the History of Religions section either. His work also dominated the philosophical subsection Studies in Religion in General (*Studies over den godsdienst in het algemeen*), with articles on “The essence and origin of religion” and “The developmental laws of religion”. The split between “historical” and “philosophical” contributions reflected, of course, the disciplinary division between the history of religions and the philosophy of religion in the Netherlands.

This brief survey shows Tiele as the towering figure in early Dutch science of religion, although one has to keep in mind that he was surrounded by many eminent scholars, who worked on religion, and mostly on one particular religion, both inside and outside the theological faculties of that time. Especially in the domain of oriental studies, there were many scholars who did pioneering research. It is also clear that from the 1860s onwards there is an increase in the number of articles in Dutch journals contributing to the field of the science of religion. These articles were explicitly classified as such. If we compare Jordan’s survey of 1905 with more recent accounts we see at least two conspicuous differences. First, the newly emerging study of religion was not seen as limited to “foreign” religions, but included the study of the Christian and Israelite religions. Secondly, the work of scholars outside the theological faculties, such as De Groot and Kern, was considered also to contribute to the new endeavour.

2. *The Principal Religions*

The appearance of *The Principal Religions* (*De voornaamste godsdiensten*) was an important landmark for the early study of religion outside academia.²⁸ The initiative was taken in the early 1860s by A.C. Kruseman (1818–1894), one of the leading publishers of that time, also in the field of (modern) theology.²⁹ There are older examples of overviews of various religions in the Dutch language, but these

²⁸ Incidentally, Jordan also mentions this series; cf. Jordan, *Comparative Religion* (1905), p. 437, note 3.

²⁹ Cf. A.C. Kruseman, *Bouwstoffen voor een geschiedenis van den Nederlandschen boekhandel, gedurende de halve eeuw 1830–1880*, 2 vols, Amsterdam 1886–1887, vol. II, pp. 15–20. Most information in this section was drawn from J.W. Enschedé, *A.C. Kruseman*, 2 vols, Amsterdam 1899–1902.

are mostly translations.³⁰ An exception might be *The History of Religions*,³¹ which appeared anonymously and was published by Kruseman's colleague P.J.W. de Vos in monthly instalments from 1843 onwards. The mention, however, of, for instance, "4 Moses 24" points to a German *Vorlage*. In Dutch, this is a very unusual way to refer to the Old Testament book of Numbers. Be that as it may, the edition was discontinued after seven issues, probably for financial reasons.³² The book was still governed by biblical chronology; there were chapters on religion before and after the Flood.

Kruseman was inspired by foreign examples: Hurd, *History of all Religions* (available in a Dutch translation), Dorville, *Histoire des différents peuples du monde*, Fonseca, *Altindische Mythologie*, and especially Clavel, *Histoire des religions*.³³ Kruseman had these books sent to the theologian and *homme de lettres* J.J.L. ten Kate (1819–1889), who had expressed interest in his plans. From an economical perspective, the publisher Kruseman thought it a pity that Clavel's book had already been translated into Dutch. Nevertheless, he took the risk of undertaking a new, similar project, only on a larger and more solid scholarly scale. He expected Ten Kate to provide a "historical-philosophical, but popular exposition of the forms of religion".³⁴ Kruseman took over Clavel's division into Brahmanism, Buddhism, Polytheism, Paganism, Judaism, Muhammadanism, Christianity, and Deism, and suggested that, instead of chapters, whole books should be devoted to these topics, with the hope that the new series would inspire respect for "all myths and philosophies . . . of mankind". Plans were made to include plates in the books and Kruseman made offers about the honorarium. Yet, the idea that one person could fulfil this task was soon abandoned.

³⁰ William Hurd, *Oude en tegenwoordige staat en geschiedenis van alle godsdiensten, van de schepping der waereld tot op den tegenwoordigen tijd* [tr. from the English], Amsterdam 1781–1791; F.T.B. Clavel, *Geschiedenis der godsdiensten, behelzende de oude en hedendaagsche godsdienstige gebruiken, plegtigheden en leerbegrippen van alle volkeren der aarde* [tr. from the French], 2 vols, Gouda 1847 [²1873, ³1907].

³¹ Anonymous, *De geschiedenis der godsdiensten, benevens derzelver leerstelsels, feesten en plegtigheden, bij alle volken der aarde van de schepping tot op den tegenwoordigen tijd*, Amsterdam 1843.

³² Enschedé, *Kruseman*, vol. I, p. 7.

³³ Enschedé, *Kruseman*, vol. II, p. 9; cf. William Hurd, *Oude en tegenwoordige staat en geschiedenis van alle godsdiensten*; C. Dorville, *Histoire des différents peuples du monde, contenant les cérémonies religieuses et civiles . . . de chaque nation*, Paris 1770–1771; A.E. Wollheim da Fonseca, *Mythologie des alten Indien*, Berlin 1856; Clavel, *Geschiedenis der godsdiensten*.

³⁴ Enschedé, *Kruseman*, vol. II, p. 9.

Initially, the collaborators were sought in literary circles. J.A. Alberdingk Thijm (1820–1889), for instance, was asked to prepare the volume on Catholicism. Thijm was not only a highly influential art critic, but also a pious man (his motto was *nil nisi per Christum*) and a leading figure in the Catholic revival.³⁵ He raised the principal objection that the history of Catholicism (being the history of the supreme revelation) is not on a par with that of other religions. The aim, he wrote, cannot be to publish a series of monographs that contradict each other in such a way that the acceptance of one point of view leaves no room for other positions.³⁶ Consequently, he turned the proposal down. Finally, the Protestant minister and future professor of Aesthetics and Modern Languages at the Municipal University of Amsterdam, Allard Pierson (1831–1896), agreed to write a history of Catholicism.³⁷

The orthodox Protestant minister J.J. van Oosterzee (1817–1882) had qualms similar to those of Alberdingk Thijm. He thought the “higher harmony” of this enterprise was threatened by the cooperation between those who considered “Mozaism and Christianity [to be] the fruit of a supernatural revelation”, and those who denied such a thing and viewed all religions as the “most noble blossom of the tree of humanity”. After Oosterzee’s refusal, the prolific author A.L.G. Bosboom-Toussaint (1812–1886) was considered because of her great creative and imaginative powers. As with Thijm, however, “an unpleasant mysticism” and a lack of objectivity were feared by the men who were in charge at the moment, Kruseman himself and the *homme de lettres* Carel Vosmaer (1826–1888).³⁸ Anti-Catholicism was never far away with (liberal) Protestants.³⁹

In the long run, the whole venture, originally intended as a series for a wide, cultured audience, was slowly taken over by academics. Nevertheless, the scholarly character of the series was criticised by

³⁵ Cf. P.A.M. Geurts et al. (eds), *J.A. Alberdingk Thijm 1820–1889. Erflater van de negentiende eeuw*, Baarn 1992; Michel van der Plas, *Vader Thijm. Biografie van een koopman-schrijver*, s.l. 1995.

³⁶ Enschedé, *Kruseman*, vol. II, p. 13.

³⁷ A. Pierson, *De Geschiedenis van het Roomsche Katholicisme, tot op het Concilie van Trente*, 4 vols, Haarlem 1868–1872.

³⁸ Thijm’s “mysticism which reeks of incense did throttle [Vosmaer’s] heart” and made him yearn for some fresh air; cf. Enschedé, *Kruseman*, vol. II, p. 14.

³⁹ Bosboom-Toussaint was a good Protestant, but mysticism was usually closely associated with Catholicism.

some. One of the leading Dutch philosophers, C.W. Opzoomer (1821–1892),⁴⁰ claimed that time was not yet ripe for such an (overly) ambitious project. Allard Pierson showed more enthusiasm and agreed to write on Egyptian religion. This plan failed, but, as stated above, he eventually wrote the contribution on Catholicism. Moreover, Pierson agreed to interest his colleague C.P. Tiele, who endorsed the project, but also expressed some hesitations. It is not easy, Tiele argued, to write a general history of religions that meets contemporary scholarly standards. Besides, is such a history that important to a general public? Would it not be better to deal only with those religions that are somehow related to the Christian religion? In this way, the religions of America, China, Japan, Australia, Malaysia, and middle and south Africa would be excluded, since “up till now” these have remained “outside the stream of religious development”.⁴¹ Tiele proposed to include the following religions: Brahmanism, Buddhism, Muhammadanism, and Old-Persian, New-Persian, Slavic, German, Celtic, Greek, Roman, Egyptian, Hebrew, and Christian religion. Tiele was prepared to write on the Persian religion, and moreover pointed to P.A.S. van Limburg Brouwer as a suitable candidate to deal with Buddhism. Brouwer had written several contributions in this area, but the attempts to win him over to the plan proved to be in vain. He objected that too little was known with certainty about Indian religious history. The Sanskritist and Indologist J.H.C. Kern (1833–1917) was sceptical in this regard, too, and advised to wait till the materials for such a work were collected “by various hands”.⁴² Twenty years later, he would finish his *History of Buddhism in India*.⁴³

Notwithstanding all the setbacks in convincing people to participate in this project, Kruseman was able to publish an announcement of the series in February 1863, which mentioned the following collaborators: R. Dozy, C. Busken Huet, J.W.G. van Oordt, A. Pierson, L.W.E. Rauwenhoff, C.P. Tiele, and C. Vosmaer. Here

⁴⁰ On Opzoomer, see H.A. Krop, “The Duty to Account. The Legacy of Christianity in Dutch Liberal Protestantism”, in: Henri Krop, Arie L. Molendijk & Hent de Vries (eds), *Post-Theism. Reframing the Judeo-Christian Tradition*, Leuven 2000, pp. 125–140.

⁴¹ Enschedé, *Kruseman*, vol. II, p. 16. For Tiele’s views on development, see chapter VI below.

⁴² Enschedé, *Kruseman*, vol. II, p. 29.

⁴³ J.H.C. Kern, *De geschiedenis van het Buddhisme*.

Kruseman claimed that of all the various fields of study, the field covering the different ways in which the “Highest Being” is worshipped drew the widest general attention, “especially in this country”. The development of various concepts of the Deity, the ways in which the gods are worshipped, the value of these concepts, and the research into the meaning of the “symbols, sanctities, and ceremonies” of those religions, must be of interest to those who wish to account for their own view, “with thankful acknowledgement of the light under which they themselves have been raised”.⁴⁴ This careful but nevertheless liberal formulation points to the scholarly perspective of the series, which aimed at understanding these religions on their own terms. This does not alter the fact that most authors favoured some sort of liberal Protestantism. But the Arabist Reinhart Dozy, for instance, who was a sceptic, talked freely about the unattractiveness of Christianity (including its miracles, the doctrine of the Trinity, and a crucified god) to the “shrewd and scoffing Arab”.⁴⁵ To orthodox Christians, Dozy’s view expressed a disdain for the Christian revelation, and some sent his book back to the publisher, with remarks such as: What do you gain by ruining the peace of mind of thousands of people, and by spreading uncertainty and distress?⁴⁶

Nevertheless, the project was to be a reasonable commercial success. When Kruseman retired from business in 1877, he had sold some 5795 copies out of 8750. Up till that time seven titles, some of them in several volumes, had appeared. The last contribution to the series was to appear in 1882–1884: two volumes on Buddhism by Kern. The first had been Dozy’s book on Islam, which presented a rather gloomy picture of this religion. According to Dozy, no other well-known, older Arabic book showed so much utterly bad taste, and was as tedious and boring, as the Qu’ran.⁴⁷ Mohammed had a

⁴⁴ Enschedé, *Kruseman*, vol. II, p. 21f. Translating Kruseman’s prospectus is not without difficulties. Especially my rendering of the Dutch word “heiligheden” by “sanctities” may be questioned. Here, the material connotation is stressed, whereas the meaning “those things which are holy [to religious believers]” may also be implied.

⁴⁵ Cf. R.A.P. Dozy, *Het Islamisme*, Haarlem 1863, p. 9; on Dozy’s “a-religious liberalism”, see J. Brugman, “Dozy, A Scholarly Life According to Plan”, in: W. Otterspeer (ed.), *Leiden Oriental Connections 1850–1940*, Leiden etc. 1989, pp. 62–81.

⁴⁶ Cf. Enschedé, *Kruseman*, vol. II, pp. 23–26; Kruseman, *Bouwestoffen*, vol. II, pp. 593–595.

⁴⁷ Dozy, *Het Islamisme*, p. 77f.

somewhat sick imagination and was not attracted to the sublime (“because he had never had any understanding of true sublimity”) but to “rhetorical pomp”.⁴⁸ Dozy’s rectorial address *Oratio de causis cur Mohammedanorum cultura et humanitas prae ea quae Christianorum est imminuta et corrupta sit* ended with an anti-clerical and anti-theological outburst.⁴⁹ Several times Dozy drew parallels between Islam and Roman Catholicism. In both cases, “faith has suffocated reason” and “mechanical ceremonies” play a major part. Both have a Church language that is not understood by the masses, and, finally, in both religions the “most enlightened” have become unfaithful to the Church.⁵⁰ His book on Islam closed with the following telling comparison: “If Catholicism still remains in full force at the moment that the enlightened New Zealander, in the midst of a vast wilderness, comes to sketch the ruins of St. Paul’s Cathedral on the banks of the Thames, then probably at the same time the ‘lâ ilâha illa’l-lâh’ of the muezzins will still resound from the tops of innumerable minarets”.⁵¹ The comparison is perhaps not crystal clear (in Dozy’s text, it is prefaced by some kind of counterfactual), but even in this somewhat cautionary way the image of the cultured New Zealander sketching the remains of Christian religion must have been as repellent to many contemporaries as it was attractive to the anti-clerical Dozy. His negative views on Arabs and Islam⁵² here stand in contrast to an even darker picture, if possible, of future Catholicism.

In his book on Islam Dozy declared that he was dissatisfied with previous research, especially on the origin of Islam. He also announced

⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 14.

⁴⁹ R.A.P. Dozy, *Oratio de causis cur Mohammedanorum cultura et humanitas prae ea quae Christianorum est imminuta et corrupta sit*, Leiden 1869, p. 19.

⁵⁰ Dozy, *Het Islamisme*, p. 355.

⁵¹ Ibid., p. 356.

⁵² Cf. Dozy, *Histoire des Musulmans d’Espagne jusqu’à la conquête de l’Andalousie par les Almoravides (711–1110)*, 4 vols, Leiden 1861, vol. I, p. 12: “Or les Arabes, en dépit d’un préjugé accrédité, n’ont que fort peu d’imagination. Ils ont le sang plus impétueux, plus bouillant que nous, ils ont des passions plus fougueuses, mais c’est en même temps le peuple le moins inventif du monde. Pour s’en convaincre on n’a qu’à examiner leur religion et leur littérature”. Because of their lack of imagination they have never made any real progress. For more examples of Dozy’s racist views (which he shared with other famous Orientalists), see Brugman, “Dozy”, p. 74f. The opening of Dozy’s book is truly fascinating, because here he characterises the Beduin nomads by “immobility”: “Pendant que l’Europe marche depuis des siècles dans la voie du progrès et du développement, l’immobilité est le caractère distinctif des innombrables peuplades qui parcourent avec leurs tentes et leur troupeaux les vastes et arides déserts de l’Arabie” (4).

that a more extensive treatise on this subject than he could give in the context of the popular series on the principal religions would be forthcoming. A year later, in 1864, the sequel appeared, entitled *The Israelites at Mecca from David's Time up to the Fifth Century of Our Era*.⁵³ The format was the same as that of the series, and Dozy thought the new book so important that he convinced Kruseman to publish a translated version simultaneously. Later, Kruseman complained that only some 100 books of the German⁵⁴ edition of 1500 were sold.⁵⁵ This is all the more astonishing, because the book was controversial, to say the least. According to a recent biographer, “[t]his is one of Dozy’s most ingenious works, containing a large number of astute hypotheses, leading to the conclusion that the rites of the Islamic pilgrimage to Mecca must have had a Jewish origin related to the Jewish Passover—originally a commemoration of the crossing of the River Jordan under Joshua—and that the Arab tribe of the Ishmaelites should be identified as the Jewish tribe of the Simeonites”.⁵⁶ Further, Dozy argued that the original worship of Israel was that of Baal, not of Yahweh,⁵⁷ and spoke freely about polytheistic practices and the worship of stones and trees, common among all Semitic peoples.⁵⁸ The book stirred up various reactions. It was praised excessively,⁵⁹ but also severely criticised, in the first place by Old Testament scholars.⁶⁰ None of the other contributions to the series aroused so

⁵³ Dozy, *De Israëlieten te Mekka, van Davids tijd tot in de vijfde eeuw onzer tijdrekening*, Haarlem 1864.

⁵⁴ Dozy had proposed to bring out a French edition; cf. Enschedé, *Kruseman*, vol. II, p. 93.

⁵⁵ Kruseman, *Bouwstoffen*, vol. II, p. 17. In the end, 251 copies were sold, whereas the Dutch version found some 700 buyers; cf. Enschedé, *Kruseman*, vol. II, p. 100. Kruseman succeeded in selling almost all 1250 copies of Dozy, *Het islamisme*; cf. Enschedé, *Kruseman*, vol. II, p. 32.

⁵⁶ Brugman, “Dozy”, p. 79; Van Koningsveld points to the merits of Dozy’s book; cf. P.Sj. van Koningsveld, *Snouck Hurgronje en de Islam*, p. 54f. For a summary of the main hypotheses, see Dozy, *De Israëlieten*, p. 17f. (German edition, p. 15f.).

⁵⁷ Dozy, *De Israëlieten*, pp. 36–39.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 21 (German edition, p. 18f.).

⁵⁹ By Dozy’s pupil M.J. de Goeje (1836–1909), see M.J. de Goeje, “Een stap vooruit”, in: *De Gids* 28/2 (1864) 297–312.

⁶⁰ See H. Oort, *De dienst der Baälüm in Israël: Naar aanleiding van het geschrift van Dr. R. Dozy “De Israëlieten te Mekka”*, Leiden 1864; H. Oort, *The Worship of Baalim in Israel. Based Upon the Work of Dr. R. Dozy “The Israelites at Mecca”*, transl. by J.W. Colenso, London 1865 (who criticised Dozy’s thesis that the ancient Israelites worshipped Baal and not JHWH); H. Pierson, *De heilige steenen in Israël. Naar aanleiding*

much controversy (provoked, of course, by Dozy's portrayal of primitive Israelite religion as a form of polytheism and fetishism), nor did they promote such a negative appraisal of the religion they dealt with. This second feature of Dozy's book can probably be explained by prevalent negative stereotypes, which were especially crude as far as Arabs and Islam were concerned. In the case of Dozy, this was strengthened by a critical stance towards religion in general (which was not common at the time).

Although it is not always clearly indicated whether or not a volume was actually part of *The Principal Religions*, it is reasonably safe to say that the series eventually comprised eight books:⁶¹

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|-----------|---|
| 1863 | R.A.P. Dozy, <i>Het Islamisme</i> (The Islam), 356 pp. |
| 1864 | J.W.G. van Oordt, <i>De Godsdienst der Grieken, met hunne volksdenkbeelden</i> (The Religion of the [Ancient] Greeks), 388 pp. |
| 1864 | C.P. Tiele, <i>De Godsdienst van Zoroastra van haar ontstaan in Baktrië tot den val van het Oud-Perzische Rijk</i> (The Religion of Zoroaster), 306 pp. |
| 1865–1871 | L.W.E. Rauwenhoff, <i>De Geschiedenis van het Protestantisme</i> (The History of Protestantism), 3 vols, 268, 187 and 439 pp. |
| 1868 | L.S.B. Meijboom, <i>De Godsdienst der oude Noormannen</i> (The Religion of the Old Vikings), 654 pp. |

van het werk van Prof. R. Dozy “*De Israëlieten te Mekka*”, Rotterdam 1864; K.H. Graf, *De Israëlieten te Mekka van R. Dozy beoordeeld*, transl. by H.A. Leemans, Utrecht 1866 [German original in *Zeitschrift der Deutschen morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 19 (1865) 330–351]; Kuenen, “Simeonieten en Ismaëlieten. Eene bijdrage tot de critiek van Dozy's Israëlieten te Mekka”, in: *Godgeleerde Bijdragen* 40 (1866) 449–515 (Kuenen attacked the view that “the patriarchs were stones”, as Dozy's ideas were once summarized). Land and Juynboll provided more nuanced appreciations: J.P.N. Land, “De afgoderij van Israël in de woestijn (Amos 5: 25–26)”, in: *Godgeleerde Bijdragen* 39 (1865) 286–299, and A.W.T. Juynboll, “Eenige opmerkingen betreffende de Israëlitische Molekdienst”, in: *Godgeleerde Bijdragen* 39 (1865) 300–344; cf. Gustave Dugat, *Histoire des Orientalistes de l'Europe du xii^e au xix^e siècle*, 2 vols, Paris 1868–1870, vol. II, p. 61: “Cet ouvrage est, selon, les uns, le meilleur, et, selon d'autres, le plus mauvais de tous ceux qu'il ait faits. Aucun livre ne lui a valu autant de louanges, et autant de critiques amères, surtout de la part des Juifs allemands”.

⁶¹ Cf. Enschedé, *Kruseman*, vol. II, p. 32. Dozy, *De Israëlieten*, is usually not considered part of the series; cf. Enschedé, *Kruseman*, vol. II, p. 93. The last contribution (by Kern) was published by the firm of Tjeenk Willink, which at the time had taken over the series from Kruseman.

- 1869–1870 A. Kuenen, *De Godsdienst van Israël tot den Ondergang van den Joodschen Staat*, 2 vols, 504 and 563 pp.⁶²
- 1868–1872 A. Pierson, *De Geschiedenis van het Roomsche Katholicisme, tot op het Concilie van Trente* (The History of Roman Catholicism until the Council of Trent), 4 vols, 431, 498, 492 and 526 pp.
- 1882–1884 J.H.C. Kern, *De Geschiedenis van het Buddhisme in Indië* (The History of Buddhism in India), 2 vols, 452 and 456 pp.⁶³

It is evident that the publisher did not succeed in commissioning books on all the subjects he wished. Ancient Egypt, for instance, is missing. Dozy did not consider this a major problem, because Egyptian religion had not been a “world religion”.⁶⁴ With the exception of Kern’s work, all contributions appeared or began to appear in the 1860s. Most contributors can be considered more or less experts; but not all. Pierson, who had first agreed to write on Egyptian religion, and Meijboom were both amateurs in the fields they treated. Meijboom even confessed that he had no knowledge of the relevant languages before he began his studies of the Edda and other related sources. In the making of this series, (future) academics increasingly dominated the whole enterprise, at the cost of “free floating intelligentsia” (*freischwebende Intelligenz*) and men of letters. All contributors were from Protestant families, they were in their thirties or forties when they agreed to contribute, and the majority held (or would later hold) professorships at the University of Leiden. Tiele, Kuenen, Meijboom, Pierson, and Rauwenhoff were trained as theologians, but Van Oordt was a classical scholar and Dozy and Kern were specialists in the languages and cultures of the Orient.

3. Changing Perspectives on Method

Several of the authors did not pay much attention to the purpose of the series, or the relationship between the religion they discussed

⁶² Translated as: *The Religion of Israel to the Fall of the Jewish State*, 3 vols, London 1874–1875.

⁶³ Translated as: *Histoire du Buddhisme dans l’Inde*, 2 vols, Paris 1901–1903.

⁶⁴ Enschedé, *Kruseman*, vol. II, p. 28.

and Christianity. Kern's book is probably the clearest example of approaching the subject in its own right without bothering with actual relevance. Meijboom did not show much interest in "comparative religion" either. Yet, at the end of his book, he concluded that the Vikings eventually received the Christian faith, be it in an impure form. Evidently, the religion of the ancient Greeks did not pose much of a threat to contemporary Christianity. Van Oordt, writing on Greek religion, confessed explicitly that he held an evolutionary point of view. Research on Homer's work may shed light on early phases of human civilization and religion. In this way, the veil around the mysterious "childhood of humanity" can to some extent be removed.⁶⁵ Although the beginning of humanity will remain somewhat of an enigma, according to Van Oordt, he deemed this kind of knowledge of essential importance for the understanding of world history.

The most outspoken evolutionary perspective was adopted by Tiele, who devoted a large section of his book to the place of Parsism within the history of religions. To this end, he distinguished four successive stages (or classes): worship of nature, mythology, the philosophical-dogmatical religions, and the highest class, that of the universal or world religions. Parsian religion is categorised among the third group. Tiele's study ends with a comparison between "Mozaism" and "Parsism", which turns out in favour of "Mozaism". "Parsism" did not develop, but degenerated, and will not bear any offspring; but "Judaism can die", because it lives on in "two powerful shoots": Christianity and Islam.⁶⁶

One of the methodologically more explicit contributions is Abraham Kuenen's *The Religion of Israel to the Fall of the Jewish State*. The fall of Jerusalem in the year 70 CE is the *terminus ad quem* of Kuenen's book. From that time onwards, the Jewish religion is "no longer one of the 'principal religions'".⁶⁷ Its further development has exercised little influence outside "the narrow circle of the community itself". That is not to say that this further history is unimportant. "But general progress no longer proceeds from them [= the Jews]. . . . The history of Judaism is a reflection of that of Islam and of Christianity, and not the converse. The modifications which it undergoes, whatever

⁶⁵ Van Oordt, *De Godsdienst der Grieken*, Haarlem 1864, p. 1.

⁶⁶ Tiele, *De Godsdienst van Zoroaster*, p. 304; cf. chapter VI below.

⁶⁷ Kuenen, *The Religion of Israel*, vol. I, p. 3.

weight they may have for those directly concerned, can lay no claim to general interest". Kuenen said he would "sketch" these later developments "in a last chapter, an appendix as it were, of this work".⁶⁸ Further, he warned his readership that his conception of the religious history of Israel would differ radically from contemporary ideas. Therefore, it would not be possible to limit the exposition to a discussion of his own standpoint, but the difficulties connected with the older theories needed to be discussed, too. A fierce battle had to be fought in defence of a new historical approach that did not take the Old Testament testimonies at face value.⁶⁹

Even with Abraham Kuenen, who was disposed towards empirical research and disinclined to philosophical speculation, a teleological view of world history is only just below the surface. In his opinion, Jewish religion was important because of its (transient) contribution to the development of religious history. At the time Christianity and Islam came on the scene, the part of Jewish religion in world history was finished. Kuenen also commented on the inclusion of Christianity and Israelite religion in the series. "[T]he idea of including the Israelitish [sic] and the Christian among 'the principal religions' deserves approbation and applause, only if there exist[s] no specific difference between these two and all the other forms of religion".⁷⁰ But can we overlook the claim of both these religions that they are founded on a "supernatural origin"? "By no means". But this is true for other religions, too. Recognizing this fact does not imply, however, that the "description of those forms of religion must start from that belief".⁷¹ Modern scholarship has another starting point. It "places itself in the position not of belief, which recognises no truth beyond the circle in which it rules, but of impartial criticism, which, instead of applying the same standard to everything, acknowledges the claims of variety, and notices the good, wherever and under what form it finds it".⁷² This is not the place, Kuenen

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, vol. I, p. 3; cf. p. 32.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, vol. I, pp. 17–18: "We find by experience every day that accounts which have been current but for a short period have admitted very strange elements, and in some cases have become unrecognisable. Without a perpetual miracle the oral tradition of Israel cannot have remained free from this influence. . . . Narrowly examined, the Old Testament narratives of Israel's earliest history present all sorts of phenomena which forbid us to recognise them as historical".

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, vol. I, p. 5.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, vol. I, p. 6.

⁷² *Ibid.*, vol. I, p. 6.

argues, to demonstrate the truth of this view. He only wanted to emphasize one thing: this standpoint has nothing arbitrary, “as its opponents assert, but is the natural fruit of progress in knowledge and development, of the entire intellectual work of Europe during the last century”.⁷³

Kuenen’s entire methodological exposition is pervaded by a sense of intellectual and religious progress. Our widening scope implies that we no longer see our own standpoint in absolute terms: “Israel is no more the pivot on which the development of the whole world turns, than the planet which we inhabit is the centre of the universe. In short, we have outgrown the belief of our ancestors”. In the modern era, it would be an absurdity to believe that God’s activity was confined to a single people. According to Kuenen, in all forms of religion we have learned to “revere and admire the never resting and all-embracing activity of God’s Spirit in humanity”.⁷⁴ Comparison can still show the superiority of our own tradition, Kuenen believes, but comparison surely makes it clear that there is no essential difference between the religion of Israel, Christianity, and other religions.

These various types of progress—religious, moral, and scientific—are somehow connected to each other. “The old religions have been examined and traced out in detail. That which formally was included in a general condemnation, is now revealed to us in its rich diversity, and often in its great excellence. The pure sources from which knowledge of religions may be derived have been disclosed by the untiring labour of European scholars”.⁷⁵ It looks as if we had to wait for modern nineteenth-century western scholarship to unearth the hidden treasures of (other) religions. It is not my intention to imply that Kuenen was insincere in one way or another, but there seems to be a blind spot in his perception of the blessings of the new study of religion. It is hard to avoid the impression that, although such research did indeed show the richness of non-Christian religions, certainly in the view of those early scholars, in the end the results were used to construe an evolutionary scheme with Christianity at the very top.⁷⁶ For us, the question forcibly presents itself whether this

⁷³ Ibid., vol. I, p. 7.

⁷⁴ Ibid., vol. I, p. 9.

⁷⁵ Ibid., vol. I, p. 10.

⁷⁶ Cf. Kuenen, *National Religions*.

did not contribute more to a western feeling of superiority, sustained by allegedly sound scholarship, than to an appreciation of those foreign religions in their own right.

But putting such misgivings aside, we here find a rather early statement of some of the main principles of the science of religion in embryonic form. Kuenen himself had no doubts about the fruitfulness of this new approach. For him, the study of the Old Testament would corroborate the anti-supranaturalistic principle of modern science of religion,⁷⁷ as it will show the natural development not only of Israelite religion, but also of the belief in its heavenly origin. Another feature of the new approach, as has already been mentioned, was the comparative perspective. Although one should be very careful in this regard, according to Kuenen, comparisons cannot be avoided.⁷⁸ What particularly strikes us at the beginning of the twenty-first century is Kuenen's moralistic outlook. Those who think there is an essential difference between "Israel's religion and its sisters . . . overlook that which is defective and erroneous in the religion of Israel, and have no eye for the excellences of other religions".⁷⁹ The comparisons are framed exclusively in moral terms and in a judgemental way. Apparently, faults and virtues can be fairly easily detected by the scholar. In later publications the tone is somewhat softened, but the framework of moral evaluation has remained fundamentally the same.⁸⁰

Kuenen's introductory remarks are a fine and early specimen of the newly emerging approach, which defined itself over against the old theology (based on a special revelation). They are also an indication of the fact that the science of religion, as it was called in Dutch, was initially not about the creation of a new discipline, but involved several fields of study. In this respect, it is revealing that volumes on the history of Catholicism and Protestantism were included in the series. This decision reveals the beginning of a new methodological awareness among scholars of religion in the broad sense of the word. One's own religion had to be researched in the same way as other religions. The contributions by Pierson and Rauwenhoff were the most voluminous of the series. Rauwenhoff's *History of*

⁷⁷ Kuenen, *The Religion of Israel*, vol. I, p. 12 (p. 13 in the original Dutch edition).

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, vol. I, p. 10.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

⁸⁰ Cf. Kuenen, *National Religions*, pp. 285ff.

Protestantism runs to 900 pages, whereas Pierson's book on Roman Catholicism, which only dealt with a part of this vast topic (until the Council of Trent), covers almost 2,000 pages. Both authors claimed that they wrote the history of a particular religion, not that of a church. Rauwenhoff's explicit aim was to understand Protestantism in its particularity *as a form of religious life*.⁸¹ Consequently, he did not present a full history of the Protestant church and its dogmas. Dogmatical and theological developments had to be included, but the practical and social aspects were equally important. According to Rauwenhoff, special attention should be given to the question how a religion is related to the state, the sciences, the arts, and the "progress of general civilisation".⁸² He considered the authoritarian character of churches a threat to the piety of believers; and for the future envisaged only a "free religious idealism".⁸³

In this respect, Allard Pierson differed from his colleague Rauwenhoff. Although he had even more severe quarrels with the Dutch Reformed Church, which he was eventually to leave,⁸⁴ he showed much more sympathy for the ecclesiastical dimension of Roman Catholicism. An important aspect of its greatness consisted in its capacity to adjust itself to the needs of the masses.⁸⁵ Recently, it has been convincingly argued that Pierson was not so much fascinated by the aestheticism of Catholicism, but rather by the way this Church exercised authority over its believers.⁸⁶ It is the most realistic kind of Christianity, Pierson claims, and its goal is the general spread of this type of religion. Yet, it would be utterly wrong to identify pre-Reformation Christianity with Roman Catholicism. Pierson argues for a conceptual and historical distinction between the two. The main line of argument was that early Christianity already contained

⁸¹ Rauwenhoff, *De geschiedenis van het protestantisme*, vol. I, p. 42; on Rauwenhoff, see P.L. Slis, *L.W.E. Rauwenhoff (1828–1889). Apologeet van het modernisme*, Kampen 2003.

⁸² Rauwenhoff, *De geschiedenis van het protestantisme*, vol. I, p. 42.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, vol. III, p. 438; cf. vol. I, p. 33.

⁸⁴ Cf. J. Trapman, "Allard Pierson en zijn afscheid van de kerk", in: *Documentatieblad voor de Nederlandse Kerkgeschiedenis na 1800* 19 (1996) 15–27; Arie L. Molendijk, "Abschied vom Christentum. Der Fall Allard Pierson", in: Henri Krop, Arie L. Molendijk, Hent de Vries (eds), *Post-Theism. Reframing the Judeo-Christian Tradition*, Leuven 2000, pp. 141–157.

⁸⁵ Pierson, *De geschiedenis van het Roomsche Katholicisme*, vol. I, pp. 25 & 29.

⁸⁶ P.G.J.M. Raedts, "Veroordeeld tot vrijheid: Pierson en het katholicisme", in: *De Negentiende Eeuw* 21 (1997) 5–15.

a plurality of forms, only one of which was cultivated by Roman Catholicism. This is also the basis for the justification of Protestantism, which, however, is not sketched in merely positive terms. The realism of Catholicism is contrasted with the “one-sided spiritualism” of Protestantism, which is further characterised by the unmanageability of its official church forms and its “preposterous confessional obstinacy”.⁸⁷ Pierson also examines the point of view from which a sensible discussion of Catholicism should be undertaken. The first condition is that one should take a standpoint beyond the ongoing struggle between Catholicism and Protestantism. Both supporters and opponents are equally unable to achieve “impartiality”.⁸⁸ Another requirement is to abstain from “rationalistic influences”. It would be wrong to ask whether religious views stand the test of logical scrutiny. Neither should historiographers venture their own opinions about the plausibility of the religion they study. “A religion wants to be judged totally on its own terms”.⁸⁹

Neither Rauwenhoff nor Pierson suppressed their personal predilections, but they were well aware of the fact that the fundamental assumption of the series implied a new approach to Christian religion as well. Basically, Protestantism and Catholicism were on the same level as other religions. What is more, not only institutions, creeds, and theologies were to be studied, but the forms of religious life as well. The history of the Catholic Church, Pierson claimed, is not to be confused with that of Catholicism as a religious form of life. And it was this last form of history which was to be presented in this series. It is the history not of external facts, but of the “interior life of a substantial part of our fellow human beings”.⁹⁰ This expression can easily create the idea that Pierson was only focusing upon a history of piety. This would be a misunderstanding. One of the peculiarities of the Catholic religion, according to Pierson, is that it claims people completely. There is not only Catholic theology, but Catholic philosophy, ethics, art, and views on society and family life as well. On closer inspection, we see that it was not so easy for these scholars to live up to the standards they had set for themselves. However, on a methodological level, they surely made a serious step

⁸⁷ Pierson, *De geschiedenis van het Roomsche Katholicisme*, vol. I, p. 43.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, vol. I, p. 44; cf. p. 20.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, vol. I, p. 46.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, vol. I, p. 9.

forwards in transforming traditional church history into something new. The Whig history of bygone times, which focuses on official documents and the main church events, had to be supplemented by a history that paid attention to lived religion.

Such programmatic statements do not make Pierson a forerunner of recent scholarship, as practised, for instance, in the French *Annales* School. Nevertheless, it is important to notice that a new methodological awareness arose at the same time in the fields of science of religion and church history. In the context of Kruseman's series, these fields were apparently seen as part of a greater endeavour. Disciplinary boundaries were not yet as fixed as they are now. The contributors represented a new approach to the study of religions as such. In principle, all religions—including the Israelite and Christian religions—were to be studied in the same way. This does not preclude the conviction that comparison would ultimately show Christianity, or liberal Protestantism in particular, to be morally the best and religiously the most profound, inclusive religion of all. Most authors came from liberal Protestant backgrounds. The above analysis confirms some of the main findings of the historiography of early science/history of religion. No doubt, the philological-historical method prevailed in the series, but a strong belief in the usefulness of the comparative approach is demonstrable as well. Only religions based on holy books were included. It went without saying that non-scriptural religions did not belong to the "principal religions". The development of the series also shows the growing degree of professionalisation and "academisation" of the study of religion. In the early stages contributions had been invited from various amateurs from literary circles.

A remarkable fact is that the initiative for the series was not taken by theologians. Contributions came from scholars from other backgrounds and even with sceptical attitudes toward religion. In this respect, the project does not fit the common assumption that early Dutch science of religion was primarily or even solely an affair of theologians. If historiographical research into the institutionalization of the field is not restricted to the theological faculties, one cannot fail to notice a broader interest in the study of religions in the plural, both from scholars and from an educated general public. The inclusion of volumes on the history of Catholicism and Protestantism shows that the series did not originate in a (theologically motivated) need to fill a lacuna (the study of "foreign" world religions), but

instead points to the emergence of a new, comparative view of all religions. The fact that at a later time the field was more or less incorporated into the theological faculties should not obscure the beginnings of the academic study of religion in the Netherlands, which was at least to some degree a joint enterprise of people from various backgrounds, outside as well as inside the universities.

4. *The Higher Education Act of 1876*⁹¹

We now turn to the institutionalization of early Dutch science of religion within the university system. In an authoritative account, Eric J. Sharpe, referring to a piece written in 1880 by the Dutch scholar A.G. van Hamel,⁹² wrote: “There were powerful secularising influences at work in this development, and in this sense the Dutch university served as a paradigm for the kind of situation which was to arise in other countries”.⁹³ Many other historians are more sceptical about the supposed institutional breakthrough in the Netherlands. They emphasize the theological constraints under which scholars such as C.P. Tiele and P.D. Chantepie de la Saussaye still worked.⁹⁴ In order to avoid the pitfall of teleological interpretation, which stresses the antagonism between the science of religion and theology and forgets how intimately the two were linked together (even to such an extent that it was sometimes hardly possible to demarcate boundaries),⁹⁵

⁹¹ The habit of speaking of “the Dutch Universities Act of 1876” is incorrect, because the former Latin Schools (now called “Gymnasia”), which prepared for the university, were also involved. The evolution of the Gymnasium from the Latin School was actually a more complicated process; cf. H.J. Smid, *Een onbekoekte nieuwigheid? Invoering, omvang, inhoud en betekenis van het wiskundeonderwijs op de Franse en Latijnse scholen 1815–1863*, Delft 1997, pp. 33–44; C.A. Mandemakers *Gymnasiaal en middelbaar onderwijs. Ontwikkeling, structuur, sociale achtergrond en schoolprestaties*, s.l. [Rotterdam] 1996.

⁹² A.G. van Hamel, “L’enseignement de l’histoire des religions”, in: *Revue de l’histoire des religions* 1 (1880) 379–385.

⁹³ Eric J. Sharpe, *Comparative Religion. A History* (1975), London 1986, p. 121.

⁹⁴ Cf. K.-H. Kohl, “Geschichte der Religionswissenschaft”, in: *Handbuch religionswissenschaftlicher Grundbegriffe*, vol. I, Stuttgart 1988, pp. 217–262; J.G. Platvoet, “Close Harmonies. The Science of Religion in Dutch *Duplex Ordo* Theology, 1860–1960”, in: *Numen* 45 (1998) 115–162.

⁹⁵ Cf. Hjelde, *Die Religionswissenschaft und das Christentum*; Hjelde, “The Science of Religion and Theology. The Question of Their Interrelationship”, in: Arie L. Molendijk & Peter Pels (eds), *Religion in the Making. The Emergence of the Sciences of Religion*, Leiden 1998, pp. 99–127.

I will try to (re)contextualise the process of the institutionalization of the science of religion in the Netherlands.⁹⁶

It was a long and winding road that led to the Higher Education Act, which was signed by King William III on the sixth of May 1876, and became effective on the first of October 1877.⁹⁷ A first draft was presented by the Home Secretary on February 25, 1868, after which several other proposals followed. However, it was not until March 8, 1876, that the final parliamentary discussion began, which would eventually take a month. In the meantime, at least five petitions concerning the theological faculties, mainly from the senates of the universities of Utrecht and Leiden, reached Parliament. Theological education was a major concern at that time, and the Dutch Parliament—actually, it was the so-called “Second Chamber” (comparable to the British House of Commons, which has legislative power)⁹⁸—debated this topic extensively. Its 75 members had been elected by a small minority of the Dutch population, who had the right to vote on the basis of property and income (general suffrage was first introduced in 1917). This wealthy and well-educated elite was particularly interested in (higher) education, which explains, at least to some extent, the long duration of the debate.

The outcome of their discussions concerning the theological faculties bore the character of a compromise, as was generally recog-

⁹⁶ Cf. George W. Stocking, Jr., *Victorian Anthropology*, New York–London 1987, p. xii: “an experiment in multiple contextualisation”. Ivan Strenski, *Durkheim and the Jews of France*, Chicago–London 1997, pp. 8–12, stresses the necessity for historical scholarship to provide contexts which can throw light on the intentions of those early scholars of religion. Speaking about Durkheim he writes: “Thus, it is not a question of the truth or falsity of Durkheim’s claims about symbolism, not a question of why or why not Durkheim was *wrong* about symbolism. It is a question of what made Durkheim *think* he was right!” (10). Perhaps Strenski is too optimistic about recovering intentions (and consequently underestimates the role of our own preconceptions in the process of historical research), but his advice to contextualize carefully is right on target.

⁹⁷ Cf. O.J. de Jong, “De wetgever van 1876 en de theologie”, in: *Nederlands Archief voor Kerkgeschiedenis* 48 (1967–1968) 313–332; G.A. Meuleman, *De Godgeleerdheid volgens de Wet op het Hoger Onderwijs van 1876*, Amsterdam 1982; Albert de Lange, “Staatsrechtelijk geknutsel. De regeling van de predikantsopleiding in Nederland door de overheid in de negentiende eeuw”, in: *Documentatieblad voor de Nederlandse Kerkgeschiedenis na 1800* 54 (2001) 28–58.

⁹⁸ Besides the “Second Chamber”, there is the “First Chamber” of Parliament (comparable to the British House of Lords), whose members are not directly chosen by the citizens and which has no right of amendment. In actual fact, it plays a subordinate role, although it can reject a bill.

nized. “A sour fruit of political patchwork”,⁹⁹ said the later Prime Minister Abraham Kuyper, who led the ecclesiastical and political emancipation of the orthodox Protestants in the late nineteenth century (the prelude to the famous “pillarization” of Dutch society).¹⁰⁰ Notwithstanding some adaptations the Bill still forms the basis of the theological faculties at state universities (Leiden, Groningen, Utrecht, and until recently Amsterdam),¹⁰¹ and until recently the actual meaning of the clauses relating to the theological faculties has continually been disputed.¹⁰² Under these conditions, the question concerning what the Act “really” was about is very difficult to answer, if the question even makes sense at all. My purpose here will be to draw some contours that emerge from the debates surrounding the Act of 1876.

The main problem that confronted government and Parliament was the fact that the state, under the old regime of the Act of 1815, was directly involved in the training of ministers of the main Protestant

⁹⁹ Abraham Kuyper, *Is er aan de publieke universiteit ten onzent plaats voor een faculteit der theologie?*, Amsterdam 1890, p. 19.

¹⁰⁰ Peter van Rooden, “Contesting the Protestant Nation. Calvinists and Catholics in the Netherlands”, in: *Etnofoor* 8/2 (1995) 15–30; Van Rooden, *Religieuze Regimes. Over godsdienst en maatschappij in Nederland, 1570–1990*, Amsterdam 1996. On Dutch pillarization see, besides the famous monograph by A. Lijphart, *The Politics of Accommodation. Pluralism and Democracy in the Netherlands*, Berkeley 1968, particularly the English-language volume: *Acta Politica* 19 (1984) 7–178, and J.C.H. Blom & J. Talsma (eds), *De verzuiling voorbij. Godsdienst, stand en natie in de lange negentiende eeuw*, Amsterdam 2000.

¹⁰¹ A few years ago the Theological Faculty of the University of Amsterdam was closed, and, concomitantly, a small department of religious studies was founded within the Faculty of Arts and Letters. To speak of “State universities” is somewhat tricky: the University of Amsterdam has been a municipal university for a long time, and, since recently, many universities are no longer called *rijksuniversiteit* (national university). Nonetheless, they are all public (“neutral”) institutions, in contrast to the confessional universities, based on orthodox Protestant or Catholic principles. In these last cases the church involved has a great say in appointments, especially in the theology departments. The first confessional university was the Neocalvinist “Free University” of Amsterdam, founded by Kuyper in 1880.

¹⁰² P.A.H. de Boer & P.Sj. van Koningsveld (eds), *Honderd jaar “Uit Egypte . . .”*. *Leidse opstellen over de scheiding tussen kerk en staat aan de openbare theologische faculteit*, Leiden 1979; Meuleman, *De Godgeleerdheid*; Ed Noort & Hetty Zock (eds), *Trends in de Groninger Theologie*, Delft 2002; F.G.M. Broeyer & H. Noordegraaf (eds), *Duplex Ordo 125 jaar. Colloquium “Is de Duplex ordo in de huidige vorm van deze tijd?”*, 8 juni 2001, Utrecht 2002; F.G.M. Broeyer, “Theological Education at the Dutch Universities in the Nineteenth Century”, in: Theo Clemens & Wim Janse (eds), *The Pastor Bonus. Papers Read at the British-Dutch Colloquium at Utrecht, 18–21 September 2002* (Leiden etc. 2004) = *Dutch Review of Church History* 83 (2003) 390–408.

church in the Netherlands.¹⁰³ Formally, the Dutch Reformed Church (DRC) had no say in the academic training of its ministers, because the Dutch state had full responsibility. This situation was perceived more and more as being in conflict with the constitutional separation of church and state, especially after the introduction of the liberal constitution in 1848. There were various attempts at reform, but it took several years before the Home Secretary J. Heemskerk Azn. (1818–1897),¹⁰⁴ who belonged to the Remonstrants (the old Arminians; a small, but relatively influential upperclass Protestant church), put forward a bill on higher education in 1868. The new university would have no more than four faculties, and the money formerly expended on the theological faculties would be earmarked for the DRC, which would enable it to establish its own seminaries. In addition, as Heemskerk said in the explanatory memorandum, every Dutch citizen and every approved association and religious denomination was free to open a special school for higher education. The Minister probably had in mind the “seminaries” of several small Protestant denominations in Amsterdam, which were independent but made use of the facilities of the “Athenaeum”, the predecessor of the municipal university, established with the Act of 1876.¹⁰⁵

Heemskerk’s proposal did not meet with general approval, to say the least. It failed to appreciate the complex and, to some extent, subterranean links between the Dutch state and the Dutch Reformed Church. At first sight, the separation of church and state in 1796 had put an end to social and political discrimination based on religious difference. The Dutch state would only know citizens, not various corporate religious groups, but this did not imply that the Netherlands would be perceived as a secular nation. “Dutch national

¹⁰³ Verordening omtrent het onderwijs, 1815, art. 56 (cf. *Bijvoegsel tot het Staatsblad van het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden*, Tweede deel 1815, Dordrecht 1817). Catholic seminaries and those of the Remonstrants, the Mennonites, and the Lutherans, were also funded by the state (art. 58, 59).

¹⁰⁴ Cf. J.J. Huizinga, *J. Heemskerk Azn. 1818–1897. Conservatief zonder partij*, Harlingen 1973.

¹⁰⁵ The Senate of the University of Leiden strongly protested against the foundation of this new academic institution, arguing that it was completely superfluous and dangerous to the academic level in the Netherlands; cf. its Petition to the “First Chamber”, April 24, 1876; cf. P.J. Knegtmans & P. van Rooden (eds), *Theologen in ondertal. Godgeleerdheid, godsdienstwetenschap, het Athenaeum Illustre en de Universiteit van Amsterdam*, Zoetermeer 2003.

identity was furnished with characteristics that had strong religious overtones, like a simple piety, strong moral sentiments, . . . and tolerance".¹⁰⁶ As the former established church, the DRC (together with some small Protestant churches) was thought to play a role in the religious and moral education of the citizens. The DRC was not supposed to mark differences (between religious groups), but to represent an integrative force in the nation.¹⁰⁷ On the one hand, the religious identity of the Netherlands was framed in non-denominational, broadly Protestant terms, but on the other hand it could not be denied that the DRC had a major contribution to make to this identity.

Because of this (ideological) link between Protestant religion and the Dutch state, the clear-cut solution that Heemskerk offered was not convincing in the end. In its 1868 petition to Parliament, the Leiden Theological Faculty referred explicitly to the threat theological seminaries could pose to the state: seminaries could easily develop into breeding grounds for mysticism, fanaticism, and intolerance. It was argued that, notwithstanding the separation of church and state, there would always be a close link between religion and the state. Only a genuinely scholarly theology, embedded within the university, could provide an antidote against religious separatism and atheism.¹⁰⁸ Furthermore, the Leiden faculty pointed to the "odd" consequence of the ministerial proposal that Islam, the "Vedas", and the "Talmud" would be studied within the universities, whereas Christianity would be excluded from these subjects worthy of academic treatment. The abolition of the theological faculties would mean a "mutilation" of university education.¹⁰⁹

In the parliamentary debate another argument was adduced in favour of the theological faculties; namely, the interests of several Protestant churches in the academic education of their ministers. It was thought unwise to push the separation of church and state too far. Besides, in 1875 the Synod of the DRC had pleaded for the

¹⁰⁶ Van Rooden, "Contesting the Protestant Nation", p. 19f.

¹⁰⁷ This homogenization process resulted in a sometimes virulent anti-Catholicism.

¹⁰⁸ [J.H. Scholten et al.], *De Theologische Faculteit aan de Nederlandsche Hoogeschoolen, naar aanleiding van het bij de Tweede Kamer ingediende Ontwerp van Wet op het Hooger Onderwijs, door de Godgeleerde Faculteit aan 's Rijks Hoogeschool te Leiden*, Leiden 1868, p. 22f.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 9 and 32.

preservation of the old system.¹¹⁰ However, there was no consensus about this topic. At least 27 members of Parliament (Catholics, representatives of the dissenting Protestant denominations, and Conservatives) were against state faculties of theology. Another heterogeneous group seems to have been in favour of the status quo. A third faction, consisting of almost 30 Liberals, wanted, instead, a faculty of science of religion. This proposal received 32 votes, and was consequently rejected. The last motion put to the vote was to retain the old name. 28 Liberals were willing to pay this price to save the theological faculties, and the vote in favour of the “faculty of theology” was carried by a majority of 43 against 30.¹¹¹

It is difficult to detect and distinguish the precise character of the various standpoints in Parliament. The Home Secretary was quick to point to an alleged confusion: Do terms such as “theology” and “science of religion” designate different contents? Or is the last word just a terminological invention to sell old goods? Or is something different implied? According to the Home Secretary the term “science of religion” was simply too narrow to capture the whole of theology. He did not deny the importance of the field, but the subject did not make up a separate faculty. How many students would be attracted to such a restricted (truncated) faculty?¹¹² This point of view was also taken by the member of Parliament Van Naamen van Eemnes, who had close ties with the more orthodox Utrecht Theological Faculty, where the dogmatician J.I. Doedes advocated a concept of theology as concerned with God (and not so much with religion).¹¹³

In Parliament the renaming and restructuring of the theological faculties was defended by A. Moens, a student of the Leiden theo-

¹¹⁰ In 1876 Heemskerk expressed his surprise that his generous offer to transfer the theological faculties to the churches was in the end renounced by the DRC, whereas the Synod of 1868 had shown clear interest in the proposal. Cf. De Jong, “De wetgever van 1876 en de theologie”, pp. 320–321.

¹¹¹ Dutch: “Faculteit der Godgeleerdheid”; cf. De Jong, “De wetgever van 1876 en de theologie”, pp. 321–324.

¹¹² B.J.L. de Geer van Jutfaas (ed.), *De Wet op het Hooger Onderwijs. Uit de gewisselde stukken en de gehouden Beraadslagingen toegelicht*, Utrecht 1877, p. 160; cf. Meuleman, *De Godgeleerdheid*, p. 16, note 72. Heemskerk referred to the Utrecht theologian Doedes, who defended a restricted view on science of religion; cf. J.I. Doedes, *Encyclopedie der Christelijke Godsdienst*, Utrecht 1876, pp. 97–102. In the ongoing discussions since 1868 it had also been suggested to locate science of religion within the Faculty of Liberal Arts (*Letteren*).

¹¹³ Meuleman, *De Godgeleerdheid*, pp. 13–15 (and note 55).

gians J.H. Scholten and Kuenen. As representatives of a liberal theology that denied both miracles and the inspiration of Scripture, they favoured free theological inquiry, which was in no way to be restricted by church interests.¹¹⁴ Along these lines, the primary subject of theology was not God, but (Christian) religion. Moens' plea for a faculty of science of religion is to be seen in this light. The name was chosen, first of all, out of the desire to exclude anything reminiscent of ecclesiastical interests or dogmas. Moens said that the science of religion dealt with everything that counted as religion, not just with the revered object, and not just with religious feeling or practice, but with all that together.¹¹⁵ The subdiscipline philosophy of religion had to evaluate the truth claims of various religions. Religious truth was to be sought beyond denominational differences. Therefore, those theological disciplines that were thought to be too closely linked to the DRC had to be eliminated from the new curriculum.

Although science of religion was not accepted by Parliament as the name of the reconstituted faculties, the disciplines "history of religions in general" and "philosophy of religion" were introduced in the new list of theological disciplines. Heemskerk's proposal to include dogmatical and practical theology (when Parliament insisted on theological state faculties, the Home Secretary stipulated that a complete theological programme had to be guaranteed) was not accepted. The DRC was given the opportunity to set up state-funded church professorships at the universities in these fields;¹¹⁶ an opportunity that was seized with both hands. Thus, a dual structure emerged (the so-called "duplex ordo"), in which ordinary state-appointed professors work next to extraordinary church-appointed professors.

In sum, the passionate discussions concerning science of religion in the Netherlands were not about the introduction of a new discipline; rather, they were centred on the transformation of the traditional faculty of theology. The advocates of this change belonged to the liberal wing of Dutch Protestantism, which had its intellectual stronghold at the University of Leiden. They believed in an unbiased,

¹¹⁴ K.H. Roessingh, *De Moderne Theologie in Nederland. Hare Voorbereiding en eerste Periode* (1914), in: id., *Verzamelde Werken*, vol. I, Arnhem 1926, pp. 1–182.

¹¹⁵ Quoted in Meuleman, *De Godgeleerdheid*, p. 11.

¹¹⁶ Act 1876, Art. 104–106. For a French translation of the Act, see D.J. Steyn Parvé, *Organisation de l'Instruction Primaire, Secondaire et Supérieure dans le Royaume des Pays-Bas*, Leiden 1878, Appendix, pp. lv–lxxxvii.

non-confessional study of religion, which in the end would prove the superiority of their own liberal Protestantism. Fundamental to their view was the conviction that liberal Protestantism, although historically located in and linked to the DRC, was of general importance and could be a civilising force in Dutch society. They thought of themselves not as a denomination among others, but as a fundamental part of the Dutch nation. In an important sense, the theology-as-science-of-religion programme can be considered the scholarly counterpart of the Protestant feeling of superiority. The fulfilment of this programme would guarantee that theology acquired a scientific footing. The opponents of this stance, among them the Home Secretary, had a much more restricted view regarding the possibilities of the science of religion. According to them, its subject matter was religion or religious individuals. As such, the science of religion covered, at best, only a part of traditional theology, which is concerned with the divine.

The controversy surrounding the science of religion was essentially about the proper way of doing theology, and about the design of the theological faculties as a whole; not about the introduction of a new field of research. The proposal to introduce the “history of religions in general” and the “philosophy of religion” as separate disciplines was accepted without much discussion. They were simply included in the theological curriculum by the Act of 1876. As far as I can see, there was no substantial resistance against this renewal. As early as the summer of 1873 the Synod of the DRC had discussed the proposal to oblige future ministers to attend courses in philosophy and history of religion. On February 1, 1874 the new regulation for church examinations was issued.¹¹⁷ Tiele in Leiden and J.I. Doedes in Utrecht taught *historia religionum* from the academic year 1873–1874 onwards.

The question as to what extent “powerful secularising influences” were at work in this development, as claimed by Eric J. Sharpe,¹¹⁸ is rather difficult to answer. It is true that the close relationship

¹¹⁷ “Reglement op het examen ter toelating tot de Evangelie-bediening in de Nederlandsche Hervormde Kerk” (1 Febr. 1874), in: H.M.C. van Oosterzee (ed.), *Reglementen voor de Nederlandsche Hervormde Kerk*, fourth edition, Schiedam 1874, pp. 86–96, p. 87. For the minutes of the Synod, see *Handelingen van de Algemeene Synode der Nederlandsche Hervormde Kerk ten jare 1873*, 's-Gravenhage 1873 (from 25–29 September), pp. 205ff. I am grateful to Frits Broeyer for drawing my attention to these church regulations.

¹¹⁸ Sharpe, *Comparative Religion*, p. 121.

between the state theological faculties and the DRC was relaxed. The idea to adopt to some degree the German system of separate Protestant and Catholic professorships (albeit, unlike the situation in Germany, in one and the same faculty) was not followed.¹¹⁹ Some sort of deconfessionalisation did take place. However, this does not necessarily imply that the proponents of the theology-as-science-of-religion programme wanted to cut the link between church and state in a supra-confessional (= liberal Protestant) sense. The usefulness of “secularization” as a concept to describe some sort of linear development of religion in the Netherlands in the 19th and 20th century is limited.¹²⁰ The institutionalization of the science of religion in the Netherlands has been analyzed here in the context of the debates on the theological faculties. Because the outcome took on the character of a compromise, the Act of 1876 can be interpreted in various ways.¹²¹ I myself am inclined to see the outcome, to a large extent, as a victory for the liberal Protestant view on theology. Looking at the disciplines listed in Article 42 of the new bill, we note that the emphasis is on (Judeo-Christian) religion and on a historical approach, not on dogmatic theology.¹²² Anyhow, the parliamentary debates about science of religion were always about the (re)structuring of theological education. There was no talk about the need to classify foreign religions as such, and the colonial dimension seems to have been completely absent from the discussions.

5. *Disciplines and Boundaries*

Until now I have used the term “science of religion” rather implicitly, as if this label were self-evident and the designated content

¹¹⁹ The proposal was made by the Conservative MP Wintgens; cf. de Geer van Jutfaas (ed.), *De Wet op het Hooger Onderwijs*, p. 156.

¹²⁰ Cf. van Rooden, *Religieuze Regimes*.

¹²¹ Cf. Meuleman, *De Godgeleerdheid*.

¹²² Only one discipline (out of ten) is explicitly concerned with God, but in a historical way: the History of the Doctrine about God. The other disciplines not already mentioned include: Encyclopaedia of Theology, History of Israelite Religion, History of Christianity, Literature of Israel and Early Christianity, Exegesis of the Old and New Testament, History of the Doctrines of the Christian Religion, and Ethics; cf. Arie L. Molendijk, “De beoefening van de theologie in Nederland aan openbare instellingen voor hoger onderwijs”, in: H.J. Adriaanse (ed.), *Tweestromenland. Over wijsgerige en belijdende theologie*, Leuven 2001, pp. 31–52.

familiar to the informed scholar. This, of course, was not the case at the time. Even concerning the name there was no consensus. Although from a historical perspective a case could be made to consider “science of religion” to be the covering designation, many other terms were used to refer to (parts of) the new field. After a cursory reading of texts of Dutch authors, I counted the following names: science of religion, science of religions, history of religion, history of religions, philosophy of religion, phenomenology of religion, psychology of religion, hierology (*godsdiensleer*), and hierography (*godsdienskunde*).¹²³ Terminology was not fixed, and the relationships between the various branches were a matter for discussion. Different terminological solutions were presented, sometimes even by the same author.

In the Act of 1876, however, only the “history of religions in general”¹²⁴ and the “philosophy of religion” were mentioned. The historiography of the “science/history of religion” focuses primarily on the first discipline.¹²⁵ This has to do with later developments, which caused the original bond between the history and philosophy of religion to loosen. Scholars such as C.P. Tiele, P.D. Chantepie de la Saussaye and G.H. Lamers, however, did not perceive their task as merely to describe various religions. They wanted to know more about religion as such, and this objective required a more or less philosophical approach to the subject matter. It is not the intention of this observation to deny the emphasis they put on an empirical (historical) way of doing research, but the inquiry into the development, the essence, and the value of religion(s) was part and parcel of their undertaking. In early Dutch science of religion, the relationship between the new field and theology was a touchy subject. The most radical position was taken by Tiele, who in his early years pleaded for a complete transformation of theology into science of religion. Chantepie de la Saussaye was not so sure about this, and apparently became more and more sceptical about such a radical modification. Though according to him the science of religion was

¹²³ For the Dutch terms, see C.P. Tiele, “Over de wetten der ontwikkeling van den godsdienst”, in: *Theologisch Tijdschrift* 8 (1874) 225–262, p. 225.

¹²⁴ In the original proposal it was “History of Religion [!] in general”. This change of name was not discussed in Parliament.

¹²⁵ The term “discipline” is used with some hesitation here, because essential elements such as a more or less demarcated field of research, and a consensus about methodological issues, were lacking at the time, but no more adequate term is at hand.

of great use to theology for gaining a deeper insight into the religious idea of Christianity, the two fields were conceived as distinct disciplines with distinct aims.¹²⁶

By virtue of the Higher Education Act of 1876 the new endeavour was located in the theological faculties. This situation could be interpreted in different ways. The minimal interpretation saw the history of religions and the philosophy of religion only as new instruments that helped to broaden the scope of theology. The debate in Parliament, however, focused not so much upon the introduction of new disciplines as upon the organisation of the theological faculties as such. The proponents of the science of religion aimed at a radical transformation of theology into science of religion. From their view, the science of religion was not only a descriptive, but also an evaluative discipline. It could fulfil (most of) the tasks of the old theology and would show the superiority of Christian religion. Tiele, for instance, speculated about a purified, liberal Protestantism developing into the religion of mankind, on the basis of a true, complete humaneness.¹²⁷

The programme of theology-as-science-of-religion explains some of our difficulties in demarcating the new field. Theology as such had to get on to a new, scientific footing, and that is the reason why, in principle, all theological disciplines were involved. The science/history of religion(s) was explicitly not limited to non-Christian religions, even though the main effort was concentrated in this field. However, the study of the "other religions" was thought to be related to the study of Christian religion. Thus, scholars who lived up to the new standards and worked, e.g., on church history or the Old Testament, were included in the new field. Yet the division of tasks caused those scholars who actually had an assignment to teach the "science/history of religion" to concentrate on non-Christian religions. By doing this, they could justify their own existence within academia. Much emphasis was actually placed on the study of the *Umwelt* of the Old and New Testament, i.e., on the religions of ancient Egypt, Mesopotamia and the extra-biblical Semitic religions, and those of the Greek, Hellenistic, and Latin worlds.¹²⁸ This fact accounts

¹²⁶ For a more detailed discussion of the views of Tiele and Chantepie de la Saussaye see chapter IV below.

¹²⁷ C.P. Tiele, "Over de wetten der ontwikkeling van den godsdienst", p. 262.

¹²⁸ Cf. Platvoet, "Close Harmonies".

for the common ground that was found with (mainly philologically trained) scholars in the Faculty of Arts.

Depending on whether one takes the science of religion as the attempt at a methodological reform of theology as such, or as a discipline concerned with non-Christian religions, its history can be written in different ways. From the present perspective, one is perhaps tempted to focus on the emergence of a distinct field of study (within the theological faculties). This is, of course, possible, but leads to a misrepresentation of early science of religion in the Netherlands. What hardly anybody wanted, however, was the establishment of some kind of department of religious studies, in which various religions would be studied for their own sake. The science of religion, no matter how it was taken, was thought to contribute to a better understanding of (the superiority of liberal Protestant) Christianity. In this situation, it is almost impossible to draw definite boundaries. The historian of Dutch science of religion in a broad sense has to learn to see it as a field of study in which scholars from various backgrounds and with different interests worked. This chapter has shown that from a methodological point of view the discussions about the science/history of religion were related to a comparative approach to religion, and, from an institutional point of view, led to the positioning of the discipline in the faculties of theology. Moreover, the above analysis shows the importance of the belief in the meaningfulness of an interrelated study of religion, which would contribute to the understanding of *religion as such*.

CHAPTER FOUR

CONCEPTUALIZING SCIENCE OF RELIGION

In the late nineteenth century C.P. Tiele and P.D. Chantepie de la Saussaye were seen as the main representatives and architects of the science of religion in the Netherlands. In this chapter I will discuss their views on the new field, and also provide a brief sketch of their careers. Special attention will be paid to the international context in which both scholars worked.

1. *Cornelis Petrus Tiele (1830–1902)*

In the morning edition of 14 January 1902, the Philadelphia *Public Ledger* announced the “death of a noted scholar and scientist”: Cornelis Petrus Tiele, who had died three days earlier in his native city Leiden. The obituary noted that Tiele was held in high honour in the United States. “He was a member of the American Philosophical Society, whose rooms are at 104 South Fifth Street, and of the American Oriental Society and the American Society of Biblical Literature and Exegesis. About two years ago the American Committee for Lectures on the History of Religions [. . .] invited him to come to this country and deliver a course of lectures in the prominent cities of the United States; but his engagements at that time were such that he was obliged to decline the invitation”. This announcement was probably written by Tiele’s American friend and colleague, Morris Jastrow Jr. (1861–1921),¹ at the time professor of Semitic Languages at the University of Pennsylvania (Philadelphia) and a member of the Committee mentioned above. On the occasion of Tiele’s seventieth birthday Jastrow had already written an exceptionally favourable

¹ For an overview of his work, see *Bibliography of Morris Jastrow Jr., Ph.D., Professor of Semitic Languages in the University of Pennsylvania 1885–1910*, Philadelphia (privately printed), 1910 (a copy of this book is in the Leiden University Library). Jastrow dedicated his book *The Study of Religion* (London 1901) to Tiele; cf. also p. 47 of Jastrow’s book.

“commemoration”, which placed Tiele on a par with other Leiden scholars such as Scaliger, Boerhaave, J.H. Scholten, C.G. Cobet, R.P.A. Dozy, and Abraham Kuenen.² Jastrow pointed to Tiele’s many international contacts and regretted the fact that Tiele had not accepted his invitation to visit some leading American universities, and to give the Annual Courses of Popular Lectures in the History of Religions. In fact, as far as I know, Tiele never crossed the Atlantic; the efforts of J.H. Barrows to persuade him to attend the Chicago Parliament of Religions in 1893 were also in vain.³

Cornelis Petrus Tiele was born in Leiden on 16 December 1830. He was the first child of the marriage between the bookseller and printer Cornelis Tiele (1794–1847) and his wife Maria Johanna van Kampen (1809–1846),⁴ who probably died in the aftermath of child-

² Jastrow, “Cornelis Petrus Tiele. In Commemoration of His Seventieth Birthday”, in: *The Open Court. A Monthly Magazine Devoted to the Science of Religion, the Religion of Science, and the Extension of the Religious Parliament Idea* 14 (1900) 728–733.

³ Tiele did, however, write a contribution: “On the Study of Comparative Theology”, in: John Henry Barrows (ed.), *The World’s Parliament of Religions*, 2 vols, London 1894, vol. I, pp. 583–590. This text was read by Rev. Frank M. Bristol (Chicago) on the Parliament’s session of 15 September 1893; cf. W.R. Houghton (ed.), *Neely’s History of The Parliament of Religions and Religious Congresses at the World’s Columbian Exposition*, Chicago 1893, p. 245. The correspondence between the main executive of the World’s Parliament, John Henry Barrows, and Tiele is kept in the Leiden University Library (BPL 2709E). On the Chicago Parliament, see Eric J. Ziolkowski (ed.), *A Museum of Faiths. Histories and Legacies of the 1893 World’s Parliament of Religion*, Atlanta, Georgia 1993; Richard Hughes Seager, *The World’s Parliament of Religions. The East/West Encounter, Chicago 1893*, Bloomington–Indianapolis 1995; Seager (ed.), *The Dawn of Religious Pluralism. Voices from the World’s Parliament of Religion, 1893*, La Salle, Illinois 1993; Dorothea Lüddeckens, *Das Weltparlament der Religionen von 1893. Strukturen interreligiöser Begegnung im 19. Jahrhundert*, Berlin–New York 2002.

⁴ She was the daughter of N.G. van Kampen (1776–1839), professor of Dutch literature, and the sister of the publisher P.N. van Kampen (1818–1888); on Van Kampen, see NNBW III, col. 662; NNBW: *Nieuw Nederlandsch Biografisch Woordenboek*, ed. by P.C. Molhuysen, P.J. Blok (& K.H. Kossmann), 10 vols, Leiden 1911–1937. On Tiele, see also J.H. de Ridder, “Cornelis Petrus Tiele”, in: J. Kalff Jr. (ed.), *Mannen en vrouwen van betekenis in onze dagen. Levensschetsen en portretten*, Haarlem 1900, pp. 321–364 (321–357), p. 324. Tiele published several of his books with P.N. van Kampen. For further biographical information, cf. J.A. Beijerman, “Cornelis Petrus Tiele”, in: *Uit de Remonstrante Broederschap* 13 (1902) 129–140; P.D. Chantepie de la Saussaye, “Cornelis Petrus Tiele”, in: *Jaarboek van de Koninklijke Akademie van Wetenschappen* 1902, pp. 125–154; reprinted in: id., *Portretten en Kritieken*, Haarlem 1909, pp. 82–120; S. Cramer, “Tiele, Cornelis Petrus”, in: *Realenzyklopädie für protestantische Theologie und Kirche*, begründet von J.J. Herzog, dritte Auflage, hg. von Albert Hauck, vol. XIX, Leipzig 1907, pp. 766–775; W.B. Kristensen, “Religionshistorikeren C.P. Tiele”, in: *Rünger* 1, No. 16 (16 April 1898) 3–7; Kristensen, “Professor C.P. Tiele”, in: *Woord en Beeld*, October 1899, pp. 348–354; Kristensen, “Tiele (Cornelis Petrus)”, in: NNBW IV, col. 1332–1335; Albert de Lange, “Tiele, Cornelis Petrus”,

birth (Tiele's youngest brother David Louis survived his mother by only five days). Tiele and the remaining sister and brothers were orphaned at an early age. The children were raised further by relatives⁵ and brought up in a Remonstrant milieu. Tiele finished the "Gymnasium" in Leiden, and went on to study at the *Athenaeum Illustre* and the Seminary of the Remonstrant Church (the former Arminians), both in Amsterdam. He was influenced most by his Remonstrant teacher, Abraham des Amorie van der Hoeven (1798–1855), whom Tiele praised on several occasions for his personal qualities and his outstanding rhetorical skills.⁶ Remonstrant students were required to take courses at the *Athenaeum Illustre*, which was a municipal institution for higher learning without the status and with only few of the privileges of the approved universities (three at that time: Leiden, Utrecht, and Groningen).⁷ Tiele had fond memories⁸ of the lectures by the church historian Willem Moll (1812–1879),⁹ Jan van Gilse (1810–1859, professor at the Mennonite Seminary in Amsterdam),¹⁰ and the ethnographer and specialist on the Dutch East Indies, Pieter Johannes Veth (1814–1895, at the time professor in Oriental languages, including Hebrew).¹¹ He concluded his studies with a thesis on the Gospel of John.¹²

in: BLGNP, vol. IV, Kampen 1998, pp. 421–424; BLGNP: *Biografisch Lexicon voor de Geschiedenis van het Nederlandse Protestantisme*, 5 vols [so far], Kampen 1978–2002; W.C. van Maanen, "Prof. Dr. C.P. Tiele †", in: *De Amsterdammer. Weekblad voor Nederland*, 19 January 1902 (p. 10); Van Maanen, "In memoriam Cornelis Petrus Tiele (1830–1902)", in: *Theologisch Tijdschrift* 36 (1902) 190–192, and the contributions in: E.H. Cossee & H.D. Tjalsma (eds), *Geloof en Onderzoek. Uit het leven en werk van C.P. Tiele (1830–1902)*, Rotterdam 2002.

⁵ Cornelis Petrus by his uncle Van Marle; cf. De Ridder, "Cornelis Petrus Tiele", p. 324.

⁶ Cf. Tiele, "Am. des Amorie van der Hoeven", in: *De Teekenen des Tijds* (1859) 23; Tiele, *Gedenkrede bij het 250jarig bestaan van het Seminarium der Remonstranten, uitgesproken op dinsdag den 28^{sten} october 1884, in de Stads-gehoorzaal te Leiden*, niet in den handel [not for sale], Leiden 1884; cf. E.H. Cossee, "'Zoo wij iets sloopen, het is niet de godsdienst'. Cornelis Petrus Tiele (1830–1902) als apologet van het Modernisme", in: *Jaarboek voor de geschiedenis van het Nederlands Protestantisme na 1800* 1 (1993) 17–33.

⁷ Piet de Rooy, "De ontdekking van een oud bestoven familieportret", in: J.C.H. Blom et al. (eds), *Een brandpunt van geleerdheid in de hoofdstad. De Universiteit van Amsterdam rond 1900 in vijftien portretten*, Hilversum–Amsterdam 1992, pp. 9–28; P.J. Knegtmans & P. van Rooden (eds), *Theologen in onderdal. Godgeleerdheid, godsdienstwetenschap, het Athenaeum Illustre en de Universiteit van Amsterdam*, Zoetermeer 2003.

⁸ Tiele, *Gedenkrede*, p. 20.

⁹ BLGNP I, pp. 188–190.

¹⁰ NNBW IV, col. 657.

¹¹ On Veth, see chapter VII.2 below.

¹² Tiele, *Specimen theologicum continens annotationem in locos nonnullos Evangelii Joannei*,

Tiele married Johanna Maria Henrietta Backer (1831–1885)¹³ in 1853 and was ordained as a minister in the Remonstrant Brotherhood in the same year. He first went to the small village of Moordrecht, and was offered a new parish some three years later in Rotterdam. Here he had two Remonstrant colleagues: C.W. van der Pot (1813–1891, his former religious instructor in Leiden),¹⁴ and H.N. van Teutem (1802–1889).¹⁵ During his Rotterdam ministry he also became acquainted with his Walloon colleagues Albert Réville (1826–1906) and Allard Pierson (1831–1896). Réville was to become the director of the famous Fifth Section of the *École Pratique des Hautes Études* in Paris,¹⁶ and Pierson was to leave the church in 1865 because he found ecclesiastical institutions too confining and an impediment to a full-grown humanistic religious development of the individual.¹⁷ Tiele remained in Rotterdam till 1873 (earlier, his announcement

ad vindicandam hujus evangelii authenticam, Amsterdam 1853; cf. Tiele, *Het Evangelie van Joannes, beschouwd als bron voor het leven van Jezus*, Amsterdam 1855. This thesis was not the formal equivalent of a Ph.D. thesis. Tiele could not call himself “doctor” until he received an honorary doctorate from the University of Leiden in 1873.

¹³ Her name is often spelled as “Bakker”, but “Backer” is probably the correct spelling, as this is the name on her tombstone. My guess would be that she is the sister of the medical student G.H. Backer, who was a member of the same student society, “Collegium Belgicum”, as Tiele was; cf. the Tiele Collection in the Leiden University Library, Sign. BPL 2709A; for a short description of the contents of this collection, see Arie L. Molendijk, “The Heritage of C.P. Tiele”, in: *Nederlands Archief voor Kerkgeschiedenis* 80 (2000) 78–114, pp. 93–101; Anton van der Lem (ed.), *Religie in de academische arena. Leven en werk van C.P. Tiele (1830–1902)*. Catalogus bij een tentoonstelling in de Leidse Universiteitsbibliotheek van 11 januari tot 24 februari 2002, samengesteld door Hans van de Breevaart, Gerard Wiegers & Arie L. Molendijk, Leiden 2002.

¹⁴ BLGNP II, pp. 371–372.

¹⁵ BLGNP I, pp. 377–378; cf. Tiele, “Levensbericht van Dr. H.N. van Teutem”, in: *Levensberichten van de Maatschappij der Nederlandsche Letterkunde over het jaar 1890*, pp. 1–16; Tiele, “Dr. H.N. van Teutem”, in: *Uit de Remonstrantsche Broederschap over het jaar 1890*, pp. 104–110.

¹⁶ Cf. the Réville letters in the Tiele Collection (BPL 2710), and Albert Réville, “C.P. Tiele”, in: *Revue de l’Histoire des Religions* 45 (1902) 70–75, p. 71: “C’est là [à Rotterdam] que l’auteur de ces lignes eut l’avantage de le [Tiele] connaître. Il fut témoin de ses succès grandissants comme prédicateur très couru et très estimé”.

¹⁷ Cf. his valedictory speech to his last congregation: *Dr. A. Pierson aan zijne laatste gemeente*, Arnhem 1865; BLGNP II, pp. 361–364. There are three letters by Pierson in the Tiele Collection. On Pierson, see J. Trapman, “Allard Pierson en zijn afscheid van de kerk”, in: *Documentatieblad voor de Nederlandse Kerkgeschiedenis na 1800* 19 (1996) 15–27 and Arie L. Molendijk, “Abschied vom Christentum. Der Fall Allard Pierson”, in: Henri Krop, Arie L. Molendijk & Hent de Vries (eds), *Post-Theism. Reframing the Judeo-Christian Tradition*, Leuven 2000, pp. 141–157.

that he had rejected an offer from the Amsterdam Remonstrant congregation had been met with applause by his parishioners).¹⁸

In 1873 Tiele accepted the call to become the new director of the Remonstrant Seminary, which had just been transferred from Amsterdam to Leiden. The Leiden Theological Faculty of the second half of the nineteenth century was the stronghold of theological modernism, which denied the possibility of miracles, propagated a historical-critical analysis of the Holy Scriptures, and claimed to have found a synthesis of Christian faith and scholarly knowledge. The decision to relocate the education of Remonstrant ministers from Amsterdam to Leiden was a victory for the liberal wing of the Remonstrant Brotherhood. This resolution met with severe resistance from, among others, Tiele's immediate predecessor Joannes Tideman (1807–1891), who refused to attend Tiele's inaugural lecture of 1873.¹⁹ In this address Tiele presented himself as a successor of Simon Episcopus (1583–1643), the leader of the Arminians and professor of theology in Leiden, who had been forced to leave Leiden University after the condemnation of the Remonstrants by the Synod of Dordrecht (1618–1619). Tiele seized the opportunity to praise the tolerance of the nineteenth-century university regents. Although—as a Remonstrant professor—Tiele had to teach mainly practical theological disciplines such as homiletics (rhetoric), catechetics, and pastoral theology,²⁰ his inaugural lecture addressed the subject of the place of primitive religions in the history of religions.²¹ Tiele was to retain this position (outside the actual faculty) till his death in 1902. To his great satisfaction, the science/history of religion was given a place in the theological curriculum by the Higher Education Act of 1876. Tiele obtained a full professorship within the theological faculty proper in 1877, with the teaching assignment “history of religions in general”.

¹⁸ De Ridder “Cornelis Petrus Tiele”, p. 328; cf. Tiele, *De ware verlichting. Toespraak gehouden in de Remonstrantse gemeente te Rotterdam, op den avond van 9 februari 1868*, niet in den handel [not for sale], s.l. 1868.

¹⁹ Tj. Barnard, “Het verstoten kind tot de vrijheid geroepen. Ontwikkelingen binnen de Remonstrantse Broederschap in de tweede helft van de negentiende eeuw”, in: *Documentatieblad voor de Nederlandse kerkgeschiedenis na 1800* 20 (1997) 3–22; Cossee, “Zoo wij iets sloopen”. On Tideman, see BLGNP III, pp. 352–354.

²⁰ Tiele, *Gedenkrede*, p. 33. According to Tiele, the Remonstrant Brotherhood had no explicit dogmatical theology.

²¹ Tiele, *De plaats van de godsdiensten der natuurvölker in de godsdienstgeschiedenis. Redevoering bij het aanvaarden van het professoraat aan het Seminarium der Remonstranten, den 13den februari 1873, in het groot auditorium der Leidsche Hoogeschool, Amsterdam 1873*.

At the start of his professorship he also taught the “history of the doctrine of God”, but in 1891 he exchanged this subject for the philosophy of religion with his more orthodox colleague J.H. Gunning (1829–1905), who could not reconcile his Christian belief with the then current presupposition of philosophy of religion that in principle all religions are on a par.²² From 1877 till 1900 Tiele held two chairs; in addition to the Remonstrant professorship, he occupied the first Dutch chair in the history (and philosophy) of religion during these years.

Many contemporaries stressed Tiele’s artistic inclinations, i.e. his polished style and his rhetoric talents, which seem a bit old-fashioned nowadays. He wrote on literary subjects, and was not only a member (since 1862), but also twice president²³ of the Society of Dutch Literature (*Maatschappij der Nederlandsche Letterkunde*). He was a friend of the famous Dutch poet P.A. de Génestet (1829–1861), with whom he published the Christian Popular Almanac (*Christelijke Volksalmanak*, 1855–1862), and who died young.²⁴ He edited his friend’s two volumes of poetry, and added a long introduction.²⁵ Tiele himself published a volume of poetry and a novel under the pseudonym Dr. Pronius.²⁶ He also had contacts with foreign literati. The

²² On Gunning, see BLGNP IV, pp. 165–173; Albert de Lange, *De verhouding tussen dogmatiek en godsdienstwetenschap binnen de theologie. Een onderzoek naar de ontwikkeling van het theologiebegrip van J.H. Gunning Jr. (1829–1905)*, Kampen 1987; De Lange, *J.H. Gunning Jr. (1829–1905). Een leven in zelfverloochening*, vol. I (1829–1861), Kampen 1995.

²³ Cf. Tiele, “Toespraak ter opening van de Algemeene Vergadering van de Maatschappij der Nederlandsche Letterkunde door de voorzitter C.P. Tiele” [meeting: 20 June 1878], in: *Handelingen en Mededeelingen van de Maatschappij der Nederlandsche Letterkunde over het jaar 1878*, pp. 7–20; Tiele, “Toespraak ter opening van de Algemeene Vergadering van de Maatschappij der Nederlandsche Letterkunde door de voorzitter C.P. Tiele” [meeting: 19 June 1890], in: *Handelingen van de Maatschappij van Nederlandsche Letterkunde over het jaar 1890* (bijlage 1), pp. 21–41.

²⁴ NNBW II, pp. 466–467. For De Génestet’s letters to Tiele, see P.A. de Génestet, *De nagelaten brieven van P.A. de Génestet 1829–1861*, ed. by C.M. Verkroost, Delft 1976.

²⁵ De Génestet, *De Dichtwerken*, ed. by C.P. Tiele, second edition (original edition: 1869), Amsterdam 1871 (various reprints). There are German and Latin translations of some of his poems: De Génestet, *Der Sankt Nicolaus-Abend und andere Gedichte*, zweite sehr vermehrte mit einer Einleitung von [C.P.] Tiele versehene Auflage, den holländischen Originalen nachgebildet von J.R. Hanne, Halle 1890; *Genestetiana sive Petri de Genestet poetae Neerlandici Carmina selecta Latine vertit J.J. Hartman*, Lugduni Batavorum 1901.

²⁶ Tiele [under the pseudonym Dr. Pronius], *Augustus Berneman en de zijnen. Een eerste roman*, Haarlem 1853 and Tiele, *Gedichten*, Haarlem 1863 (reprinted in 1874). Tiele can be reckoned in the famous category of “minister-poets” who dominated

Oslo Library possesses a letter Tiele wrote to the Norwegian writer and 1903 Nobel Prize winner Björnstjerne Björnson (1832–1910), in which he thanked Björnson for sending him the English translation of his novel *In God's Ways* (“a masterpiece in every respect”). Björnson was highly interested in Tiele’s work as a historian of religion, and he advised his nephew W.B. Kristensen (1867–1953)²⁷ to study in Leiden. Tiele considered Kristensen “a young man of great promise, a hard worker with an ardent love of science, and still no book-worm, but agreeable in company”.²⁸ Eventually, Kristensen was to succeed Tiele in 1901. As is suggested by his letter to Björnson, Tiele loved good company. “[N]o less attractive than Tiele the scholar, is Tiele the man. A charming personality, made additionally attractive by innate modesty and extreme kindness of disposition, he is the natural centre of any circle which he enters”.²⁹ He had a rather young appearance, many necrologists remarked, and could be seen riding through the streets of Leiden on horseback till late in his life. The photographs left in the Tiele Collection of the Leiden University Library reveal an elegant, carefully dressed man, whose countenance shows contentment.

the Dutch literary scene till the 1880s; cf. G. Brom, *De dominee in onze literatuur*, Nijmegen–Utrecht 1924. The writers of the Eighties Movement revolted against this moralistic and old-fashioned literature. They propagated a purely aesthetic style, and their revolt was so successful that the “minister-poets” still have a rather bad reputation in the historiography of Dutch literature. Tiele should be seen as a minor figure in the history of Dutch literature, although contemporaries valued his poetry; cf. E.J. Potgieter, [Article on several volumes of poetry, including Tiele, *Gedichten*], in: *De Gids* 28/1 (1863) 183–224 (189–205) (a rather favourable review). Furthermore, several of Tiele’s religious poems were included in the hymn book distributed by the “Dutch Association of Protestants” (*Nederlandsche Protestantenbond*), an alliance of liberal Protestants who favoured free forms of Christian religiosity. This hymnal was also used in Remonstrant churches; cf. *Liederenbundel ten dienste van de Remonstrantsche Broederschap*, Amsterdam s.a. [1943], hymns 33 & 173 (by Tiele).

²⁷ BLGNP IV, pp. 266–269.

²⁸ Tiele to Björnson, 27.2.1891 (language: English); cited with permission of the Oslo University Library (Collection B. Björnson). Tiele had included translations of three of Björnson’s poems in Tiele, *Gedichten*, pp. 40–45; cf. Sigurd Hjelde, “From Kristiansand to Leiden. The Norwegian Career of W. Brede Kristensen”, in Hjelde (ed.), *Man, Meaning & Mystery. Hundred Years of History of Religions in Norway. The Heritage of W. Brede Kristensen*, Leiden 2000, pp. 205–222.

²⁹ Jastrow, “Cornelis Petrus Tiele”, p. 732; cf. J.R. Hanne, “Cornelis Petrus Tiele”, in: *Protestantische Monatshefte* 6 (1902) 114–118, p. 115: “[I]m privaten Verkehr liebte er geselliges Plaudern, interessante Anekdoten, einen treffenden Witz. Alles das in seiner feinen, stets gehaltvollen und gemütswarmen Art. . . . In seinem Hause begegnete er seinen Gästen als der lebenswürdigste Wirt”.

Tiele was Rector of Leiden University in 1892–1893. In 1899 and 1901 he took the place of the deceased rectors P.J. Cosijn (1840–1899) and J.E. van Iterson (1842–1901),³⁰ respectively. In the speech he gave when handing over the rectorship in 1901 he looked back on his career. This was one of the rare moments when Tiele revealed something of his personal thoughts. The letters, as far as I have been able to study them, are mainly about business and contain little personal information. In his speech, Tiele expressed a satisfaction with his academic career, the widespread recognition of his work, and the honours bestowed on him. In his private life, he said, he had experienced his share of grief and misfortune. He was probably referring to the death of his first wife in 1885 and the fact that his marriages remained childless; perhaps this is also a hint at the fact that he became an orphan at the age of sixteen. In 1890, at the age of sixty, he was married for the second time, to an old “family friend”, Antoinette Sophie Ruychaver (1840–1907). The sober religious ceremony was conducted by his friend and colleague Abraham Kuenen (1828–1892).³¹

Tiele’s death came rather suddenly. As his colleague, the jurist W. van der Vlugt (1853–1928), then Secretary of the Senate of the University, described it, the rumour of Tiele’s decease went through the town of Leiden that morning “comme un éclat de tonnerre”.³² He was buried in Leiden in the cemetery in the Groenesteeg next to his first wife on 14 January 1902.³³ The grave, in which the remains of his second wife now also rest, still exists; on the tombstone the three names are hardly legible. During his lifetime Tiele had been a supporter of the Society for Cremation; he had given the opening addresses at the general meetings of the Society in 1878

³⁰ NNBW IV, col. 800.

³¹ Kuenen’s hand-written speech is in the Tiele Collection (sign. BPL 2712, Box I, Nr. 19). On Kuenen, see BLGNP IV, pp. 270–274, and Tiele, “Abraham Kuenen. In Memoriam”, in: *De Gids* 56/1 (1892) 191–196; Tiele, “Abraham Kuenen”, in: *Koninklijke Akademie van Wetenschappen, Jaarboek 1892 (Levensberichten)*, Amsterdam 1892, pp. 1–25.

³² W. van der Vlugt, “† C.P. Tiele (1830–1902)”, in: *De Nieuwe Courant*, Monday 13.1.1902; cf. G. Schlegel, “Cornelis Petrus Tiele”, in: *Toung Pao. Archives pour servir à l’étude de l’histoire, des langues, de la géographie et de l’ethnographie de l’Asie orientale*, second series, 3 (1902) 39–40.

³³ Cf. I.W.L. Moerman & R.C.J. van Manen, *Groenesteeg. Geschiedenis van een Leidse begraafplaats* (Leidse historische reeks, vol. X), s.l. [Leiden] 1994.

and 1887.³⁴ The Society, which had to wage a hard struggle to achieve its objective (until 1914, cremations had to take place outside the Netherlands, for instance in Hamburg), published a somewhat perplexed death notice for their one-time supporter.³⁵

In accordance with Tiele's testamentary wish³⁶ his widow, Mrs. Tiele-Ruychaver, bequeathed the majority of her husband's academic library (some 1800 titles) to the Leiden University Library. The collection was catalogued,³⁷ and in an annex of the Library an exact copy of the master's old study was rebuilt, including his books, furniture, photographs, etc. On the desk was a small sculpture of Mommsen (probably Theodor Mommsen),³⁸ and on the walls were portraits of Coornhert, Van Oldenbarneveldt, Johan de Witt, Erasmus, and photographs of older contemporaries and friends.³⁹ Many of these personal belongings and souvenirs are still kept in the Tiele Collection. The room itself no longer exists. It was completely financed by Mrs. Tiele, who also established the Tiele Foundation (*Tiele Stichting*), which exists to this day. The Foundation is an endowment to maintain Tiele's original science of religion library and to keep it up to date, especially with regard to Old-Persian, Babylonian, Assyrian, and Egyptian religion. It was acknowledged by notarial act on 12 February 1902. Two acts followed (13.2.1902 & 26.9.1902), with the result that, in total, Mrs. Tiele donated the large amount

³⁴ *Berichten en Mededeelingen der Vereeniging voor Lijkverbranding* 3 (1878) 12–18; 12 (1887) 83–84.

³⁵ *Berichten en Mededeelingen der Vereeniging voor Lijkverbranding* 26 (1902) 41: “vroeger een warm strijder” (“who used to be an ardent supporter of our cause”); cf. Wim Cappers, *Vuurproef voor een grondrecht. Koninklijke Vereeniging voor Facultatieve Crematie (1874–1999)*, Zutphen 1999.

³⁶ Cf. the letter by M.J. de Goeje, *Interpres Legati Warneriani*, 17 January 1902, to the Curators of the University of Leiden (Sign. Arch. Curatoren III, Ingekomen 1902, No. 42). De Goeje informs the Curators of the gift of the scientific section of Tiele's library and his wish that these books should be kept in a separate room (“in één lokaal”), and tells them of the funds Mrs. Tiele intended to donate to maintain the collection and furnish the room.

³⁷ *Tiele's Kamer. Lijst der boeken uit de nalatenschap van Prof. Dr. C.P. Tiele geschenken door Mevrouw Tiele-Ruychaver*, Leiden 1902 [compiled by Louis D. Petit (1847–1918)]. One letter from Tiele to Petit has been preserved (10.5.1897; signature LTK 1788), in which he thanks Petit for cataloguing the books he had donated to the Library of the Remonstrant Seminary (which is part of the Leiden University Library).

³⁸ The only book by a Mommsen in the Tiele Collection is Th. Mommsen's *Römische Geschichte* (Berlin 1865).

³⁹ *Tiele's Kamer*, p. v.

of 20,000 guilders to the Foundation.⁴⁰ We have not been able to trace the date of the transfer of the manuscripts and of the letters in the collection to the University Library.⁴¹

We know little about Tiele's financial position, but the fact that he was able to enrol in academic studies after the death of both his parents shows that the family was not really poor.⁴² However, Tiele

⁴⁰ I am grateful to dr. A.J.M. Linmans and prof. A. van der Kooij, curators of the *Tiele Stichting*, for their cooperation and permission to use the archive of the Foundation. However, I did not find any information on any bequests Mrs. Tiele might have left to the Foundation upon her death.

⁴¹ The receipt of the collection of letters in the Department of "Western Manuscripts" of the Leiden University Library is dated 5 October 1964. They probably came from the so-called "Tiele Room", which was given up around that time. The approximately 1800 books, plus offprints, were handed to the Librarian and the *Interpres Legati Warneriani* on 20 June 1902 (cf. the summary of the letter—21 June 1902— from the librarian to the Curators of the Library; Inventory of the Library, sign. M. 93; "annual report"—22 September 1902; sign. M. 93; cf. also the anonymous contribution "Tiele's Kamer", in *Nieuwe Rotterdamse Courant*, Saturday, 21 June 1902, sheet [*blad*] C). No mention, however, is made of any letters having been donated. They could have been added to the collection after the death of Tiele's widow on 27 November 1907, but it is most probable that they were included in the gift of 1902. In his letter of 15 February 1908, the librarian informs Mr. C. Fock (The Hague) that there would be a new bequest by the late Mrs. Tiele, but that there was no official announcement yet (Inventory of the Library, sign. M. 94). No mention is made of letters (or manuscripts). As Dr. J.J. Witkam was kind enough to tell me, the archives (insofar as catalogued) of the *Interpres Legati Warneriani*, which was a more or less independent institution and is now an integral part of the Leiden University Library, contains no information about the transfer of the materials. The collection of M.J. de Goeje (1836–1909), the then *Interpres*, which does contain three letters by C.P. Tiele, does not help us any further either. One would expect that Tiele would have discussed any plans for a donation with his colleague De Goeje during his lifetime.

⁴² Two of his brothers—the only ones of whom I have been able to procure some biographical information—did not attend university, but nevertheless had excellent careers. P.A. Tiele (1834–1889) became the librarian of the Leiden University Library; cf. NNBW IV, col. 1335–1337; Martinus Nijhoff, "Levensbericht van Dr. P.A. Tiele", in: *Handelingen en Mededeelingen van de Maatschappij der Nederlandsche Letterkunde over het jaar 1888–1889*, Leiden 1889, pp. 136–188, and U.J. Jinkes de Jong & A.P.W.M. Kosten (eds), *Dr. Pieter Anton Tiele. Documentaire Bijdrage tot een Biografie*, 's-Gravenhage 1981. Another brother, J.J. Tiele (born in 1835 and still alive at the time his brother died), made his money in the tobacco business, and was able to build up a admirable art collection of (mainly) nineteenth century Dutch art (G.H. Breitner, Jozef Israëls, Isaac Israëls, and J.H. Weissenbruch); cf. *Vereeniging tot bevordering van Beeldende Kunsten. Verzameling "J.J. Tiele". Premie-Uitgave 1897*, s.l., s.a. [1897], (with an introduction by Ph. Zilcken). J.J. Tiele donated, together with his brother M.J. Tiele, an album with photographs of Java temples to the University library after the death of C.P. Tiele (signature: Plano 65 D 2). The librarian thanked them for this gift and for sending some offprints of articles by Tiele that the Library did not yet have in its collection (cf. Inventory of the Library signature: M. 93, 17 November 1902).

once recalled the fact that there was a time when he had no franchise (which was linked to a certain income). The costs for one year of study at that time have been estimated at 1,000 guilders; the *Bildungsbürgertum* earned incomes of 1,000–2,000 guilders a year, the lower middle classes and the civil service 300–1,000 guilders.⁴³ But perhaps Tiele was able to stay with relatives in Amsterdam, so that the costs of his five years of study remained below the estimated average.⁴⁴ As a Remonstrant professor Tiele had an income of 3,000 guilders (fl. 2,400 paid directly by the state, and a supplement from the Remonstrant Brotherhood of fl. 600; he renounced the supplement when he became a regular professor in 1877).⁴⁵ As a regular professor he was offered, in addition, a fixed salary of 4,000 guilders. The tuition fees were abolished by the Act of 1876. Tiele's taxable income for 1900 was 8,700 guilders. The poorest Leiden professors at the time had a taxable income of some 3,000 guilders, but could still keep up a good standard of living. Out of a population of 53,000, 237 persons in Leiden earned more than 5,000 guilders; 39 professors (out of 49) belonged to this group.⁴⁶ Tiele lived in spacious rooms; from 1888–1897 he rented a large house at the Rapenburg 43, the most famous Leiden canal, which was a very popular location at the time.⁴⁷

The political tastes of most of the Leiden professors at the time may probably most aptly be described as conservative-liberal. Some of Tiele's poems show a condescending attitude to "ordinary people". One could hardly imagine him as a supporter of the introduction of general suffrage (established in the Netherlands in 1917). On the other hand, he once explicitly included women in the opening

⁴³ W. Otterspeer, *De wiekslag van hun geest. De Leidse universiteit in de negentiende eeuw*, Leiden 1992, p. 432.

⁴⁴ I doubt, however, if this really was the case. The only Amsterdam address I was able to trace, "Leidsche Straat bij Kerkstraat bij de heer [?] Visser" (cf. the letter by H.C. Millies, 12.5.1851 [BPL 2709A]), does not point to such a situation. Moreover, as is clear from the same letter, Tiele was at the time the President of the Business Committee of the Amsterdam Students' Union. A really poor student could hardly have had such costly memberships.

⁴⁵ I owe this information to Tjaard Barnard, who is preparing a thesis on the transformation of the concept of church in the Remonstrant Brotherhood (1850–1930).

⁴⁶ Otterspeer, *De wiekslag van hun geest*, p. 388.

⁴⁷ Th.H. Lunsingh Scheurleer, C. Willemijn Fock, A.J. van Dissel, *Het Rapenburg. Geschiedenis van een Leidse gracht*, vol. III, Leiden 1988, pp. 571, 595–596, 609.

of a speech,⁴⁸ and complained that the (evangelical principle of) equality of men and women was still far away in the state institutions.⁴⁹ This did not change his traditional view of women, who have to be courted first, in order to be mastered later.⁵⁰ Many of these privileged liberals were also concerned about the “social question”. They took an active part in social and charity affairs. Tiele was on the board of the Leiden Remonstrant parish and the J.F. van der Lindenspoort (a Remonstrant institution providing housing for poor people).⁵¹ As is clear from the portraits in Tiele’s room, he attached great value to the national traditions of his country. In the presence of King William III (1817–1890) and other royal guests, he gave the big lecture in the Pieterskerk (the main Leiden church) on the occasion of the celebration of the tercentennial of the liberation of the town of Leiden from the Spanish siege, 3 October 1574.⁵²

Tiele hardly published anything on political issues, as far as we know. It is true that he contributed to the *Leiden–South-Africa–Album*, a collection of articles, poems, and drawings supporting the case of the Boers against the British.⁵³ But his extremely short piece is put in the most general terms, and he accepted an honorary doctorate from the University of Edinburgh in 1900, whereas his *collega proximus* P.D. Chantepie de la Saussaye (1848–1920)⁵⁴ refused the same honours from the University of Glasgow. In his rectorial address of 1901, Tiele stressed that his Edinburgh doctorate of law had been bestowed upon him *in absentia*.⁵⁵ An obituary, probably from a Scottish

⁴⁸ E.g., Tiele, *Gedenkrede*, opens with “toehoorders en toehoorderessen” (the male and female form of “listeners”). Many orators at the time (and to the present day) used only the male form, which may be considered to be inclusive.

⁴⁹ Tiele, *De rechte verhouding tusschen godsdienst en staat. Een woord voor den tijd, uitgesproken te Rotterdam, den 27^{den} september 1868*, Amsterdam 1868, p. 22.

⁵⁰ Tiele, “Een pleidooi tegen de moderne richting”, in: *De Gids* 29/4 (1865) 227–244 [Re: D. Chantepie de la Saussaye, *Leven en Rigting. Vier voorlezingen over godsdienstige vraagstukken van dezen tijd*, Rotterdam 1865], p. 229.

⁵¹ Ine Leermakers & Frouke I. Welling, *Door gangen en poorten naar de Leidse hofjes*, Leiden 1997, pp. 129–132.

⁵² Tiele, *Feestrede op het derde eeuwfeest van Leidens ontzet den 3en oktober 1874 in de Pieterskerk gehouden*, Leiden 1874. On this occasion, he received royal honours.

⁵³ *Leiden–Zuid-Afrika–Album*, Leiden 1899 [no page numbers added].

⁵⁴ BLGNP IV, pp. 89–92.

⁵⁵ Tiele, “Verslag van de Lotgevallen der Universiteit in het afgelopen jaar, uitgebracht den 16^{den} September 1901, door D^r. C.P. Tiele, bij het overdragen der waardigheid van Rector Magnificus aan M^r. H. van der Hoeven”, in: *Jaarboek der Rijks-Universiteit te Leiden 1900–1901*, Leiden 1901, pp. 29–47, p. 41f.

newspaper (reference is made to a lecture by professor Kirkpatrick, who had invited Tiele to Edinburgh to give the Gifford Lectures)⁵⁶ says: “Nothing could be more enlightened than the late Professor’s attitude with regard to the South African War. He could see, he often said, faults on both sides, but he utterly disbelieved the charges so recklessly made against the British Army, and he never wavered in his warm attachment to his British friends”.⁵⁷

Tiele was granted many honours. He received the degree of doctor *honoris causa* from the universities of Leiden (1873),⁵⁸ Bologna (1888), Dublin (1899), and Edinburgh (1900). He was (corresponding) member of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association (1875), Society of Biblical Archaeology, London (1878), Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (1882), Society of Biblical Literature and Exegesis, USA (1889), Academy of Anthropology, New York (1889), Teyler’s Theological Society, Haarlem (1889), Royal Asiatic Society, London (1895), American Oriental Society (1898), Philosophical Society, Philadelphia (1898), Royal Academy of Sciences, Brussels (1899), and the Dutch Society of Sciences, Haarlem (1900). He was also elected honorary president (together with Max Müller) of the First International Conference on the History of Religions, held in Paris in 1900.⁵⁹ The Dutch and Belgian governments decorated Tiele several times.

The above overview may suggest that Tiele was mainly known in the Anglo-Saxon world, and, indeed, many of his works appeared in English. William Robertson Smith (1846–1894), the editor of the ninth edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, asked him to supply the entry on “Religions”. Tiele also contributed several items to the *Encyclopaedia Biblica* (edited by T.K. Cheyne and J. Sutherland Black). However, his work also appeared in other European languages. He wrote two volumes on Babylonian-Assyrian history for a German handbook on ancient history.⁶⁰ He contributed to the *Zeitschrift für*

⁵⁶ C.P. Tiele, *Elements of the Science of Religion*, Part I: Morphological, Part II: Ontological, Edinburgh–London 1879–1899.

⁵⁷ TIELIANA: Box 4; the clipping is not identified further.

⁵⁸ Most biographical articles mention 1872 as the year in which Tiele obtained this doctorate; the date on the certificate kept in the Tiele Collection (BPL 2712, [Box] 2), however, reads 14 January 1873.

⁵⁹ *Actes de Premier Congrès International d’Histoire des Religions. Paris 1900*, vol. I: Séances Générales, Paris 1900, p. ix.

⁶⁰ For more bibliographical information, see Waardenburg, *Classical Approaches*,

Assyriologie, the *Zeitschrift für Religionsgeschichte*, the *Historische Zeitschrift*, the *Internationales Archiv für Ethnographie*, the *Theologischer Jahresbericht* (he compiled the review articles on history of religions during the years 1897–1898), and the *Revue de l'Histoire des Religions*, the first specialized journal in the field. He was the only foreigner on the board of the *Revue de l'Histoire des Religions*. Nevertheless, the bulk of Tiele's publications appeared in Dutch. He made the *Theologisch Tijdschrift* into one of the most important reference organs in the field of the history of religions. Approximately 200 reviews and 26 articles written by Tiele were published in this journal in the years 1867–1892. Tiele published in several other Dutch journals as well. The most important of them was the general monthly *De Gids*, to which he contributed eight articles.

To a large extent, Tiele was an autodidact in science of religion; he had taught himself ancient languages, such as Persian and Assyrian, in his Rotterdam parsonage. His academic career had started in the 1850s with two books on the Gospel of John. Tiele argued that this gospel offered a useful historical insight into the life of Jesus and that as a historical document it was to be preferred to other New Testament writings, not so much because it contained more reliable facts, but rather because the Fourth Gospel reflected the overall historical picture better than the other sources.⁶¹ His first major contribution to the emerging science of religion was his book *The Religion of Zoroaster*.⁶² From the late 1870s onwards, many of his articles and books were translated into the major European languages. His *Outlines of the History of Religion* (1877), originally published in Dutch in 1876, went through five editions between then and 1892, and the German translation, revised and enlarged by the Swedish scholar Nathan Söderblom (1866–1931)⁶³ after Tiele's death, was one of the most influential handbooks in German-speaking countries until

vol. II, pp. 282–286; De Ridder, “Lijst van geschriften van Dr. C.P. Tiele”, in: J. Kalf Jr. (ed.), *Mannen en vrouwen van beteekenis in onze dagen. Levensschetsen en portretten*, Haarlem 1900, pp. 358–364; Molendijk, “The Heritage of C.P. Tiele”, pp. 102–109.

⁶¹ Tiele, *Specimen theologicum continens annotationem in locos nonnullos Evangelii Joannei*; Tiele, *Het Evangelie van Joannes*.

⁶² Tiele, *De Godsdienst van Zarathustra van haar ontstaan in Baktrië tot den val van het Oud-Perzische Rijk*, Haarlem 1864.

⁶³ On Söderblom, see Bengt Sundkler, *Nathan Söderblom. His Life and Work*, Lund 1968, pp. 48–51, 65f., and Eric J. Sharpe, *Nathan Söderblom and the Study of Religion*, Chapel Hill–London 1990.

the Second World War. The book has explicitly been construed as a “history of religion” (singular) rather than a “history of religions”. This focus on religion as such, or, as Tiele would have preferred to say, on the essence and origin of religion,⁶⁴ does not imply a lack of interest in the different manifestations of this particular cultural form. He spent a great deal of time developing classifications of religions. This endeavour, however, was complicated by Tiele’s wish to present a developmental scheme at the same time. This attempt at a diachronic classification gave rise to extensive and confusing discussions.⁶⁵

Tiele’s interest focused on the ancient religions of Egypt and the Middle East, as the bibliography of his works clearly shows. Some of Tiele’s categories have been influential until the present day. Hans G. Kippenberg researched the spread of influential Dutch-produced distinctions, and succeeded in showing the influence of Tiele’s contrast between “theantropic” and “theocratic” religion in the work of Max Weber and Jürgen Habermas.⁶⁶ It is important, however, to keep in mind that Tiele’s work covered much more than just science of religion. He published two popular journals: besides the above-mentioned *Christian Popular Almanac* (1855–1862),⁶⁷ he also edited *The Signs of the Times*, the first modern ecclesiastical organ to appear in the Netherlands, which was discontinued in 1859 after only one year.⁶⁸ He published several collections of sermons⁶⁹ and speeches

⁶⁴ Tiele, “Het wezen en de oorsprong van den godsdienst” [with reference to P.D. Chantepie de la Saussaye, *Methodologische Bijdrage*], in: *Theologisch Tijdschrift* 5 (1871) 373–406.

⁶⁵ Cf. chapter VI below.

⁶⁶ Hans G. Kippenberg, “Max Weber im Kreise von Religionswissenschaftlern”, in: *Zeitschrift für Religions- und Geistesgeschichte* 45 (1993) 348–366, pp. 356–360; Kippenberg, “Max Weber und die vergleichende Religionswissenschaft”, in: *Revue internationale de philosophie* 49 (1995) 127–153, pp. 138–144; Kippenberg, *Die Entdeckung der Religionsgeschichte. Religionswissenschaft und Moderne*, München 1997, p. 79 (= *Discovering Religious History in the Modern Age*, Princeton–Oxford 2002, p. 49f.); Kippenberg, “One of the Mightiest Motors in the History of Mankind. C.P. Tiele’s Impact on German Religionswissenschaft”, in: Gerard Wiegers (ed.), *Modern Societies & The Science of Religions. Festschrift Lammert Leertouwer*, Leiden etc. 2002, pp. 67–82.

⁶⁷ In this almanac his first attempt in the new field appeared, entitled “Something on pre-Christian Religions”: Tiele, “Iets over de voor-christelijke godsdiensten”, in: P.A. de Génestet & C.P. Tiele (eds), *Christelijke Volks-Almanak voor het jaar 1857*, Nieuwe serie, tweede jaargang, Amsterdam s.a. [1856], pp. 115–131.

⁶⁸ *De Teekenen des Tijds. Weekblad aan de belangen der godsdienst gewijd 1858–1859.*

⁶⁹ Tiele, *De nieuwe geest des evangelies in zijne werking en eischen. Vijf preken*, Haarlem 1865; *Twaalf preken*, Amsterdam 1873.

held at festive ecclesiastical occasions. This concerned not only the Remonstrant Brotherhood, which opened various new parishes and church buildings at the time, but Tiele was also President of the so-called *Nederlandsche Protestantenbond* (an association of liberal Protestants outside the established churches).⁷⁰ This association (1870-present) strove to transgress confessional boundaries and to promote a free Protestant religiosity. As the Remonstrant Professor, he played a prominent role in this small, yet influential church. He was a member and often president of the executive board of the Remonstrant Brotherhood.⁷¹ A large part of the Tiele Collection contains material and letters concerning the Remonstrant Church.

In retrospect, we can discern three major areas in Tiele's work. Especially in the early stages of his career he was a man of letters, who wrote poems and literary reviews. Secondly, he was a minister and, later, professor of the Remonstrant Brotherhood, which meant that he was responsible for his parishioners and students, and had to take part in many ceremonies. Thirdly, he was one of the pioneers of the "scientific" study of religion.

2. Tiele's View on the Science of Religion

Tiele not only made significant contributions to the science of religion, he was also an ardent advocate of it. His first battle cry was a devastating critique of the history of religions as taught by Jan Hendrik Scholten (1811–1885), the grand Leiden master of modern theology, who was at the time at the height of his prestige.⁷² This did not

⁷⁰ Cf. *Verslag van de Vijfde Algemeene Vergadering van het [sic!] Nederlandsch Protestantenbond* (26.10.1875), Rotterdam s.a. [1875]; *Verslag der Zeventiende Algemeene Vergadering van den Nederlandschen Protestantenbond* (3.11.1887), Amsterdam 1887, pp. 4–7; *Verslag der Achttiende Algemeene Vergadering van den Nederlandschen Protestantenbond* (24.10.1888), Amsterdam 1888, pp. 4–6.

⁷¹ Cf. Anonymous, "Herdenking der 40-jarige Evangeliebediening van Dr. Cornelis Petrus Tiele" [summaries of speeches by I. Hooykaas, A. Kalf, A.P.G. Jorissen, and others], in: *Uit de Remonstrantsche Broederschap* 5 (1893) 93–107; Tiele, *De Remonstrantsche Broederschap in haar beginsel en doel. Gedenkrede van veertigjarigen dienst in de Broederschap. Uitgesproken in de Remonstrantsche kerk te Rotterdam den 12^{den} November 1893*, Meppel 1893 [= *Uit de Remonstrantsche Broederschap* 5 (1894) 108–123].

⁷² On Scholten, see BLGNP I, pp. 320–323; K.H. Roessingh, *De Moderne Theologie in Nederland. Hare Voorbereiding en eerste Periode* (1914), in: id., *Verzamelde Werken*, vol. I, Arnhem 1926, pp. 1–182, pp. 105–131; A.J. Rasker, *De Nederlandse Hervormde Kerk vanaf 1795. Haar geschiedenis en theologie in de negentiende en twintigste eeuw*, Kampen 1981, pp. 115–118.

prevent Tiele from speaking of “unwarranted statements” and “insufficient concepts” with regard to Scholten’s sketchy outline of history of religion.⁷³ Tiele wrote ironically that for one moment he had even thought that the book was a joke to test how far the stupidity of the Dutch regarding the history of religions would go.⁷⁴ After this review it is a small miracle that Scholten later accepted Tiele’s appointment at the Leiden Theological Faculty.⁷⁵ Tiele had started his campaign for the new subject in the 1860s and pleaded for a complete transformation of theology into science of religion, which in his view would be able to fulfil the main tasks of the old theology in a scientific way. Tiele’s inaugural lecture of October 10, 1877 in Leiden on the significance of assyriology for the comparative history of religions marked the institutional beginning of the science/history of religion in the history of the Dutch university system.

Tiele was often praised for his tact and discretion, but early in his career he could come up with sharp and even harsh remarks. In a programmatic piece he denounced the shortcomings of Ernest de Bunsen’s *The Hidden Wisdom of Christ and the Key of Knowledge*.⁷⁶ He seemed almost personally offended by the ignorance demonstrated in this book. Although he said he appreciated De Bunsen’s attempt to relate Christianity to other religions, he immediately added that this had turned out to be a complete failure. Tiele further asked: would any such attempt necessarily result in failure? “Would theology be beyond redemption? Would its future be the dusk of a

⁷³ J.H. Scholten, *Geschiedenis der Godsdienst en Wijsbegeerte* (1853), Leiden 1859 (= *Manuel d’Histoire comparée de la Philosophie et de la Religion*, traduit par A. Réville, Paris etc. 1861), pp. 1–16. On the Dutch-French connection in the early science of religion, see Patrick Cabanel, “L’institutionnalisation des ‘sciences religieuses’ en France (1879–1908). Une entreprise protestante?”, in: *Bulletin de la Société de l’Histoire du Protestantisme français* 140 (1994) 33–80; cf. Ivan Strenski, *Theology and the First Theory of Sacrifice*, Leiden–Boston 2003, chapter 4. Basing his survey on an evolutionary scheme, Scholten dealt, firstly, with fetishism, the religions of the Chinese, India (Brahmanism, Buddhism), the Semitic tribes, the Persians, the Egyptians, and the Greeks, and, secondly, with “Israelite” and Christian religion.

⁷⁴ Tiele, “Het onderwijs in de godsdienstgeschiedenis”, in: *De Gids* 24/1 (1860) 815–830, p. 816.

⁷⁵ Cf. Scholten’s letters to Tiele (BPL 2710). In his function of Secretary of the Leiden Senate, Scholten also wrote Tiele about the honorary doctorate he would receive in 1873.

⁷⁶ Tiele, “Theologie en Godsdienstwetenschap”, in *De Gids* 30/2 (1866) 205–244; Ernest de Bunsen, *The Hidden Wisdom of Christ and the Key of Knowledge: or History of the Apocryphs*, London 1865.

seminary or the darkness of a monastery?”⁷⁷ The prevailing theology was not entitled to the name of “science”, any more than the Habsburg Empire could claim to be a nation. “Whole and half kingdoms, principalities, duchies, a piece of Germany, a bit of Poland, a bit of Italy, Bohemia, Hungary, supplemented with three million Russians, one and half million Serbs and Illyrians, a million Carinthians and some Bulgarians and Croats, that is what one pleases to call the Austrian empire. A bit of philology, a bit of the history of religions, a bit of philosophy, a bit of the theory of rhetorics, a bit of psychology, a bit of art theory, and some other stuff, and there we have theology”. Formerly this was perhaps not much of a problem, Tiele said, but since people no longer believe in the infallibility of popes and theologians, and the belief in supernatural revelation has been shaken, the contradiction inherent in a state that finds its only unity in the head of state is becoming more and more evident, as is the impossibility of a science, the parts of which have no inner connection at all to each other but are only kept together by the external interest of a particular church denomination.⁷⁸

This comparison between the state and theology is telling. In ancient times the unity of a political or scientific sphere could be established by authority, but this is no longer possible. According to Tiele, the unity has to be guaranteed by an organic coherence. In any case, it cannot be determined by an external factor of power. Therefore, Schleiermacher was wrong in arguing that the coherence of theology lies in its relationship to a particular church.⁷⁹ Tiele praises Schleiermacher’s genius and his acute awareness of the existing situation, but says that his construction of theology as a positive science (kept together by its focus on church leadership) is actually a *contradictio in terminis*. Schleiermacher’s *Brief Outline of Theology* is

⁷⁷ Tiele, “Theologie en Godsdienstwetenschap”, p. 212.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 213.

⁷⁹ F.D.E. Schleiermacher, *Brief Outline of Theology as a Field of Study*, ed. by Terrence N. Tice, Lewiston 1990; *Kurze Darstellung des theologischen Studiums zum Behuf einleitender Vorlesungen*, 1811, ²1830, ed. H. Scholz, reprint Darmstadt 1982, p. 3: “Dieselben Kenntnisse, wenn sie ohne Beziehung auf das Kirchenregiment erworben und besessen werden, hören auf, theologische zu sein, und fallen jede der Wissenschaft anheim, der sie ihrem Inhalte nach angehören”; vgl. H.J. Birkner, *Schleiermachers Christliche Sittenlehre im Zusammenhang seines philosophisch-theologischen Systems*, Berlin 1964; Birkner, “Schleiermachers ‘Kurze Darstellung’ als theologisches Reformprogramm”, in *Text-Kontext*, Sonderreihe, vol. 22, Kopenhagen–München 1986, pp. 59–81.

more an instruction of future ministers than a scientific encyclopaedia. It is just as impossible to combine the disparate theological abilities and disciplines into a living whole by reference to the concept of “church”, as it is to make the patchwork quilt of Austrian countries, peoples and races into one state by reference to the magical word “monarchy”.⁸⁰

It also troubled Tiele that in this way there were as many theologies as denominations. That, he said, is the same as saying that every single state has to have its own national economics (*staathuishoudkunde*), which can vary with the form and content of each state. From a scholarly point of view, however, there can only be one kind of economics, which should be used for all states equally. Furthermore, Tiele pointed to three causes which impeded the development of an autonomous theological science. The first one is narrow-mindedness: scholars do not dare to go outside the boundaries of their own religion. This is lethal, because all knowledge begins with comparison. A true theologian is acquainted with other religions than his own and does not consider them a confused mixture of superstitions and fables.⁸¹ The old distinction between natural and revealed religions has made an impartial study impossible. A second impediment is simply not knowing enough of the so-called pagan religions. Thirdly, the prevailing speculative method leads to arbitrariness. Science has to be based upon experience and that means that the inductive method has to play an important role in research.

Recently, however, substantial progress has been made in the study of Israelite and Christian religion, and, according to Tiele, only one further step remained to be taken: this research had to be integrated into the study of religions in general. Ultimately, the goal is to gain—by way of comparison—knowledge of religion as such. Of course, Tiele knew that “religion” as such does not exist anywhere in reality, but the same is true of animals and languages. However, the fact that we only encounter a single cow, a single horse, a single dog or a single lion, does not make the discipline of zoology impossible. The same is true of religion: the various religions are “different expressions of religion, which slumbers potentially in every human being”.⁸² Without using the term, Tiele presupposed a religious a

⁸⁰ Tiele, “Theologie en Godsdienstwetenschap”, p. 214.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 216.

⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 227.

priori. Whatever our view of religion is, “it is a fact, which we perceive everywhere, and the goal of the science of religion is to explain this fact”.⁸³

The criticism of the old theology leads to a new interpretation: good theology is to be seen as equivalent to science of religion, which has its own rightful place among the sciences. Religion is a “fact”, distinct from other phenomena, such as languages, politics and arts, and thus it can and must be studied in its own right. It is interesting to see how the science of religion is specified further. In Tiele’s view it belongs to anthropology (the study of man), more particularly to psychology, which is concerned with the mental capacities of human beings. Logic, aesthetics, linguistics and ethics are also part of psychology in this (broad) sense of the word. In the same way as logic and linguistics research the cognitive and linguistic human capacities, the science of religion studies man as being religious. This division reveals a psychology of capacities. Human beings have various psychic capacities, which—although related—can be distinguished from each other. To Tiele, the fact that religion is a human phenomenon means that it cannot be reduced to a simple desire or need. His teacher Des Amorie van der Hoeven had maintained that religion is the essence of man. This claim is too strong, because other things need to be included in man’s essence as well.⁸⁴ But it “is certain, at all events, that religion, along with all that is truly great in man’s aims and actions, emanates directly from the distinctive badge of his humanity—the Infinite within him”.⁸⁵ In this way religion is located in the inner self, without being “reduced” to a psychological category.

The ultimate goal of the comparative study of religion is to determine the essence of religion (a theme which pervades Tiele’s writings). In spite of some positivistic tendencies, especially in his earlier work, he did not want to restrict himself to a mere assessment of the “facts”. Already in 1866, in his piece on theology and the science of religion, he stated that true scholarship starts with judicious

⁸³ Ibid., p. 228.

⁸⁴ Tiele, *Inleiding tot de godsdienstwetenschap*, 2 vols, vol. I: eerste reeks nov.–dec. 1896; vol. II: nov.–dec. 1898, tweede herziene druk, Amsterdam 1900, vol. II, p. 217; cf. *Elements of the Science of Religion*, vol. II, p. 248. Tiele’s critique of Des Amorie van der Hoeven on this point is only found in the Dutch edition.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

comparison.⁸⁶ Moreover, next to its empirical and systematical (theoretical) tasks, the science of religion has to fulfil practical tasks. A philosophical analysis of its origin and essence will show how religion has to be strengthened, stimulated, purified and reformed.⁸⁷ In this sense, the modern science of religion can take over tasks formerly fulfilled by the old practical theology. Tiele's proposal to reform theology into science of religion and to remove such subjects as polemics, apologetics and dogmatical theology from the theological faculty, evoked resistance—even among his liberal-minded Leiden colleagues. To elucidate his point of view Tiele published an article in the first issue of the just-founded *Theologisch Tijdschrift*.⁸⁸ He countered the reproach—in his view unjust—that much of the old theology had simply been abandoned. The science of religion, according to Tiele, dealt with the longing to know God (images and ideas of the divine), to be with God (worship), to be like God (religious morals), and to be some day with God and like God for ever (eschatology). Furthermore, the science of religion reflects on the power behind all this; that is to say, it reflects on faith, the “primeval religious force”,⁸⁹ and searches for a criterion to evaluate the main religions. Tiele compared this outline with J.H. Scholten's dogmatical treatise *Dogmaticae Christianae Initia*,⁹⁰ and claimed that, with a few modifications, in principle nothing was lost.

For Tiele's later views on the science of religion we had best turn to the Gifford Lectures, which he gave in Edinburgh in 1896 and 1898. In these, religion is still seen primarily as a human phenomenon that sprouts from the human mind: “I mean those manifestations of the human mind in words, deeds, customs, and institutions which testify to man's belief in the superhuman, and serve to bring him into relation with it”.⁹¹ The object of research is not the superhuman itself, but “religion based on belief in the superhuman”.⁹² In this way

⁸⁶ Tiele, “Theologie en Godsdienstwetenschap”, p. 237.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 241.

⁸⁸ Tiele, “Godsdienstwetenschap en Theologie”, in: *Theologisch Tijdschrift* 1 (1867) 38–52. The journal was simply named *Theological Journal*, and on its foundation in 1867 there had been some discussion about its name. Tiele's proposal to name it *Journal for the Science of Religion* (*Tijdschrift voor Godsdienstwetenschap*) was rejected by some of the other editors.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 51.

⁹⁰ J.H. Scholten, *Dogmaticae Christianae Initia*, Leiden 1856.

⁹¹ Tiele, *Elements*, vol. I, p. 4.

⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 5.

metaphysical questions are excluded: religion is to be studied as a human, historical and psychological phenomenon. There is no reason, Tiele argued, to see the science of religion as a threat to religion, just as linguistics is not harmful to language. Impartial scientific research will not lead to scepticism; on the contrary, religion will benefit from it. “Does our mother-tongue sound less pleasantly in our ears because we have made acquaintance with the beauty and vigour of other languages? I, at least, do not love the religious community to which I belong the less because I strive to appreciate, by the light of our science, what is truly religious in other forms”.⁹³

In the Gifford Lectures Tiele no longer called for a transformation of theology into science of religion. The audience would probably have had great difficulties in understanding, let alone accepting, such an argument. Tiele himself had become less radical in this regard and granted theology some degree of independence. Whereas theologians want to understand and justify their own religion, scholars of religion have to investigate the essence and origin of religion. “And so, like the science of language in relation to grammatical, lexicographical, and philological studies, the science of religion recognises the independence of the special branches which provide her with material for her speculation [*bespiegeling*],⁹⁴ and of theology likewise, each within its respective sphere, while she herself forms the crown, or rather the centre, to which they all converge”.⁹⁵ The science of religion is often characterised as a philosophical enterprise, which researches religious phenomena and “seeks to penetrate to their foundations”. Tiele went to some lengths to specify what exactly he had in mind: “It is not a philosophic creed, or a dogmatic system of what is commonly called natural theology, or a philosophy with a religious tinge, and still less a philosophy regarding God Himself. All this is beyond its province. It leaves these matters to theologians and metaphysicians. It is in fact literally the philosophy of religion, according to the present use of that term, which is deservedly gaining ground: a philosophy which we must have the courage to reform, in accordance with the demands of science in its present state of development”.⁹⁶ In the English text this is not explained further, but

⁹³ Ibid., p. 11; Tiele, *Inleiding tot de godsdienstwetenschap*, vol. I, p. 10.

⁹⁴ Perhaps better translated as “reflection [on]”.

⁹⁵ Ibid., p. 13; Tiele, *Inleiding tot de godsdienstwetenschap*, vol. I, p. 12.

⁹⁶ Ibid., p. 15; Tiele, *Inleiding tot de godsdienstwetenschap*, vol. I, p. 14.

the Dutch version states that “a philosophical investigation of religion as a general [universal] human phenomenon” is meant.⁹⁷

Historical research is necessary, but not sufficient to attain this goal. “Historical research must precede and pave the way for our science; but it does not belong to it. If I have minutely described all the religions in existence, their doctrines, myths, customs, the observances they inculcate, and the organisation of their adherents, besides tracing the different religious forms, their origin, bloom, and decay, I have merely collected the materials with which the science of religion works. And, indispensable as this is, it is not enough. Anthropology or the science of man, sociology or the science of our social relations, psychology or the science of man’s inmost being, and perhaps other sciences besides, must yield their contributions in order to help us to learn the true nature and origin of religion, and thus to reach our goal”.⁹⁸ This is a strong statement, but it is evident that for Tiele the study of religious phenomena (and social and psychological phenomena as well) is only the basis of the science of religion in the strict sense, which wants to understand and explain religion as such.⁹⁹ Tiele even went so far as to specify its method as deductive, which is not to be mistaken for speculation. “On the contrary, our deductive reasoning must start from the results yielded by induction, by empirical, historical, and comparative methods”.¹⁰⁰ Tiele’s concepts of religion and development will be discussed in the following two chapters. For the moment, I want to finish with a quotation that shows Tiele’s—from our present-day point of view—comfortable and apparently unchallenged belief in the harmony between religion and “our science”: “And the more we study religion, the further we penetrate into its history, the better we understand the nature of its doctrines, so much the more clearly we shall see that it is entitled to precedence in our spiritual life, because the religious need is the mightiest, profoundest, and most overmastering of all. Let no dread of ecclesiastical ambition and sacerdotal tyranny

⁹⁷ Tiele, *Inleiding tot de godsdienstwetenschap*, vol. I, p. 14.

⁹⁸ Tiele, *Elements*, vol. I, p. 17; Tiele, *Inleiding tot de godsdienstwetenschap*, vol. I, p. 16.

⁹⁹ Tiele, *Elements*, vol. I, p. 18; Tiele, *Inleiding tot de godsdienstwetenschap*, vol. I, p. 17.

¹⁰⁰ Tiele, *Elements*, vol. I, p. 18; Tiele, *Inleiding tot de godsdienstwetenschap*, vol. I, p. 17f.

prevent us from recognising this; for they are powerless except when true religion languishes or slumbers".¹⁰¹

3. *Pierre Daniël Chantepie de la Saussaye (1848–1920)*

Pierre Daniël Chantepie de la Saussaye was born on 9 April 1848 in Leeuwarden (Friesland) of the marriage of the Walloon minister Daniël Chantepie de la Saussaye (1818–1874) and Maria Anna Carolina Louisa van Schelle (1819–1908). His father was a well-known theologian, who together with his colleague J.H. Gunning Jr. (1829–1905) is seen as the founder of “ethical theology”.¹⁰² They were inspired by Schleiermacher and the Swiss revival theologian Alexandre Rodolphe Vinet (1797–1847) and assumed the objective content of divine truth, which manifests itself in the conscience and life of Christian believers.¹⁰³ The son considered his father to have been one of his most important teachers.¹⁰⁴ Pierre Daniël studied theology in Utrecht, where he obtained his doctorate in 1871 with a methodological study on the origin of religion.¹⁰⁵ In 1872 he married Regina Maria Martin, daughter of an Amsterdam banker. She was an erudite woman, who taught her husband English, translated foreign literature, and edited several anthologies of the work of Kierkegaard.¹⁰⁶ Shortly after he was married, La Saussaye¹⁰⁷ was ordained by his father in the village of Hemmen. In 1875 he founded, together with his university friend J.J.P. Valeton Jr. (1848–1912) the theological journal *Studiën. Theologisch Tijdschrift*, which also accepted contributions on the field of history of religion.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰¹ Tiele, *Elements*, vol. II, p. 261; Tiele, *Inleiding tot de godsdienstwetenschap*, vol. II, p. 228.

¹⁰² A.J. Rasker, *De Nederlandse Hervormde Kerk vanaf 1795*, pp. 125–138. Recently a large selection of La Saussaye’s writings were re-issued in a three-volume edition: [Daniël Chantepie de la Saussaye], *Verzameld Werk. Een keuze uit het werk van Daniël Chantepie de la Saussaye*, ed. by F.G.M. Broeyer et al., 3 vols, Zoetermeer 1997–2003.

¹⁰³ BLGNP II, pp. 118–121.

¹⁰⁴ Vgl. J.H. Gunning Jr. & P.D. Chantepie de la Saussaye, *Het ethische beginsel der theologie*, Groningen 1877.

¹⁰⁵ P.D. Chantepie de la Saussaye, *Methodologische bijdrage tot het onderzoek naar den oorsprong van den Godsdienst*, Utrecht 1871.

¹⁰⁶ M.J. Aalders, *Ethisch tussen 1870 en 1920. Openbaring, Schrift en ervaring bij J.J.P. Valeton Jr., P.D. Chantepie de la Saussaye en Is. van Dijk*, Kampen 1990, p. 101f.

¹⁰⁷ This is the abbreviation of his name that was used at the time.

¹⁰⁸ Cf. for instance P.D. Chantepie de la Saussaye, “Letterkundig overzicht.

In 1878, at the age of thirty, La Saussaye became professor of the History of Religions at the Municipal University of Amsterdam. In 1883 he published *Four Sketches* on Kong-tse, Lao-tse, Zoroaster and the Buddha.¹⁰⁹ He earned international recognition with his manual *Lehrbuch der Religionsgeschichte*, which went through four editions and was (partly) translated into French and English.¹¹⁰ I will discuss the overall structure of this influential handbook below. Besides the books mentioned, La Saussaye published only a few smaller articles and one more extensive volume on Teutonic religion in his later career. This book was written for an American series, but La Saussaye also published a shortened Dutch version in 1900. He deemed a historical overview of “Teutonic heathenism” of importance for the “civilised reader”.¹¹¹ Much of his writing was meant for a broader audience. La Saussaye was engaged in various fields and was not a specialist in the history of religions *pur sang*. His manual was to a large extent based on secondary literature, and he even characterised it as “second-hand”.¹¹² This does not mean that his work was not appreciated by his colleagues. When the International Congress of the Historians of Religion convened for the first time in the Netherlands in 1912, it was obvious that La Saussaye should be its chairman.¹¹³ At the first international conference on the science of religion, held in Stockholm in 1897, he was one of the keynote speakers.¹¹⁴

Geschiedenis der godsdiensten”, in: *Studiën. Theologisch Tijdschrift* 4 (1878) 47–70. The journal appeared between 1875 and 1881.

¹⁰⁹ P.D. Chantepie de la Saussaye, *Vier schetsen uit de godsdienstgeschiedenis*, Utrecht 1883.

¹¹⁰ P.D. Chantepie de la Saussaye, *Lehrbuch der Religionsgeschichte*, 2 volumes, Freiburg i.B. 1887–1889.

¹¹¹ P.D. Chantepie de la Saussaye, *Geschiedenis van den godsdienst der Germanen voor hun overgang tot het Christendom*, Haarlem 1900, p. v; *The Religion of the Teutons* (Handbooks on the History of Religions, 3), translated from the Dutch by Bert J. Vos, Boston etc. 1902.

¹¹² K. Kuiper, “Levensbericht van Pierre Daniel Chantepie de la Saussaye, 9 April 1848—20 April 1920”, in: *Jaarboek van de Koninklijke Akademie van Wetenschappen* (1920–1921) 103–128, p. 113.

¹¹³ Cf. *Actes du IV^e Congrès International d’Histoire des Religions, tenu à Leide du 9^e–13^e septembre 1912*, Leiden 1913.

¹¹⁴ P.D. Chantepie de la Saussaye, *Die vergleichende Religionsforschung und der religiöse Glaube*, Vortrag gehalten auf dem ersten religionswissenschaftlichen Kongresse in Stockholm am 31. August 1897, Freiburg i. B. etc. 1898; reprinted in: idem, *Portretten en Kritieken*, Haarlem 1909, pp. 337–367. On this congress see Björn Skogar, “Neoprotestantism in Stockholm in 1897”, in: Sigurd Hjelde (ed.), *Man, Meaning & History. Hundred Years of History of Religions in Norway. The Heritage of W. Brede Kristensen*, Leiden etc. 2000, pp. 57–70.

His lecture on that occasion for the first time clearly shows some scepticism concerning the possibilities of the science of religion. It happens too often, La Saussaye claimed, that the “higher” is explained by reference to the “lower”. The prevailing approach is too superficial: “[D]er religionsgeschichtlichen Betrachtung geht eine gewisse Tiefe ab”.¹¹⁵ Kierkegaard and Pascal teach us more about the essence of religion than does the science of religion. In his obituary for Tiele (written in 1902) La Saussaye was much more explicit: Although the words “bitter disappointment” might be not wholly appropriate, we would be even less justified in speaking of a brilliant success. In Holland it is impossible to find enough capable scholars to occupy the chairs of the new field.¹¹⁶ Although the interest in the history of religions is not completely absent among students, La Saussaye continued his lamentation, for most of them the “foreign names” are only “lumber”. They can do little more than absorb the results, while it is not possible to open up a field of research for them. The study of foreign religions is no doubt necessary, but it cannot be denied that it does not “yield as much fruit as one had hoped for”.¹¹⁷ The sense of disappointment and resignation is unmistakable. The shortage of students seems to have been an important consideration,¹¹⁸ when in 1899 La Saussaye switched to the Leiden Theological Faculty, where he mainly taught ethics.

At that time he had even considered the possibility to retire from occupational life entirely. After his marriage he certainly was a wealthy man. The story was told that he always bought two copies of a book, the first one for his library in Amsterdam and, later, in Leiden,

¹¹⁵ Chantepie de la Saussaye, *Die vergleichende Religionsforschung*, p. 15.

¹¹⁶ The list of possible successors to Tiele’s chair included the names of three foreigners: N. Söderblom, E. Lehmann and W.B. Kristensen, and when La Saussaye himself left his Amsterdam post in 1899 he was succeeded by the German *Religionsgeschichtler* Wilhelm (A.J.H.W.) Brandt.

¹¹⁷ P.D. Chantepie de la Saussaye, “Cornelis Petrus Tiele”, in: *Jaarboek van de Koninklijke Akademie van Wetenschappen* (1902) 125–154; reprinted in: id., *Portretten en Kritieken*, pp. 82–120, p. 97; cf. id., *Afscheids-college*, Haarlem 1916, pp. 8–9.

¹¹⁸ At the time there were few students at the Amsterdam Theological Faculty, because some chairs were not filled; cf. Piet de Rooij, “De ontdekking van een oud bestoven familieportret”, p. 21, and P.J. Knegtman, “Amsterdam en het theologisch onderwijs. De geschiedenis van een moeizame relatie”, in: Knegtman & Van Rooden, eds, *Theologen in ondertal*, pp. 11–38, p. 20f. The fact that the science of religion was deemed unattractive by the students was not the primary reason for this shortage.

and the second for the library of his country house “Kalorama” near Nijmegen, where since 1891 he spent the summers. Apparently, in the town of Leiden the following rhyme went round: “Chantepie de la Sausseie is the richest man of Leie”.¹¹⁹ He was just short of that. According to his tax declaration for 1900, he had a taxable income of 23,000 guilders, whereas the medical professor J.E. van Iterson had an income of 31,500 guilders. Many of their colleagues had incomes of about 3,150 guilders, whereas the middle classes generally earned less than 1,000 guilders.¹²⁰ In 1916 La Saussaye retired and moved to “Kalorama”.

In Leiden he became a popular teacher. The personal element in his teaching and his pleasant manners were praised by students.¹²¹ He was clearly more involved in the subjects he taught in Leiden than in remote religions. In his Leiden inaugural address he mentioned this point with a hint of irony, when he stated that he had noticed a touching concern whether the field of ethics would be safe in his hands. Perhaps—he continued—people feared that “I had kept too much company with headhunters and similar people to have been able to give the necessary attention to the ethical issues of our time”.¹²² In his Leiden period he became more and more a theologian, and stressed that Christianity had to be understood from within. This did not necessarily mean a breach with previous statements, but doubtless the emphasis shifted. La Saussaye sharply contrasted the “scientific” (the word was put between inverted commas on purpose) explanation with the “deeper need to know the mystery, which Christian theology has to satisfy”.¹²³ To be sure, there is no complete contradiction between the two approaches, but in his view the best road obviously was that *per fidem ad intellectum*.¹²⁴ La Saussaye warned that the possibilities of the sciences (science of religion included) should not be overrated; the worst one could do was to

¹¹⁹ Aalders, *Ethisch tussen 1870 en 1920*, p. 103, note 23.

¹²⁰ W. Otterspeer, *De wiekslag van hun geest*, p. 432.

¹²¹ K.H. Roessingh, “In memoriam Pierre Daniël Chantepie de la Saussaye” (1920), in: id., *Verzamelde Werken*, vol. II, Arnhem 1926, pp. 459–471, p. 470.

¹²² P.D. Chantepie de la Saussaye, *De taak der theologie*, Haarlem 1899, p. 24. His most important work in the field of ethics is: *Het Christelijk Leven*, 2 vols, Haarlem 1910–1912 (second edition 1914, third edition 1922–1923, which was revised by his successor K.H. Roessingh).

¹²³ Chantepie de la Saussaye, *De taak der theologie*, p. 16.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

sanctify science.¹²⁵ To his great pleasure he noticed a growing religious interest and awareness: most people did not believe any longer in the delusion of the sciences and again turned to religion. Religious questions and issues were back on the agenda. “The deserted altars are visited again, or even new ones are built to satisfy the erring need for worship.”¹²⁶

He did not consider himself in the first place—and certainly not exclusively—a scientist.¹²⁷ When asked to become chairman of the Humanities department of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences, he is said to have answered: “Actually, I am not a true scientist”. This should not be taken as an expression of false modesty. He wanted not only to be a specialised scholar, but also to participate in the public debate concerning moral and religious issues. He did publish his sermons and was co-founder of the magazine *Onze Eeuw* [*Our Century*], which aimed at a broad and cultivated readership. This “monthly for politics, literature, science and the arts” appeared from 1901 till 1924. La Saussaye wrote on social, moral, and religious issues, and especially on literary topics such as Goethe, Sainte Beuve, the Dutch poet Potgieter, the Norwegian Nobel Prize winner Björnson, Don Quichotte and the British novelist Mrs. Humphry Ward.¹²⁸ He had less affinity with the contemporary Dutch avant-garde.¹²⁹ La Saussaye’s activities were—to be sure—not limited to an inner circle of like-minded Christians. In one of the theses he added to his dissertation he had already made the following statement: “It is necessary that the minister unites in himself civilization and belief.”¹³⁰

¹²⁵ Cf. also Chantepie de la Saussaye, *Geestelijke Stromingen. Verzamelde voordrachten en opstellen*, second edition, Haarlem 1914, pp. 243–269.

¹²⁶ Chantepie de la Saussaye, *De taak der theologie*, p. 5.

¹²⁷ The word “science” is used here in the sense of *Wissenschaft*, which also includes the humanities.

¹²⁸ Cf. Chantepie de la Saussaye, *Portretten en Kritieken*. On Mrs. Humphry Ward, see E.G.E. van der Wall, *Het oude en het nieuwe geloof. Discussies rond 1900*, s.l., s.a. [Leiden 1999].

¹²⁹ Chantepie de la Saussaye, “Het mystieke in onze nieuwste letteren” (1900), in: id., *Geestelijke Stromingen*, pp. 346–365.

¹³⁰ Chantepie de la Saussaye, *Methodologische bijdrage*, thesis 20.

4. *Chantepie de la Saussaye's Early View on the Science of Religion*

Chantepie de la Saussaye was a many-sided man who—as it would seem from the above sketch¹³¹—almost by accident became one of the leading scholars of the emerging science of religion. The decision to write a dissertation about a subject in this new field was certainly not self-evident in the early 1870s. As we saw in the previous chapter, it was not until the mid-1870s that the history of religions and the philosophy of religion were given their rightful places in the theological curriculum. It is improbable that La Saussaye's teacher J.I. Doedes concerned himself with these topics at the time La Saussaye was studying in Utrecht. According to the *Annales Academici*, Doedes taught his first course on *historia religionum* in the academic year 1873–1874. The only reference to his teacher in La Saussaye's dissertation concerned Doedes' course on the doctrine of God, which was not published until 1871.¹³² It is said, however, that La Saussaye was an early admirer of Max Müller¹³³ and a conscientious reader of Tiele's writings.¹³⁴ In the spring of 1871 he sent his dissertation to Tiele. He owed much to Tiele's work, he wrote, and was sorry that since the summer of 1869 he had not taken advantage of Tiele's friendly offer to visit him.¹³⁵

As stated earlier, the topic of La Saussaye's dissertation was the question of the origin of religion.¹³⁶ The tenor of the book is systematical, and nowadays it would be classified under the heading

¹³¹ For more information on La Saussaye's life and work see Aalders, *Ethisch tussen 1870 en 1920*, and the fine piece by Kuiper, "Levensbericht"; cf. H.M. van Nes, "Levensbericht van Pierre Daniël Chantepie de la Saussaye (1848–1920)", in: *Handelingen van de Maatschappij der Nederlandsche Letterkunde te Leiden en Levensberichten harer afgestorven medeleden 1920–1921*, Leiden 1921, pp. 68–85; H.W. Obbink, "Pierre Daniël Chantepie de la Saussaye (1848–1920)", in: *Ernst en Vrede. Opstellen rondom de ethische theologie*. Festschrift M. van Rhijn, 's-Gravenhage 1951, pp. 100–120.

¹³² J.I. Doedes, *Inleiding tot de leer van God*, Utrecht 1871; cf. P.L. Schram, *Jacobus Isaac Doedes*, Wageningen 1952, pp. 61–63.

¹³³ Cf. Chantepie de la Saussaye, "Max Müller als Gifford-Lecturer" (1891), in: id., *Portretten en Kritieken*, pp. 230–242.

¹³⁴ Kuiper, "Levensbericht", p. 107.

¹³⁵ P.D. Chantepie de la Saussaye, letter of 17.4.1871 to Tiele, in the Tiele Collection of the Leiden University Library, signature BPL 2710. This is the first letter from La Saussaye to Tiele in the collection.

¹³⁶ Chantepie de la Saussaye, *Methodologische bijdrage*; on this dissertation see particularly Jan G. Platvoet, "Close Harmonies. The Science of Religion in Dutch *Duplex Ordo* Theology, 1860–1960", in: *Numen* 45 (1998) 115–162, pp. 122–126.

Method & Theory of the Science of Religion,¹³⁷ or even under Systematical Theology. Roughly speaking, La Saussaye stated that the question could not be answered empirically, but that in this case intuition and speculation were needed. An outsider's perspective is not enough: we will only be able to know the origin of religion if we penetrate to its very essence, which ultimately means that God will have to be taken into consideration. Tiele reacted almost immediately and published a lecture that until then he had allegedly kept in portfolio.¹³⁸ In spite of his appreciation of the book, Tiele's own point of view was radically opposed to it. What happens—he asked—if we transpose La Saussaye's approach to other fields. Can we only deal with the origin of the belief in ghosts if we take the ghosts themselves into account? No, this would amount to allowing a thoroughly unscientific, theological method to enter by the back door. Science, and therefore the science of religion as well, had to restrict itself to finite causes.¹³⁹

In the 1870s and 1880s La Saussaye's expectations concerning the new field were still fairly high, and he saw no great contrast between the old theology and the new science of religion. The history of religions has to be treated in its own right and is also helpful for a better understanding of Christianity. Comparison with other religions shows that Christianity is typically an ethical religion.¹⁴⁰ In this early period La Saussaye stuck to his conviction that by studying religions we can gain knowledge of religion as such. This issue actually concerned the field of the philosophy of religion, he thought, but it was also important for the history of religion in its strict sense. In any case it was false to oppose Christianity, as the revealed religion, to the so-called "natural" religions. The Christian religion is the "fulfilment", "the full expression of what is known elsewhere in a less complete manner".¹⁴¹ His most far-reaching statement in this respect was: "Because I acknowledge the truth in Christianity, it is

¹³⁷ J. Waardenburg, *Classical Approaches to the Study of Religion. Aims, Methods and Theories of Research*, 2 vols, Den Haag 1973–1974, vol. II, pp. 37–38.

¹³⁸ C.P. Tiele, "Het wezen en de oorsprong van den godsdienst", in: *Theologisch Tijdschrift* 5 (1871) 373–406.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 374–375.

¹⁴⁰ Chantepie de la Saussaye, *Het belang van de studie der godsdiensten voor de kennis van het christendom*, Groningen 1978, p. 20.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 26.

impossible for me to conceive of any religion as vain".¹⁴² Even if the science of religion could only open up the treasures of religion to some degree, the thirty-year old La Saussaye hoped that the new endeavour would enable the Christian believer "to express his faith in a purified, rational, civilised and, thus, fruitful way".¹⁴³ Tiele must have agreed with these words from the bottom of his heart.¹⁴⁴

5. *The First Edition of Chantepie de la Saussaye's Manual*

P.D. Chantepie de la Saussaye's most memorable achievement in the field of the science of religion is doubtless his manual *Lehrbuch der Religionsgeschichte*. The first edition consisted of more than 900 pages. He prepared its two volumes single-handedly in approximately four years; they appeared in 1887 and 1889. For the next editions he put together a team of scholars. The fourth and last edition appeared posthumously in 1925. The second edition was translated into French and the first volume of the original edition into English.¹⁴⁵ It was not primarily meant as a reference work, but the explicit intention was to provide a readable introduction of the results of recent scholarship for students of theology, and an educated public in general. There was a difference of opinion on the extent to which this goal was actually reached. The German church historian Adolf Harnack

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 29.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 32.

¹⁴⁴ Cf. C.P. Tiele, review of Chantepie de la Saussaye, *Het belang van de studie der godsdiensten*, in: *Theologisch Tijdschrift* 13 (1879) 418–423.

¹⁴⁵ P.D. Chantepie de la Saussaye, *Lehrbuch der Religionsgeschichte*, 2 vols, Freiburg i.B. 1887–1889; *Manual of the Science of Religion*, translated by Beatrice S. Colyer-Fergusson (née Müller), London 1891 (this is a translation of the first volume only); *Lehrbuch der Religionsgeschichte*, 2 vols, second edition, Leipzig–Tübingen 1897; *Manuel d'histoire des religions*, Paris 1904 (translation of the second edition); *Lehrbuch der Religionsgeschichte*, 2 vols, third edition, Tübingen 1905; *Lehrbuch der Religionsgeschichte*, 2 vols, fourth edition, Tübingen 1925. The "Translator's Preface" of the English translation tells us that Beatrice S. Colyer-Fergusson undertook the translation on the advice of her father, the famous Max Müller. She makes the following claim: "Professor Chantepie de la Saussaye has not only revised every page of my translation, but he has allowed me the use of his own notes and corrections, so that my translation may be read almost in the light of a second edition. Whenever passages which occur in the original are omitted or altered in my translation, it should be understood that the responsibility rests with the author". I am a bit sceptical concerning this claim and will use the German text to check crucial passages in the English translation.

was rather sceptical (speaking of “huge military barracks”) and professed himself ready to extend his great admiration to anyone who succeeded in reading such works in their entirety.¹⁴⁶ But then, Harnack was critical of the whole endeavour of the science of religion, which in his view would lead to dilettantism. A fellow specialist such as Tiele, however, notwithstanding his critique praised the manual highly.¹⁴⁷ In spite of—or perhaps also because of—the enormous accumulation of data it was a much-used work. But it is an undisputed fact that the way of presentation, which stressed the provisional character of the results and the uncertainty of the interpretations, did not always make for easy reading.¹⁴⁸

Especially the first edition provides a good overview of La Saussaye’s views. From the very beginning it is evident that the history of religion(s) and the science of religion are intimately related to each other. The book, which is to be a *history* of religion, starts without any further explanation with a historical overview of the *science* of religion. It is doubtless possible, La Saussaye writes, to trace the new discipline back to century-old traditions, but it makes more sense to say that the science of religion actually made its breakthrough in the second half of the nineteenth century. Three conditions are essential

¹⁴⁶ Adolf Harnack, “Die Aufgabe der theologischen Fakultäten und die allgemeine Religionsgeschichte. Nebst einem Nachwort” (1901), in: Harnack, *Adolf von Harnack als Zeitgenosse. Reden und Schriften aus den Jahren des Kaiserreichs und der Weimarer Zeit*, ed. by K. Nowak, 2 vols, Berlin–New York 1996, vol. I, pp. 797–824, p. 819: “Und wie steht es mit den Handbüchern und der allgemeinen religionswissenschaftlichen Literatur? Wir haben den Tiele und den Chantepie de la Saussaye, dazu sehr lehrreiche religionswissenschaftliche Zeitschriften. Wir freuen uns dieses Besitzes; aber glaube niemand, dass der Eintritt in die Religionswissenschaft durch diese Kasernenhöfe führt. Nicht einmal Interesse vermag jemand aus den Zusammenstellungen zu gewinnen, kaum das vorhandene zu stärken. Wem es gelingt, den Chantepie de la Saussaye durchzulesen, dem widme ich meine Bewunderung”.

¹⁴⁷ C.P. Tiele, reviews of both volumes, *Theologisch Tijdschrift* 22 (1888) 351–363, & 23 (1889) 618–633, p. 633: “excellent guide”.

¹⁴⁸ Cf. H. Holtzmann, review of the first volume of the manual in: *Theologische Literaturzeitung* 12 (1887) 465–468, p. 468: “Der Landschaft, die er zeichnet, scheint somit die ‘Stimmung’ zu fehlen. Ein weites Wiesenland, dessen unendlicher Graswuchs Unterschiede nur aufweist, je nachdem das Terrain hier feuchter oder sumpfiger, dort trockener oder steiniger beschaffen ist. Ueberall dieselben vulgären Blumen, weiss und gelb, blau und rot, nur hier dichter, dort dünner stehend. Welch hoffnungsloser Wust statt eines Gottesgartens! Nun wohl! Es giebt Leute, die das Gras wachsen hören. Diese mögen der naturgetreu beschriebenen Vegetation ihr höheres Geheimnis ablauschen! Wir unsererseits getrösten uns der alten Wahrheit, dass in der Regel erst in dem Masse, als man sich der Spitze des Berges nähert, die ganze Gebirgsformation überschaubar wird”.

for the emergence of the science of religion. The *first* is that religion as such (separate from the contents of Christian revelation) has become an object of philosophical (!) knowledge. Kant and Schleiermacher were important in this respect, but especially Hegel is seen by La Saussaye as its “true founder”, “because he first carried out the vast idea of realising, as a whole, the various modes for studying religion, (metaphysical, psychological, and historical), and made us see the harmony between the idea and the realisation of religion”. In this way Hegel has determined the aim and object of the science of religion, and compared to this, the many errors in his *Philosophy of Religion* are insignificant.¹⁴⁹ The *second* condition is the existence of a philosophy of history which tries to understand human life as a meaningful whole and not just as a “concatenation of outward events”.¹⁵⁰ In this way, political history is complemented by cultural history in the broad sense of the word, “which teaches us not only the fates of nations, but also their social systems, their material advancement, the development of arts and sciences, and the history of opinions” (*Meinungen*).¹⁵¹ The examples are Buckle’s “masterpiece” *History of Civilization in England* (1858) and, especially, some older and more speculative books such as Voltaire’s *Essai sur les mœurs et l’esprit des nations* (1756) and Lessing’s *Erziehung des Menschengeschlechts* (1780). The history of culture is important, because it shows how religion is connected to other aspects of human life. The *third* condition, to which La Saussaye attaches special importance, is the fact that so much new material has become available. Without the new materials and findings the framework created by the philosophy of religion and cultural history would be empty. “The science of religion owes its steady growth to the discoveries and advances that have been made in the sciences of language, in archaeology, philology, ethnography, psychology of nations [*Völkerpsychologie*], mythology, and folk-lore”.¹⁵² Comparative linguistics has shown resemblances between peoples, hitherto unknown languages and inscriptions are being deciphered, travellers and missionaries have gathered new information about far-away tribes, and so on.

¹⁴⁹ Chantepie de la Saussaye, *Manual*, p. 4; *Lehrbuch*, first edition, vol. I, p. 3.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁵² Chantepie de la Saussaye, *Manual*, p. 5; *Lehrbuch*, first edition, vol. I, p. 4.

Despite the emphasis on the historical character of the manual, La Saussaye also takes more systematical or philosophical questions in his stride. The general, introductory section deals with themes such as the origin of religion, the classification of religion (Hegel, Eduard von Hartmann, and Tiele), the principal forms of religion (animism, fetishism, polytheism, henotheism, and monotheism), the Darwinian theory of religion and its relevance for the science of religion, and the question whether or not animals can have religion. To La Saussaye, the two most important branches of the science of religion are the philosophy of religion and the history of religion. These two fields need each other: the science of religion would be a futile undertaking if in determining the essence of religion it lost sight of the facts, and the history of religion can not even start its work without a notion (however preliminary) of what religion is.¹⁵³ Besides, there is the famous phenomenological part of the manual, which forms the link between the history and the philosophy of religion.¹⁵⁴

This brings us to the division of the manual, which begins with the general (introductory) section, dealing with the questions outlined above, followed by, in order, the phenomenological, the ethnographical, and the historical sections. Although in the introductory section systematical issues are discussed (primarily to be reckoned under the philosophy of religion), it was explicitly not La Saussaye's intention to write an introduction to this subject. The history of religions in the broad sense is divided into an "ethnographical" and a "history of religions" (in the strict sense of the word) section. "The ethnographical [section] gives us details of the religions of the savage tribes, the so-called children of nature [*Naturvölker*], or that part of mankind that has no history. The second division gives us the historical development of the religions of the civilised nations".¹⁵⁵ From a terminological point of view things go wrong immediately, because the "civilised nations of America" are treated in chapter 31 of the ethnographical section. In the second edition of the manual, the distinction is discarded without much argumentation.¹⁵⁶

Yet, also in the first edition, by far the largest part of the book is occupied by the historical section, which in the German original

¹⁵³ Chantepie de la Saussaye, *Manual*, p. 8; *Lehrbuch*, first edition, vol. I, p. 6.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁶ Chantepie de la Saussaye, *Lehrbuch*, second edition, vol. II, p. v.

covers some 750 pages. The ethnographical section takes up 60 pages, whereas the introductory and phenomenological sections comprise almost 50 and 125 pages, respectively. With the exception of Islam, the historical section is divided according to peoples. These are discussed in the following order: the Chinese, the Egyptians, the Babylonians and Assyrians, the people of India¹⁵⁷ (including subsections on Vedic and Brahmanic times, Jainism, Buddhism, and Hinduism), the Persians, the Greeks, and the Romans. La Saussaye was dissatisfied with his treatment of Islam. As he said, he had spent much time on it, and it was almost immediately outdated by two books (the one by Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje and the other by Ignaz Goldziher) that appeared almost at the same time.¹⁵⁸ The manual was not complete. In the second edition contributions on the religion of the Japanese and the Israelites were added. In principle, the historical section was meant to comprise all religions, including Judaism and Christianity, but pragmatic considerations made La Saussaye abandon this objective. Both religions are discussed in the philosophical and phenomenological sections.¹⁵⁹

6. *Chantepie de la Saussaye's Phenomenology*

Although much has been written on the phenomenological section of the manual, it is still not really clear what La Saussaye understood by “phenomenology”.¹⁶⁰ In the second edition this section was simply left out. This was motivated, first by reference to the large size of the book, and, secondly, by the fact that phenomenology was supposed to be a “border discipline” between history and philosophy, to be dealt with in its own right. At the same time La Saussaye

¹⁵⁷ In the English edition they are named “Hindus”; cf. *Manual*, p. xiii.

¹⁵⁸ P.D. Chantepie de la Saussaye to Tiele, letter of 1 November 1889 (Tiele Collection, Signature BPL 2710). La Saussaye here referred to Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje, *Mekka*, vol. II: *Aus dem heutigen Leben*, Den Haag 1889; and he probably had in mind the first volume of the following work by Ignaz Goldziher: *Muhammedanische Studien*, 2 vols, Halle a.d. Saale 1889–1890.

¹⁵⁹ Chantepie de la Saussaye, *Lehrbuch*, first edition, vol. I, pp. 136–137, compares Christianity and Islam on the aspect of religious community.

¹⁶⁰ George Alfred James, *Interpreting Religion. The Phenomenological Approaches of Pierre Daniel Chantepie de la Saussaye, W. Brede Kristensen, and Gerardus van der Leeuw*, Washington 1995; J. Waardenburg, “Religion Between Reality and Idea. A Century of Phenomenology of Religion in the Netherlands”, in: *Numen* 19 (1972) 128–203.

expressed the hope to publish a separate book on this subject within a few years.¹⁶¹ This objective never materialized, and in his other writings one looks in vain for a further definition of what phenomenology actually is about. To the best of my knowledge the term is specified to some degree at only two (or three, depending upon on how one counts) places in the manual. First we read in the preface: “The phenomenological section is, I believe, the first more comprehensive attempt to arrange the principal groups of religious conceptions [*Erscheinungen*] in such a way that the most important sides and aspects should appear conspicuously from out the other [sic!] material”.¹⁶² The Introduction tells us that the “collecting and grouping of various religious phenomena” forms the transition from the history to the philosophy of religion, and that an “outline of religious phenomena” will be given.¹⁶³ This is not about the classification of religions (various divisions are discussed in the introductory section), but about a sensible arrangement of religious phenomena. Various views (for instance concerning animism) and phenomena (for instance sacred spaces) are discussed here.

The arrangement of religious phenomena in my view constitutes the core of La Saussaye’s phenomenology. Because his remarks on this point are scarce, we have to be careful when portraying him as the founder of a new (phenomenological) method. This does not

¹⁶¹ Chantepie de la Saussaye, *Lehrbuch*, second edition, vol. II, p. v.

¹⁶² Chantepie de la Saussaye, *Manual*, p. vi; *Lehrbuch*, first edition, vol. I, p. v: “Der phänomenologische Theil dürfte der erstere, umfassendere Versuch sein, die Hauptgruppen der religiösen Erscheinungen, ohne sie doctrinär einheitlich zu erklären, so zu ordnen, dass die wichtigsten Seiten und Gesichtspunkte aus dem Material von selbst hervortreten”. The word “other” in “other material” is not found in the German text. The parenthetical clause “ohne sie doctrinär einheitlich zu erklären” has been translated by the following sentence: “A systematic treatment of the various doctrines, as such, was not attempted”. The German text, however, suggests that La Saussaye did not want to explain the various types of religious phenomena by one single theory. But, admittedly, it remains difficult to ascertain the meaning of the parenthetical clause.

¹⁶³ Chantepie de la Saussaye, *Manual*, p. 8 (both quotations); *Lehrbuch*, first edition, vol. I, p. 6: “Die Zusammenfassung und Gruppierung der verschiedenen religiösen Erscheinungen bildet den Uebergang der Religionsgeschichte zur Religionsphilosophie. . . . Das gegenwärtige Lehrbuch hat nur die historische Hälfte dieses Schemas auszuarbeiten. Wir glauben aber die Grenzen dieser Auffassung nicht zu eng ziehen zu dürfen, und, allerdings die philosophischen Fragen bei Seite lassend, wenigstens eine geordnete Uebersicht der religiösen Erscheinungen unserer Darstellung einfügen zu müssen”. The word “geordnet” (= “well-ordered”), which qualifies “outline”, is missing in the English translation.

mean that nothing more can be said about his method of working. La Saussaye tried to proceed in an inductive manner (“from out the material”). He gave examples, described these as precisely as possible, and tried to find some sort of arrangement. He did not do this in a rigid way: heterogeneous phenomena were not forced into one single mould. Although in the case of La Saussaye I would hesitate to speak of a phenomenological method, the tenets of his approach can be more or less clearly discerned. He had a dislike of what he saw as “reductionist” explanations.¹⁶⁴ It was of the utmost importance to him to describe religious phenomena in their own right. Furthermore, he put phenomenology on a par with psychology, in so far as both were concerned with human consciousness. The outer appearances of religion could only be properly understood by relating these to inward processes. “[R]eligious acts, ideas, and sentiments are not distinguished from non-religious acts, ideas and sentiments by any outward mark, but only by a certain inward relation”.¹⁶⁵ It is not clear what is meant by “a certain inward relation”, but it is probably not too far-fetched to think of the intentions of the religious subjects (their orientation toward the divine).¹⁶⁶ This fits in with the emphasis on the importance of human consciousness in this context.

On the other hand, La Saussaye claimed that religion and worship are not in the first place symbolic expressions of ideas and feelings, but means to attain practical goals.¹⁶⁷ Within the phenomenology of religion cultic or ritual aspects are of special importance. Of course, religious ideas and feelings do matter, also in La Saussaye’s view, but one has to be aware of the fact, he claimed, that cults and rituals normally do represent the oldest material, and that in some

¹⁶⁴ Chantepie de la Saussaye, *Lehrbuch*, first edition, vol. I, p. 124: “Früher hat man wohl die ganze Religion als ein willkürliches Machwerk schlauer Priester angesehen; gegenwärtig weiss jedermann, dass nicht die Priester die Religion gemacht haben, sondern umgekehrt die Religion die Priester”.

¹⁶⁵ Chantepie de la Saussaye, *Manual*, p. 67; *Lehrbuch*, p. 48: the word “inward” is indeed a further clarification, as the German text has “durch eine gewisse Relation”.

¹⁶⁶ Chantepie de la Saussaye, *Die vergleichende Religionsforschung*, p. 24: “Was eigentlich einer religiösen Vorstellung oder Handlung den *religiösen* Charakter gibt, ist nicht so leicht zu sagen wie man öfter meint. Was (nach einem alten Beispiel) den opfernden Priester von einem Metzger unterscheidet, weiss man erst durch ein Urtheil, das von dem Aeusseren der Handlung zu ihrem Zweck und noch weiter zu dem ihr zu Grunde liegenden Gefühl durchdringt” (italics original).

¹⁶⁷ Chantepie de la Saussaye, *Lehrbuch*, first edition, vol. I, p. 50.

cases we have nothing else.¹⁶⁸ He criticised both Müller and Tiele in this respect, because their emphasis was on religious ideas and myths, which, according to La Saussaye, led to an undue neglect of the ritual elements of religion.¹⁶⁹ In his concept of religion the worship of the deity was crucial. He even wrote that properly speaking religion had only one object: “the living God, who reveals himself to all peoples as the only true God”.¹⁷⁰ The great importance La Saussaye attached to cult and ritual did not lead to a neglect of the ultimate object of religion. This type of phenomenology is not to be confused with operations such as “l’exclusion de la transcendance” or “bracketing the intended object of worship”.

Chantepie de la Saussaye’s use of term “phenomenology”, which had not yet gained currency at the time, remains remarkable. It is possible, of course, that he borrowed the term directly from Hegel, who as we have seen was considered one of the key figures in the emerging science of religion. However, I opt for the hypothesis that the decision to use this term was influenced by the work of Eduard von Hartmann (1842–1906). In his manual La Saussaye refers to him several times, most conspicuously in his treatment of various classifications of religions.¹⁷¹ Hartmann has described his own work in the field of philosophy of religion as a “phenomenology of the religious consciousness”.¹⁷² Moreover, La Saussaye explicitly refers to Hartmann’s *Phänomenologie des sittlichen Bewusstseins*, which (among other things) is a plea for a descriptive, inductive form of phenomenology, to be distinguished clearly from that of Hegel.¹⁷³ Although Hartmann emphasized the empirical foundation of his work, it is obvious that he was much more interested in speculative questions than La Saussaye. Providing a complete overview of the empirical field of

¹⁶⁸ Ibid.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid., p. 49f.: “Für die Phänomenologie liefert . . . das religiöse Handeln, Cultus und Sitte, das reichste Material; für viele Völker und Zeiten ist dies sogar der einzige Spiegel, in dem wir etwas von ihren religiösen Vorstellungen und Gefühlen sehen können”.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid., p. 51: “den lebendigen Gott, der sich allen Völkern als den einzig wirklichen Gott bezeugt”.

¹⁷¹ Chantepie de la Saussaye, *Manual*, pp. 56–58; *Lehrbuch*, first edition, pp. 39–40.

¹⁷² Eduard von Hartmann, *Werke*, vol. VII, p. xix.

¹⁷³ Chantepie de la Saussaye, *Lehrbuch*, first edition, vol. I, p. 166, note; Eduard von Hartmann, *Phänomenologie des sittlichen Bewusstseins. Prolegomena zu jeder künftigen Ethik*, Berlin 1879, especially the preface; cf. H. Spiegelberg, *The Phenomenological Movement. A Historical Introduction*, second edition, 2 vols, The Hague 1969, vol. I, pp. 15–16.

moral consciousness and a critical evaluation of its inward data was not enough: the comprehensive principles had to be deduced speculatively, according to Hartmann.¹⁷⁴ This last objective was certainly not La Saussaye's cup of tea, but in any case Hartmann was an author who supported an inductive, coherent description of a special field of human consciousness. Direct lineage, however, can not be proven. One has to keep in mind that La Saussaye was eclectic in his tastes and did not want to develop a comprehensive system or even a cogent method. From a systematic point of view, he was not very strict.

In the second edition of the manual the phenomenological section was dropped without much apology; only in the preface to the second volume was this omission explicitly mentioned. Already at first sight—the introductory section was shortened from 49 to 18 pages—it is evident that the systematic pretensions had been starkly reduced. Chantepie de la Saussaye now claimed that some sort of definition of religion was not necessary (and also of little value without a proper philosophical justification) and the crucial sentence about the “unity of religion in the variety of its forms” (which is the presupposition of science of religion) was simply deleted.¹⁷⁵ The preface to the second volume informs the reader that the emphasis has now been placed much more on the treatment of each religion in its own right. The explicit aim was to present a history of religions (in the plural) and not a history of the development of religion (in the singular).¹⁷⁶ It would be possible to provide the latter, but, as La Saussaye insisted, that was not the aim of this collective volume. He pointed in particular to the discussion of Israelite religion, which was treated in its own right and not as a specimen of Semitic religion.¹⁷⁷

Nevertheless, La Saussaye was still very pleased with the unity of the book: it was not merely a collection of heterogeneous pieces.¹⁷⁸

¹⁷⁴ Hartmann, *Phänomenologie des sittlichen Bewusstseins*, p. v: “eine Phänomenologie des sittlichen Bewusstseins, d.h. eine möglichst vollständige Aufnahme des empirisch gegebenen Gebietes des sittlichen Bewusstseins nebst kritischer Beleuchtung dieser inneren Daten und ihrer gegenseitigen Beziehungen und nebst speculativer Entwicklung der sie zusammenfassenden Prinzipien”.

¹⁷⁵ Chantepie de la Saussaye, *Manual*, p. 9; *Lehrbuch*, p. 6.

¹⁷⁶ Chantepie de la Saussaye, *Lehrbuch*, second edition, vol. II, p. vi: “Das Buch bringt Geschichte der Religionen, keine Entwicklungsgeschichte der Religion”.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. vi

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. vi: “Das Buch hat wirklich seinen einheitlichen Charakter bewahrt, und ist durchaus nicht eine Sammlung von verschieden gearteten Stücken”.

He had scrutinized all contributions and worked closely together with some colleagues.¹⁷⁹ He was less satisfied with the unity of the third edition, which appeared in 1905. By that time, specialisation had much increased, and he had not succeeded in reaching a consensus about the use of terms such as “animism” and “fetishism”.¹⁸⁰ Just as in the second edition, La Saussaye thanked the Danish historian of religion Edvard Lehmann (1862–1930) for his contribution to the editorial work. La Saussaye also announced that the next edition would be prepared by his friend and colleague Lehmann; this fourth and last edition would eventually appear in 1925. Lehmann was to receive—probably at La Saussaye’s instigation—an honorary doctorate from the University of Leiden in 1910. La Saussaye was a much-beloved teacher. His pupil Gerardus van der Leeuw thanked him on various occasions and honoured both him and Lehmann as the men who paved the way for phenomenology of religion. They had put him, Van der Leeuw wrote, on the track of a systematic treatment of religion, which had to be understood in psychological terms as well.¹⁸¹ Although the reputation of the phenomenology of religion may nowadays have declined, the approach has been extremely influential for a large part of the twentieth century.¹⁸² It is doubtful whether this would ever have happened without the phenomenological section of the first edition of Chantepie de la Saussaye’s famous manual.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid., p. vii.

¹⁸⁰ Chantepie de la Saussaye, *Lehrbuch*, third edition, vol. I, p. v.

¹⁸¹ Gerardus van der Leeuw, “Confession Scientifique” (1946), in: *Numen* 1 (1954) 8–15, p. 10; cf. Van der Leeuw, *Godsvoorstellingen in de Oud-Aegyptische pyramidetexten*, Leiden 1918, p. vii.

¹⁸² Cf. chapter II.2 above.

CHAPTER FIVE

TIELE ON RELIGION

1. *The Location of Religion*

The aim of his work, Tiele wrote in his important contribution “Religions” to the ninth edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, was not to “satisfy a vain curiosity”, but—and I give this important quote in full:

to understand and explain one of the mightiest motors in the history of mankind, which formed as well as tore asunder nations, united as well as divided empires, which sanctioned the most atrocious and barbarous deeds, the most cruel and libidinous customs, and inspired the most admirable acts of heroism, self-renunciation, and devotion, which occasioned the most sanguinary wars, rebellions, and persecutions, as well as brought about the freedom, happiness, and peace of nations—at one time a partisan of tyranny, at another breaking its chains, now calling into existence and fostering a new and brilliant civilization, then the deadly foe to progress, science, and art.¹

With rhetorical skill and even pleasure, so it seems, Tiele sketched out the enormous impact of religion on political, social, and cultural life. Especially the potentially devastating effects of the exercise of power, reinforced by religion, seem to have fascinated him, although he did not neglect the possible beneficial effects of religion. This is not a thing of the remote past, Tiele stated: on the contrary, the so-called “world religions”—Buddhism, Christianity, and Islam—appeared rather late in religious history, and their aim, in contrast to the old “national” religions, is “to conquer all mankind”. Religion and power are perceived as closely connected to each other. “The revolution brought about by religious universalism is the greatest and most complete which the history of the world can show; all others, political or social, are as nothing compared to this”.² Undoubtedly,

¹ Tiele, “Religions”, in: *The Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 9th edition, vol. XX, Edinburgh 1886, pp. 358–371, p. 358.

² Tiele, *Comparative History of the Egyptian and Mesopotamian Religions*, vol. I: *History*

the formulations betray a romantic vision of power and heroism, but they also clearly show that Tiele did not overlook the effects of religion upon general history.

By using the metaphor of a “mighty motor”, Tiele framed the relation between religion on the one hand, and cultural and socio-political history on the other, in terms of “inside” and “outside”. This apparently inward affair between human beings and their gods can yield enormous outward effects. Moreover, Tiele did not deny that political and religious history are to some extent mixed up with each other, as is shown by the titles of several of his books alone: *The Religion of Zoroaster . . . Till the Fall of the Old Persian Empire*, and *History of Ancient Religion Until Alexander the Great*.³ His *Babylonian-Assyrian History*⁴ is mainly even political history, the discussion of religion playing only a secondary part in the section on Babylonian-Assyrian culture. But this is an exception in Tiele’s writings, which on the whole deal with specific religious phenomena, specific religions, and, last but not least, with religion as such.

In spite of the importance accorded to historical investigation—Tiele even said of himself: “I am nothing if not historical”⁵—the science of religion strives, in the end, for comparison and classification. To do this adequately, one has to distinguish (as Tiele wrote in his contribution on “Religions” to the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*) “two prominent constitutive elements [of religion], . . . religious ideas and religious practices”.⁶ Such ideas may be vague or unsystematic, but, for Tiele, there exists no “living religion without something like a doctrine”. Yet, a doctrine alone does not make up a religion. “Scarcely less than by its leading ideas a religion is characterized by its rites and institutions . . .”. Given the great importance that Tiele attached from the outset to research on religious ideas instead of the study

of the Egyptian Religion, translated from the Dutch by James Ballingal with the cooperation of the author, London 1882, p. xxi.

³ Tiele, *De Godsdienst van Zarathustra van haar ontstaan in Baktrië tot den val van het Oud-Perzische Rijk*, Haarlem 1864; Tiele, *Geschiedenis van den Godsdienst in de Oudheid tot op Alexander den Grooten*, 2 vols, Amsterdam 1893–1901.

⁴ Tiele, *Babylonisch-Assyrische Geschichte bis zur Eroberung Babels durch Cyrus* (Handbücher der alten Geschichte, I, 4), 2 vols, Gotha 1886–1888.

⁵ A variation on Abraham Kuenen’s famous dictum: “I am nothing if not critical”; cf. Tiele, *Elements of the Science of Religion*, vol. I: Morphological, vol. II: Ontological, Edinburgh–London 1897–1899, vol. I, p. 17.

⁶ Tiele, “Religions”, p. 358. The following quotations are taken from the same page.

of rituals and religious practices, it is remarkable that in this statement practices are given nearly (“scarcely less”) the same rank as ideas. Tiele even went so far as to speak of “the hitherto much neglected comparative study of religious worship and of ethics”. This favourable assessment could be related to the fact that Robertson Smith, who would argue for the priority of ritual over myth, had invited Tiele to write this article. Smith’s letters to Tiele concerning the Encyclopaedia article, however, do not contain any discussion of this topic.⁷ Of course, this does not exclude the possibility that Tiele, while preparing his article, consciously or subconsciously had an audience in mind that was familiar with British anthropology of religion.

Having reminded his readers of the fact that the two main elements of religion hardly ever balance each other, so that pre-eminently doctrinal religions have to be distinguished from more ritualistic and ethical ones, Tiele’s exposition then took a striking turn:

Not that dogma and ritual are religion; they are only its necessary manifestations, the embodiment of what must be considered as its very life and essence, of that which as an inner conviction must be distinguished from a doctrine or creed—a belief.⁸

The switch here is from the outside (“manifestations”) to the inside (“inner conviction”, “belief”). Apparently, only by studying the manifestations can we get to know the inside that brings about those outer phenomena. Without researching religious ideas and practices, “we cannot get a knowledge of the belief which lies at the base of a particular doctrine and which prompts peculiar rites and acts”. In this context it is hard to understand what Tiele was aiming at, since he did not specify the content of the “belief”. On later occasions he dropped the term and spoke instead of “religious sentiment”⁹ as

⁷ The letters are kept in the Tiele Collection of the Leiden University Library, under the signature BPL 2710. In a letter of October 23, 1893, in which he expressed his thanks for the “new book” Tiele had sent him (probably Tiele, *Geschiedenis van den Godsdienst in de Oudheid*, vol. I), Smith touched upon this difference of opinion: “for my own part I am inclined to think that you give too great prominence to *gods*, while you on the other hand will think that I give too much prominence to *institutions*” (italics original).

⁸ Tiele, “Religions”, p. 358. The following quotations are taken from the same page.

⁹ Tiele, *Elements of the Science of Religion*, vol. I, p. 35; cf. Tiele, “Het wezen en de oorsprong van den godsdienst” [with reference to P.D. Chantepie de la Saussaye, *Methodologische bijdrage tot het onderzoek naar den oorsprong van den Godsdienst*, Utrecht 1871], in: *Theologisch Tijdschrift* 5 (1871) 373–406, this quotation on p. 389.

being at the heart of religion. It is certain, however, that this basic belief is not to be confused with creeds, doctrines, or religious concepts. It concerns the way the relationship with the divine is structured. The essence of religion is described in various ways (perhaps not always consistent with each other) throughout his writings. In this chapter, instead of a full, *werkgeschichtliche* investigation of Tiele's development, I will give an analysis of his mature views as presented in the Gifford Lectures. Here I turn to the concept of "religion", which is discussed extensively in the second series of these lectures; in the next chapter I will show how Tiele's views of development, epitomised in the first series, formed the basis of the complete programme of the science of religion.

2. *Outside-Inside*

After he had been obliged to reject an earlier invitation to give the Gifford Lectures¹⁰ because of his recent appointment as Rector of the University of Leiden (1892–1893), Tiele was happy to accept a second invitation. He was attracted, he stated, by the prospect of presenting his views on science of religion before a wide audience.¹¹ The Lectures, delivered in 1896 and 1898, were attended by large crowds. Tiele's voyage to Scotland received almost daily coverage in several of the main Dutch newspapers, and his arrival and activities also attracted much attention from British and Scottish dailies and magazines. Nevertheless, Tiele had not been able to perform his task to his own entire satisfaction. The main problem he faced was that he had to speak before a heterogeneous audience in a language in which he was not fully conversant. The translation of the Lectures caused some trouble, because Tiele "emended" William Hastie's translation considerably. The conflict over the translation led to a lawsuit started by Hastie,¹² and eventually ended in a new translation by Tiele's friend J. Kirkpatrick. The Lectures were finally published in two volumes, in English under the title *Elements of the Science*

¹⁰ On the Gifford Lectures, see Stanley L. Jaki, *Lord Gifford and His Lectures. A Centenary Retrospect*, Edinburgh–Macon, Georgia 1986.

¹¹ Tiele, *Elements of the Science of Religion*, vol. I, p. vii.

¹² The relevant correspondence is in the Tiele Collection of the Leiden University Library.

of *Religion*,¹³ and in Dutch and other languages as an *Introduction to the Science of Religion*.

Tiele did not burden the book with references and footnotes; he considered it to be a more or less popular introduction, and not a handbook. Probably the original Dutch title was not, or could not be, used for the English edition because of an already existing Introduction with the same title, written by his famous colleague Max Müller. This book was a permanent point of reference, not to say target, for Tiele. According to Tiele, Müller in 1873 necessarily had to deal with preliminaries, but now, 25 years later, the science of religion was a more or less established discipline able to offer concrete results. Tiele emphasized the philosophical character of the new science: the results yielded by induction, by empirical, historical, and comparative methods, have to be used to understand “the true nature and origin of religion, and thus to reach our goal” (I: 17).¹⁴ “What religion is, and whence it arises, we can only ascertain from religious phenomena. Our inmost being can only be known by its outward manifestations” (I: 18).

From the outside to the inside of religion: this is the metaphor that guides Tiele’s research programme. We find the dialectics between inside and outside, between core and shell, on different levels. For instance, it is used to argue the priority of intentions or beliefs over (ritual) practices. Tiele stated that the inner conviction guarantees that doctrine does not become “an empty phrase, a lip-service, the parrot-like mumbling of a catechism” (II: 191). This also applies to ritual: celebrating Holy Communion depends on the meaning that is attached to it. Contrary to outward appearances, “the widely different significance attached to it by Catholics, Lutherans, and Calvinists, by Zwingli, Luther, and Calvin, renders it a very different ceremony in each case”.¹⁵ Moreover, the inside-outside dichotomy

¹³ In the following pages I will make use of this translation (Tiele, *Elements of the Science of Religion*), but I will check it against the original Dutch version, which appeared simultaneously and which was re-issued in a slightly revised form in 1900: *Inleiding tot de godsdienstwetenschap*, 2 vols, vol. I: eerste reeks nov.–dec. 1896; vol. II: nov.–dec. 1898; tweede herziene druk, Amsterdam 1900. The English translation is not always adequate.

¹⁴ Numbers between brackets refer to the English edition: Tiele, *Elements of the Science of Religion*, 1897–1899. Italics in the quotations are always Tiele’s. On Tiele’s view on the relation between history and philosophy of religion, cf. chapter IV.2 above.

¹⁵ Cf. Tiele, *Elements of the Science of Religion*, 1897–1899, vol. I, p. 26. In the

plays an important role in the division of the *Elements* into two sections. The first, *Morphological* part is concerned with “the constant changes of form resulting from an ever-progressing evolution”, whereas the second, *Ontological* part deals with “the permanent elements in what is changing, the unalterable element in transient and ever-altering forms” (I: 27). The permanent elements are found on the inside, as will be shown below. The term “ontological” is perhaps a bit misleading in this context, because Tiele did not want to enter into a metaphysical discussion about transcendent issues, but to research the constituent elements of religion as such.

3. *The Definition of Religion*

The Gifford Lectures start with some preliminary questions. Prominent among these is the problem of the definition of religion. To begin research, Tiele wrote, one must have a general characteristic of religion. This first definition is not meant to identify the essence of religion, which can only be ascertained at the very end of the investigation.¹⁶ Tiele did not begin by sketching “a preconceived ideal of religion”, but by stating what is “generally understood” by the term. In a general sense it means “the aggregate of all those phenomena which are invariably termed religious, in contradistinction to ethical, aesthetical, political, and others” (I: 4). A rather formal distinction, I would say, but one which is fundamental to Tiele’s (later) work. Moreover, it is the implicit presupposition underlying the science of religion as such. Because religion is thought to constitute a distinct sphere, it is then felt necessary to establish a distinct discipline that researches this domain.

On a more substantial level, religion is specified as being concerned with “those manifestations of the human mind in words, deeds, customs, and institutions which testify to man’s belief in the superhuman, and serve to bring him into relation with it” (I: 4). Again, the duality inherent in (external) manifestations or phenomena¹⁷ that yet express (internal) human belief, is striking. Compared

English edition the Dutch term “Gereformeerden” is translated by “Evangelicals”; “Calvinists”, however, would be a more adequate term. For Tiele’s views on ritual, see Tiele, *Elements of the Science of Religion*, vol. II, p. 148f.

¹⁶ Tiele, *Elements of the Science of Religion*, vol. I, p. 4.

¹⁷ The two terms can be used as synonyms (cf. Tiele, *Elements of the Science of*

to earlier characterizations given by Tiele that focused on the relationship between man and the superhuman,¹⁸ the emphasis on external expressions of religion is new. This could be adduced as an argument in favour of the alleged “phenomenological” character of Tiele’s science of religion. The common feature of phenomenological research is defined by Jacques Waardenburg as “the desire to interrogate religious data for their meaning, while trying to avoid imposing personal value judgements on such data”.¹⁹ Although the term “phenomenological” as far as I can see only occurs in Tiele’s later work, he practised some sort of *epochè* (without using this term), denying that the superhuman as such is subject of research. The presupposed “reality of the objects of faith does not concern us here. We therefore leave the question open. The object of our science is not the superhuman itself, but religion based on belief in the superhuman” (I: 5). These beliefs can be studied scientifically, the scientific character of the new field being of great importance to Tiele.²⁰ No doubt, Tiele wanted to give a generally acceptable, unbiased characterization of religion, which would then provide a stable basis for the new science. Aiming for precision, he spoke of “superhuman” instead of “supersensual”, since the latter term would exclude “visible deities”.²¹ It is the judgement of the religious practitioners, rather than of the scholar who studies them, that determines whether or not their deities are “superhuman”.

In contrast to earlier writings, the Gifford Lectures do not define religion in terms of the relationship between human beings and superhuman *powers*. The concept of power is only introduced in the second part of the book, in the chapter on “The Constant Element in All Conceptions of God”. In his definition Tiele avoids the term “(superhuman) power”, but he speaks freely about “God” or “gods” (as equivalent to “superhuman”). Without much reasoning he seems to take for granted that the “superhuman” sphere is populated by

Religion, vol. I, p. 4f.; Tiele, *Hoofdtrekken der Godsdienstwetenschap*, Amsterdam 1901, p. 4), although on other occasions they are contrasted (cf. below).

¹⁸ Tiele, *Outlines of the History of Religion to the Spread of the Universal Religions*, London 1877, p. 1f.

¹⁹ J. Waardenburg, “Religion Between Reality and Idea. A Century of Phenomenology of Religion in the Netherlands”, in: *Numen* 19 (1972) 128–203, p. 129.

²⁰ Cf. Tiele, *Elements of the Science of Religion*, vol. I, p. 5f.

²¹ Tiele, *Outlines of the History of Religion*, p. 2.

gods or spirits.²² Although Tiele can do without the notion of power, he does need the concept of superhumans or gods to characterize religion. The fact that the notion of (superhuman) power is not used in the definition does not imply that it is no longer important. Superhuman power is still “the one element which essentially and indispensably constitutes the idea of a god” (II: 80).

At this point, it is necessary to make a remark on the use of the concept of “power” in late nineteenth century science of religion, because in the historiography this concept is above all connected to the “pre-animistic” theory of religion, as put forward by R.R. Marett (1866–1943). Marett is famous for his critique of his teacher E.B. Tylor, whose definition of (“primitive”) religion as a belief in souls and a belief in the animation of nature (“animism”) he considered “too narrow, because too intellectualistic”.²³ Marett did not locate religion in an intellectual need, but in the experience of power.²⁴ This view had a great impact on the subsequent study of religion. Rudolf Otto’s concept of the Holy was influenced by it, and Marett was also important to early sociologists of religion such as Émile Durkheim and Max Weber.²⁵

However, as the example of Tiele shows (and other examples could be added),²⁶ the notion of power played an important role in the study of religion before Marett proposed his theory on preanimism. What is the difference between them? Marett argued (against Tylor) that

²² Tiele, *Elements of the Science of Religion*, vol. I, p. 290: “The earliest [conception of a God, ALM] was not polytheistic, still less monotheistic, or even what has been termed henotheistic, but consisted in a vague, indefinite, glimmering notion of a supernatural or spirit world, to which all the spirits, thousands upon thousands of them, belonged”.

²³ R.R. Marett, “Pre-Animistic Religion” (*Folklore* June 1900, pp. 162–182), reprinted in: Marett, *The Threshold of Religion* (1907), second edition, revised and enlarged, London s.a. [1914], pp. 1–28; this quotation on p. 1.

²⁴ Hans G. Kippenberg, “Rivalry Among Scholars of Religions. The Crisis of Historicism and the Formation of Paradigms in the History of Religions”, in: *Historical Reflections* 20/1 (1994) 377–402, p. 381.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 383–386; Kippenberg, *Discovering Religious History in the Modern Age*, Princeton–Oxford 2002, pp. 133–135, 179–182.

²⁶ A. Réville, *Prolégomènes de l'histoire des religions*, Paris 1881, p. 104; Ernst Troeltsch, “Die Selbständigkeit der Religion”, in: *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche* 5 (1895) 361–436; 6 (1896) 71–110, 167–218, p. 381; on Troeltsch, see Arie L. Molendijk, “Shifting Cargoes. Ernst Troeltsch on the Study of Religion”, in: Jan G. Platvoet & Arie L. Molendijk (eds), *The Pragmatics of Defining Religion. Concepts, Contexts and Contests*, Leiden 1999, pp. 149–171.

the attitude of mind dictated by awe of the mysterious, which provides religion with its raw material, may exist apart from animism . . . Objects towards which awe is felt may be termed powers. Of such powers spirits constitute but a single class amongst many.²⁷

Religion is fundamentally perceived as a sphere of experience, ideas and concepts being of secondary importance. “My own view is that savage religion is not so much thought out as danced out”.²⁸ This is a different world compared to Tiele’s, who saw religion primarily in terms of belief. Speaking about “power”, Tiele meant the root idea in every conception of God.²⁹ To Tiele, the notion of power was basically a (religious) concept, whereas Marett uses the same term to refer to an experiential sphere.

4. *The Manifestations and Constituents of Religion*

Before we continue the discussion of Tiele’s key concepts, we have to digress slightly and take the arrangement of the Gifford Lectures into account. In order to identify their structure it is helpful to take a glance at another of Tiele’s books, actually the last one he published himself, *Outlines [Elements] of Science of Religion*,³⁰ which appeared in Dutch in 1901 and covers much the same ground as the Gifford Lectures. Compared to the Gifford Lectures, which give a much more elaborate account consisting of approximately 600 pages, the *Outlines* is a modest book (125 pages in large print). Nevertheless, it has the advantage of showing the infrastructure of Tiele’s science of religion. The similarity in composition of the two books is shown in the following scheme:

<i>Outlines 1901</i>	<i>Gifford</i>
Prolegomena	Part I: Lecture 1
Morphology	Part I: Lectures 2–10

²⁷ Marett, “Pre-Animistic Religion”, p. 1 (taken from the summary that Marett wrote for the second edition of *The Threshold of Religion*). In another contribution he specified his views in more detail: Marett, “The Tabu-Mana Formula as a Minimum Definition of Religion”, in: *Archiv für Religionswissenschaft* 12 (1909) 186–194.

²⁸ Marett, *The Threshold of Religion*, p. xxxi.

²⁹ Tiele, *Elements of the Science of Religion*, vol. II, p. 81.

³⁰ Tiele, *Hoofdtrekken der Godsdienstwetenschap*.

Ontology [with two subsections:]	Part II
– phenomenological	Part II: Lectures 1–7 ³¹
– psychological	Part II: Lectures 8–10

The Prolegomena deal with preliminary questions such as the problem of the definition of religion, as discussed in the subsection above. The morphological section deals with the development of religion. Here, Tiele gave a classification of religions (the most prominent dichotomy being the one between nature and ethical religions) and formulated laws of religious development.³² These themes were of great importance to him, but, as said, this section still only concerns the changes in forms, not the permanent element underlying these. This last topic, described as “the origin and the very nature and essence of religion” (I: 27), is explored in the ontological part of the Gifford Lectures. It is called “ontological” because it concerns “‘being’—that which *is*, as distinguished from that which grows or *becomes*, the *ousia* as distinguished from the ever-changing *morphai*” (II: 188).³³ No metaphysics were intended. Tiele assured his audience that he was only speaking of the essence of religion in the psychological sense.³⁴ Psychology is crucial because the phenomena discussed in the ontological section are “psychic and therefore steady phenomena”, whereas the morphological research treats “historical and therefore transitory phenomena”.³⁵

Because of the sharp contrast between morphology and ontology, and the focus on the (ontological) research into the essence of religion (which is of a psychological nature) in the Gifford Lectures, the impression is very easily created that the entire second series is psychological in character. This is not the case. Several amendments to the second Dutch edition, and especially the *Outlines*, show the somewhat hidden structure more clearly. The first part of the second series is concerned with “manifestations”, the second with “constituents”. By manifestations Tiele primarily meant “words and deeds”; by constituents, “emotions, conceptions, and sentiments, of which

³¹ The first, introductory, lecture of the second series explains the relationship between the phenomenological and the psychological parts.

³² Cf. chapter VI below.

³³ Cf. Tiele, *Inleiding tot de godsdienstwetenschap*, vol. II, p. 165.

³⁴ Tiele, *Elements of the Science of Religion*, vol. II, p. 188f.

³⁵ Tiele, *Hoofdtrekken der Godsdienstwetenschap*, p. 61.

words and deeds are at once the offspring and the index" (II: 6f.). Only the research into the constituents is properly called psychological ("psychological-synthetic"), whereas the investigation into the manifestations is termed "phenomenological-analytical".³⁶ Chapters 2–7 (on religious doctrine, practice, and organization) are phenomenological; chapters 8–10 (on essence, origin, and the place of religion in spiritual life) are psychological.

From the outside to the inside: this is the alleged *ordo cognoscendi*. Manifestations express underlying constituents. Moreover, religious words and deeds are only expressions of authentic religion if they "flow spontaneously from the heart" (II: 7). The underlying "emotions, conceptions, and sentiments", therefore, have ontological priority: they guarantee the authenticity of the religious expressions (manifestations). The *ordo essendi* is the opposite of the *ordo cognoscendi*. Yet, a psychological study of the constituents is still possible. These constituents are occasionally referred to as "phenomena",³⁷ and Tiele claimed that religion always begins with (which is not the same as originates in)³⁸ an emotion. He then explained what is meant by "emotion" or "affection":³⁹ "Strictly speaking, an emotion is simply the result of something that moves us [affects us, ALM]" (II: 15). However, the word is used here in the following sense:

³⁶ Tiele, *Hoofdtrekken der Godsdienstwetenschap*, p. 61. The second Dutch edition of *Elements of the Science of Religion* complicates matters by introducing the asymmetrical contrast between "phenomenological-analytical" and "synthetic-psychological"; cf. Tiele, *Inleiding tot de godsdienstwetenschap*, vol. II, p. 2.

³⁷ Terminological rigour and elegance are not Tiele's strong points. Religious words and deeds, which in his contribution to the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* were still termed "constitutive elements" of religion, are in the Gifford Lectures categorised as "manifestations". They express the underlying religious "emotions, conceptions, and sentiments", which in the proper sense of the word cannot be called "manifestations". To refer to these constituents Tiele uses the term "phenomena", which of course approaches "manifestations" (as is clear from the fact that on other occasions they are used by Tiele as near-synonyms). Another complication is that the Dutch term for manifestation (*openbaring* = the German *Offenbarung*) has a strong religious connotation, meaning "revelation". In this context, however, such a religious connotation is not implied; the term simply indicates that something is revealed, made manifest (in the general sense of the word).—For Tiele's view on the concept of religious revelation, see Tiele, *Elements of the Science of Religion*, vol. II, p. 131f.

³⁸ Tiele, *Elements of the Science of Religion*, vol. II, p. 15. Tiele's view on the origin of religion will be discussed below.

³⁹ The Dutch version has *aandoening*.

And in this sense every emotion embraces three elements: (1) a predisposition, in the form of certain longings or aspirations, as yet partly unconscious, and certain latent and vague conceptions, differing according to the temperament and inclination of the individual, which may be described as a mood; (2) an impression produced upon us from without,⁴⁰ or the affection itself; and (3) the fact of becoming conscious of such an affection, or the perception of such affection (II: 15).

The first element—the religious mood—is of central importance because it determines whether or not an impression awakens an actual religious emotion. If it is missing, one may have, for instance, an aesthetic emotion (experience), but not a religious one. The third aspect mentioned by Tiele implies that the emotion that is perceived, so to speak, gives rise to a conception. Here the connection between emotion and conception—the first two elements of the triad mentioned above—is established. This almost closes the circle because emotion and conception together easily lead to a definite “sentiment”, as the translation has it, or, perhaps better, to an inclination or disposition⁴¹ which impels to action. The emotive, cognitive, and practical aspects are closely knit together.

These three elements, emotions, conceptions, and dispositions (“sentiments”), are necessary constituents of religion. If one is missing, there may be “a certain religiosity, but there can be no sound and perfect religion” (II: 20). Any morbid symptoms in religious life are “probably” due to a neglect of one of these three. If religion is sought in emotion alone, there is the danger of “sentimental or mystical fanaticism” (II: 22). If conceptions are overrated, this easily leads to hate and persecution. Finally, if sentiment is everything, there is the threat of moralism. A balance is needed. One should, however, not overlook the fact that Tiele was talking about an inner balance. Harmony has to be established in the inner life of the religious individual.

The emphasis on religion as an ultimately psychological phenomenon easily leads to a neglect of the social and practical dimensions of religion. Only two lectures in the second series were devoted to these aspects. The sixth lecture dealt with religious practice

⁴⁰ Used in the meaning of “outside”; cf. Tiele, *Inleiding tot de godsdienstwetenschap*, vol. II, p. 14.

⁴¹ The Dutch version has *gezindheid*; cf. Tiele, *Inleiding tot de godsdienstwetenschap*, vol. II, p. 16.

(“Worship, prayers, and offerings”) and the seventh with religious organization (“Religion as a social phenomenon: the church”).⁴² Interestingly enough, the question discussed there was not whether religious persons of similar inclinations would form a community or association. Such a question would be in line with Tiele’s individualistic outlook. Instead, he asked: “Does religion, in its own nature, and with a view to its perfect evolution, require so mighty a mechanism, so elaborate an association as the church . . .?” (II: 162). The question concerned societies in which religion constitutes a separate sphere that is independent of the state, and was phrased so tentatively because, ultimately, Tiele’s conception of religion was spiritual.⁴³ The domain of the church is defined as the spiritual-religious. “[The church] must never forget that she is a purely spiritual institution, which can only attain its lofty aims by spiritual means” (II: 180). Although Tiele explicitly opposed philosophers who thought that the days of the church were gone, it is hard to see how he himself could escape from the conclusion that its essence is a spiritual bond (the communion of the believers) and that, therefore, the factual institution is, at most, of secondary importance. Tiele warned the church not to invoke the help of the state or the police to attain its goal. “[T]he church should be the last to doubt the power of the spirit, which surpasses that of all commandments and prohibitions” (II: 180).

5. *The Essence, Origin, and Place of Religion*

(a) The eighth lecture of the second series—the inquiry into the *essence* of religion—marks the turn towards the psychological-synthetic part of Tiele’s ontology. As could be expected, this essence is not to be found in the varying conceptions, rituals, or institutions of religion. It would be equally foolish, Tiele declared, to call the body the essence of human beings.⁴⁴ One has to go from the visible to the invisible, from religion as an anthropological phenomenon to

⁴² Cf. Tiele, *Hoofdtrekken der Godsdienstwetenschap*, p. 62f.

⁴³ On the explicit rejection of such a spiritualist conception by the Durkheimians, see Ivan Strenski, *Durkheim and the Jews of France*, Chicago–London 1997, p. 131f.

⁴⁴ Tiele, *Elements of the Science of Religion*, vol. II, p. 191; cf. Tiele, *Inleiding tot de godsdienstwetenschap*, vol. II, p. 167.

religiosity, in which the external manifestations originate. “And what root can this be but faith?” (II: 191). Tiele admitted that this was the view he had indeed formerly held, and that he still thought that without faith (the meaning of the term is not specified in this context) religion becomes an empty phrase or a senseless practice. But in the meantime, a counter-question had occurred to Tiele: Does this not apply to the whole of spiritual life? What is moral life without a belief in the reality of goodness? How can the scientist advance without faith in the unity of nature? One could go on asking similar questions; consequently, a more precise definition is needed.

First, Tiele rejected a Kantian view of religion as the belief in the moral order of the world, which is guaranteed by a supreme power. He was more inclined to see the core of all religion in the “belief in the Infinite above us and the infinite within us” (II: 194).⁴⁵ But this solution, which once satisfied him, did not “appear entirely adequate” any longer. It was too much of a dogma; actually, it was a compound of two dogmas (the infinite *above* and *within* us). The proposed solutions were too intellectualistic, too much on the level of concepts and ideas, to convince Tiele. Instead, he thought the essence was to be located at the level of religiosity—the subjective side of religion.⁴⁶ Tiele captured the essence in one word: piety.⁴⁷ Devotion would also be a proper term “because it involves the idea of self-dedication and personal sacrifice” (II: 197f.), but this describes only one crucial aspect, not the whole “pure and reverential disposition or frame of mind” (II: 198), which is called piety. In the rest of the eighth lecture Tiele sought to explain, in ways not always easy to understand, what piety really is. After having established piety to be the essence of religion, he alleged that the essence of piety and, consequently, religion is adoration. The reason why he did not use the word “worship” in this context is probably that this term can be associated with “external” acts, whereas only “internal”

⁴⁵ The inconsistent spelling of “Infinite” (with and without the capital) is not found in the Dutch edition; cf. Tiele, *Inleiding tot de godsdienstwetenschap*, vol. II, p. 170.

⁴⁶ On one occasion Tiele distinguished between the subjective side (religiosity) and the objective side of religion (religion proper); cf. Tiele, *Elements of the Science of Religion*, vol. II, p. 183. The distinction, however, is not sustained systematically.

⁴⁷ Tiele, *Elements of the Science of Religion*, vol. II, p. 196; cf. Tiele, *Inleiding tot de godsdienstwetenschap*, vol. II, p. 172.

eneration is meant. Adoration involves two opposite tendencies: "To adore is to give oneself . . . , [b]ut at the same time adoration includes a desire to possess the adored object, to call it entirely one's own" (II: 198f.).

It is remarkable that most of the time Tiele did not explicitly supply an object of adoration, but spoke about it in the abstract. Of course, notions such as piety and adoration have a strong religious connotation, but (to restrict myself to the second term) one can also adore other human beings, or music by Mozart. The existence of a referent, in this case a god, Tiele did not deny. But the endeavour to locate religion in "the inner depths of the human soul" (II: 24), in a "frame of mind", makes the referent almost disappear on various occasions. Religion is not primarily concerned with conceptions, but with emotions, moods, frames of mind, in one word with the *Gemüt*—to use the famous expression of Friedrich Schleiermacher. However, the cognitive level cannot be passed over completely. In a key passage Tiele stated: "In adoration are united those two phases of religion which are termed by the schools 'transcendent' and 'immanent' respectively, or which, in religious language, represent the believer as 'looking up to God as the Most High', and as 'feeling himself akin to God as his Father'" (II: 198). Still, Tiele maintained that the term "adoration" alone suffices to characterize religion because, when applied to the relationships between human beings, it is used in a metaphorical way. But for the sake of clarity he was willing to determine the essence of religion as the "adoration of a superhuman power, on which we feel dependent".⁴⁸ He claimed that the germ of this essence could also be found in primitive religions.

(b) Having established the essence of religion, in the ninth lecture Tiele discussed its *origin*. The question was not *how* religion arose. Tiele was not interested in the (historical) beginnings of religion in human history. Instead, the question is phrased as: "*Whence* does it spring, not in one instance but in all, or what is the source in man's spiritual life?" (II: 209). What is the psychological foundation of religion? Several answers given by philosophers of religion were discussed and rejected. According to Tiele, we do not receive much help from Schleiermacher's "unconditional sense of dependence"

⁴⁸ Added in the second Dutch edition; cf. Tiele, *Inleiding tot de godsdienstwetenschap*, vol. II, p. 179.

(II: 222). He also rejected the theory, adopted by himself in earlier times, that “religion is the result of a conflict between the sense of self and the sense of affliction”.⁴⁹ The origin of religion cannot be traced to feelings of fear and helplessness and the search for a god who can control danger. Feuerbach is a perfect example of this point of view, and Tiele praised him for his fine psychological analysis, although he repudiated Feuerbach’s negative conclusion that the whole process is purely subjective.

In sum: there is no denying that the wishes and desires Feuerbach analyzed so well do exist. The question one ought to ask, however, is: “But whence do they come? Why is man discontented with his conditions and surroundings?” (II: 228). The answer is simple: “because he cannot help it”.

Mere animal, selfish enjoyment cannot satisfy him permanently, because he feels that, as a man, he has an inward impulse which constrains him to overstep the boundaries of the finite and to strive after an infinite perfection, though he knows it to be unattainable for him as an earthly being. The Infinite, the Absolute, very Being, as opposed to continual becoming and perishing—or call it as you will—that is the principle which gives him constant unrest, because it dwells within him (II: 228).

In a phrase with Kantian overtones, this precedence of the Infinite is termed “a form of conception” (*voorstellingsvorm*), an idea that dominates man and constitutes his essence. Tiele quotes Alfred de Musset: “malgré moi l’Infini me tourmente” (II: 230). This “original, unconscious, innate sense of infinity” (II: 233) is presented as a psychological fact. These remarks sound very much like the theory of the “religious a priori” that found its famous expression in the work of Ernst Troeltsch.⁵⁰ According to Tiele, proving the validity of this belief in the infinite would be the task of metaphysics rather than science of religion. “But, though not called upon to prove the truth of religion, our science is not entitled to pronounce it an illusion.

⁴⁹ Tiele, *Elements of the Science of Religion*, vol. II, p. 223. The Dutch term is *noodgevoel* (*Inleiding tot de godsdienstwetenschap*, vol. II, p. 195).

⁵⁰ In an earlier text Tiele explicitly opposed such a theory because it explains nothing. It is like saying that a dog barks because it has the capacity to bark; cf. Tiele, “Het wezen en de oorsprong van den godsdienst”, p. 401. On Troeltsch and the a priori, see Karl-Ernst Apfelbacher, *Frömmigkeit und Wissenschaft. Ernst Troeltsch und sein theologisches Programm*, München etc. 1978, pp. 132–139.

This would not only be an unwarrantable conclusion, but it would make human existence an insoluble riddle, it would brand mankind as crazy dreamers, it would pronounce the source of all the best work they have ever done in this world to be sheer folly" (II: 235). It is clear where Tiele's sympathies lay; outwardly, however, he practised some sort of methodological agnosticism.

(c) The last lecture "The place of religion in spiritual life" in fact deals with two topics. The main subject, as indicated by the title of the lecture, concerns the relationship of religion to morality, art, and science. However, Tiele started by discussing the question of "how religion is born within [man]" (II: 237). This question is different from the previous one regarding the origin of religion, which lies in the human sense of the infinite. If there is to be real religion, this sense has to be activated. The new question, therefore, is: what actually causes the emergence of religion? Strictly speaking, Tiele admitted, this question belongs to the morphological part of science of religion, but because of its importance he would discuss it in this context. Here various erroneous theories on the *origin* of religion, which actually formulate principles that contribute to its *birth*, get their place: "namely, man's instinct of causality, his dissatisfaction with the worldly and the transitory, and his moral consciousness, or, in other words, his sense of truth, his sense of the beautiful, and his sense of duty" (II: 238).

Of course, this triad forms a nice transition to the main theme of the lecture. But it is not completely clear in what way and to what extent Tiele thinks these three separate factors contribute to the coming into existence of religion. Can dissatisfaction with the world be equated with the sense of the beautiful? Is not the moral aspect quintessential here? In the corresponding part of the *Outlines* this distinction is not very clear-cut either.⁵¹ A second problem is that in the *Outlines* the innate form of conception of causality ("the instinct of causality") is perceived—together with the sense of the infinite—as equally essential to the origin of religion, whereas in the Gifford Lectures this is explicitly denied.⁵² One can try to save Tiele from contradicting himself by distinguishing between a subconscious

⁵¹ Tiele, *Hoofdtrekken der Godsdienstwetenschap*, p. 123.

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 122; Tiele, *Elements of the Science of Religion*, vol. II, p. 217, and Lecture X, *passim*.

“instinct of causality”, which is to be considered a Kantian form of thought, and a conscious, empirical “instinct of causality”, which has to be awakened. But it can hardly be denied that, from a conceptual point of view, Tiele’s analysis is not very strong.

I will let this matter rest for the moment and turn to Tiele’s main concern in this last lecture: the relation between religion and “spiritual life”. As is clear from the whole series of lectures, religion was, to Tiele, an independent phenomenon. Thus, he opposed reductionist views on religion. Tiele claimed there was a major difference between religion and other cultural activities. Although science, art, and morality yield a considerable measure of happiness, “they never produce that perfect peace of mind, that entire reconciliation with one’s self and one’s worldly lot, which are the fruits of religion, and have ever characterised the truly pious of all ages” (II: 246f.). Only religion can establish harmony and answer the main existential questions: “Whence and whither?” Religion can provide an integral *Weltanschauung*. What is more, it can establish inner harmony: all human faculties are equally involved. The old saying that “religion embraces the whole of man” may not be strictly accurate, but it is certainly true that “religion, along with all that is truly great in man’s aims and actions, emanates directly from the distinctive badge of his humanity—the Infinite within him” (II: 248). In this way, religion is given a central place in Tiele’s thought as the point where the distinctiveness of man appears most prominently.

Admittedly, autonomous spheres can conflict with each other. History, indeed, provides examples of religiously motivated hostility to civilization. However, in Tiele’s view, this concerns dated forms of religion rather than religion as such, which is not irreconcilable with free developments in other cultural spheres. As long as it is not claimed that religion can be replaced by something else, there can be mutual benefit. “Although certain religious views may conflict with scientific facts, religion itself is not endangered by any legitimate result of scientific research, by any utterance of true art, or by any philosophical or ethical system thoughtfully based on sound principles” (II: 259). The ultimate ground of this rather harmonious view is the conviction that the human spirit is one and indivisible, “though revealing itself in different ways” (II: 244).

In the conclusion of the Gifford Lectures Tiele speculated about a reawakening of religious life. Remarkably, however, he immediately added that such a reawakening should never be at the expense

of the achievements of “[o]ur brilliant nineteenth century” (II: 261). Tiele warned against those who are willing to pay the price of freedom to gain religious renewal. He pondered over the possibility of a free form of religious life. The science of religion can not call such a new form into being, but may pave the way for it as it shows the permanency of the phenomenon of religion. “And then”, as the ending of the Gifford Lectures reads, “without preaching, or special pleading, or apologetic argument, but solely by means of the actual facts it reveals, our beloved science will help to bring home to the restless spirits of our time the truth that there is no rest for them unless ‘they arise and go to their Father’” (II: 262f.). Ultimately, the science of religion will bring about a deepening of religious life. This is not one hundred percent certain, but for Tiele at least it was a deeply felt conviction. If the religious need is indeed “the mightiest, profoundest, and most overmastering of all” (II: 261)—and this is presented as a result of the new science—then this need will manifest itself in ever new forms. Given his liberal Protestant idea of religion and his teleological view on religious history, Tiele did not expect a religious regression, but he did hope for a manifestation of a new free religiosity, which would harmonize with his most precious science of religion.

6. *Conclusion*

By claiming that the essence of religion lies in piety, and its origin in the innate sense of the Infinite, Tiele located religion in the “inwardness” of the human individual. The subjective side of religion (religiosity) is highlighted at the expense of its objective side (belief systems, myths, rituals, institutions, and so on). Ultimately, the reality of religion is personal and psychological. The text of the Gifford Lectures, especially the “ontological” section, does not allow of a different conclusion. Yet, one has to keep in mind that, unlike many other books by Tiele, these lectures have a strong philosophical orientation. This might seem to be an odd remark, since science of religion as such was characterized by Tiele as a philosophical affair, its explicit goal being to discern the essence (the unchanging constant) in the varying forms of religion. In practice, however, Tiele paid a great deal of attention to the forms in which religion appears, especially in his books on ancient religions. In this sense the Gifford

Lectures are not fully representative of his work. Tiele was known at the time for his mythological studies.⁵³ Therefore, we have to differentiate between the principal view of religion discussed above, and other important parts of Tiele's writings. Nonetheless, this does not alter the fact that for Tiele the analysis of particular religions and religious phenomena was, strictly speaking, only the preamble to science of religion proper. Most present-day scientists of religion take the opposite view. They see this "preamble" as the core of their discipline, whereas what Tiele proclaimed to be "science of religion" they would call vain speculation. The perception of the task and the domain of the science of religion has changed dramatically since its beginnings.

We conclude that, to Tiele, religion was grounded in the relationship between human and superhuman beings. The science of religion has demonstrated that the belief that God is above as well as in human beings is common to all religions.⁵⁴ The kinship between man and God is crucial. The new discipline has uncovered the psychological nucleus of religion, which expresses itself in ever new forms. Tiele hoped "that men will at length learn to attach no greater value to changing and transient forms than they really possess, these being necessary but always imperfect and inadequate expressions of the infinite within us" (I: 301).

⁵³ Cf. Tiele, "Comment distinguer les éléments exotiques de la mythologie grecque", in: *Revue de l'Histoire des Religions* 2 (1880) 129–169; Tiele, *Le mythe de Kronos. A propos d'une nouvelle méthode en mythologie comparée*, Paris 1886; "De mythe van Kronos. Ter toetsing eener nieuwe mythologische methode" [re: A. Lang, *Custom and Myth*, London 1884], in: *Theologisch Tijdschrift* 20 (1886) 1–28.

⁵⁴ Tiele, *Elements of the Science of Religion*, vol. II, p. 103.

CHAPTER SIX

RELIGIOUS DEVELOPMENT: TIELE'S PARADIGM OF THE SCIENCE OF RELIGION

1. *The Concept of Development in Nineteenth-Century Thought*

This chapter will focus on Tiele and show how the idea of development functioned in his work, actually forming the foundation of his science of religion. No doubt, other students of religion at the time were also deeply steeped in thinking in terms of religious development, but Tiele made an enormous effort to clarify the importance of the “hypothesis of development” for the study of religion and defended it against criticism. Before turning to Tiele, however, some general remarks on the concept of—religious—development in nineteenth-century thought should be made. Besides Tiele, the anthropologist Edward B. Tylor (1832–1917) was an extremely influential representative of evolutionist thinking in the nineteenth century. His line of research has been described as follows: “Tylor’s central anthropological problem, in its simplest terms, was to ‘fill the gap between Brixham Cave and European Civilization without introducing the hand of God’—that is, to show that human culture was, or might have been, the product of a natural evolutionary development”.¹ The discovery of Brixham Cave had established the great antiquity of man and demonstrated that the biblical chronology was untenable. For Tylor, this meant that the investigation of human history had to be conducted along the lines of the “sciences of inorganic nature”. “[O]ur thoughts, wills, and actions accord with laws as definite as those which govern the motion of waves, the combination of acids and bases, and the growth of plants and animals”.² As we will see,

¹ George W. Stocking, “On the Limits of ‘Presentism’ and ‘Historicism’ in the Historiography of the Behavioral Sciences” (1965), in: Stocking, *Race, Culture, and Evolution. Essays in the History of Anthropology*, New York–London 1968, pp. 1–12, esp. p. 11 (I have not been able to trace the origin of the quotation Stocking gives); cf. Stocking, *Victorian Anthropology*, New York etc. 1987, pp. 69–74.

² E.B. Tylor, *Primitive Culture. Researches into the Development of Mythology, Philosophy, Religion, Language, Art, and Custom* (1871), 2 vols, third edition, London 1891, vol. I, p. 2.

Tiele, too, spent a lot of time in formulating “laws” that govern cultural and religious development. Part of the debate concerned the question what kind of “laws” were involved in the process of the development of human culture. Friedrich Max Müller (1823–1900)³ also contributed to this enterprise and lectured, for instance, extensively on the “origin and growth of religion”.⁴ In a sentence which shows an almost boyish excitement in digging for the treasures of ancient times, Müller warned that his position was different from that of G.W.F. Hegel or Auguste Comte: “There is to my mind no subject more absorbing than the tracing [of] the origin and first growth of human thought;—not theoretically, or in accordance with the Hegelian laws of thought, or the Comtian epochs; but historically, and like an Indian trapper, spying for every footprint, every layer, every broken blade that might tell and testify of the former presence of man in his early wanderings and searchings after light and truth”.⁵

This last formulation betrays the practical dimension of much evolutionary thought. Both Tiele and Müller hoped that the newly established science of religion could help to bring about a purer and more advanced form of religion. This ideal is often criticised by modern scholars, who want the science of religion to be a “fully secular, fully neutral discipline”.⁶ However, it should be borne in mind that most research at the time—also by those who were critical of Christianity—was not disinterested either. Tylor, for one, claimed that ethnography was, in the end, “a reformer’s science”, which contributes to the “advancement of civilization”.

³ Lourens P. van den Bosch, *Friedrich Max Müller. A Life Devoted to the Humanities*, Leiden 2001.

⁴ F. Max Müller, *Lectures on the Origin and the Growth of Religion. As Illustrated by the Religions of India*, London 1878.

⁵ Max Müller, *Chips from a German Workshop*, vol. I: *Essays on the Science of Religion*, second edition, London 1868, p. ix.

⁶ Jan G. Platvoet, “Hawk Says/Osansa se: *Ade a Onyame aye nhina ye*, an Observer’s View of the Development of the Study of Religion in South Africa” (paper presented at ASRSA Congress, Swaziland, 28–30 June 1993), p. 13f.; quoted in Abdulkader I. Tayob, “Modern South Africa and the Science of Religion. Productive and Inhibitive Models for the Study of Religions”, in: Gerard A. Wiegers & Jan G. Platvoet (eds), *Modern Societies & the Science of Religions*, Leiden etc. 2002, pp. 302–328, p. 322.

To the promoters of what is sound and reformers of what is faulty in modern culture, ethnography has double help to give. To impress men's minds with a doctrine of development, will lead them in all honour to their ancestors to continue the progressive work of past ages, to continue it the more vigorously because light has increased in the world, and where barbaric hordes groped blindly, cultured men can often move onward with clear view. It is a harsher, and at times even painful, office of ethnography to expose the remains of crude old culture which have passed into harmful superstition, and to mark these out for destruction.

This work had to be done "for the good of mankind".⁷ The doctrine of development favoured a new, progressive view of history, which differed fundamentally, for instance, from that of David Hume. The author of *The Natural History of Religion* (1757) thought that the chief use of history is to discover the "constant and universal principles of human nature". "Mankind are so much the same, in all times and places, that history informs us of nothing new or strange in this particular".⁸ The notion of progressive development (including new stages) has its roots in German Idealism—Nietzsche even declared it to be a typical German invention.⁹ In this line of thought the development of the human species was gradually disconnected from that of nature.¹⁰ In Britain, however, the idea that human history is part and parcel of natural history was not so readily given up, as is evident from the work of men such as Herbert Spencer, Charles Darwin and Tylor. Despite these differences, in all cases scholars held the notion that species or stages of society develop out of earlier forms.

The variety of concepts and theories of development in the nineteenth century was immense. I will not attempt to present an overview, let alone give a synthesis. However, one other term must be addressed,

⁷ Tylor, *Primitive Culture*, vol. II, p. 453 (first edition, p. 410).

⁸ David Hume, *Enquiries Concerning Human Understanding and Concerning the Principles of Morals*, Repr. 1777 edition, ed. L.A. Selby-Bigge, third edition revised by P.H. Niddich, Oxford 1975 (etc.), VII.i.65 (p. 83).

⁹ Friedrich Nietzsche, *Die fröhliche Wissenschaft*, Aph. 357 (Schlechta edition, vol. II, p. 226).

¹⁰ K. Weyland, "Entwicklung I", in: *Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie*, ed. by J. Ritter, vol. II, Darmstadt 1972, cols. 550–557. Here it is not the place to sketch the history of the idea of development in European intellectual history, which would have to include French thinkers as well. For the emancipation of the scholarly study of history from the philosophy of history in the nineteenth century, see Herbert Schnädelbach, *Philosophy in Germany, 1831–1993*, Cambridge 1984, pp. 33–65.

and that is “evolutionism”. In this context it does not refer to Darwin and his followers, but to a theory of culture that claims a unilinear, universal development from a “barbaric” or “savage” to a “civilized” stage of human coexistence. In more developed civilizations, “survivals”¹¹ from older stages may exist, but in principle the course of history is progressive. One of the most famous schemes of evolution is given by Lewis Henry Morgan, who proposed the three stages of “savagery”, “barbarism” and “civilization” in his classic study *Ancient Society* (1877).¹² Evolutionism was a social theory with wide ramifications and, according to one’s point of view and interests, various representatives can be distinguished. In his stimulating book on the Victorian era, J.W. Burrow focuses on Sir Henry Main, Herbert Spencer and Tylor, and also devotes some attention to theorists such as J.F. McLennan and Sir John Lubbock.¹³ In so doing, he does not deny the importance of continental scholars such as Wilhelm Wundt, A. Bastian and A. Waitz in this respect. On the contrary, Burrow sees evolutionary theory in Victorian England as the outcome of a “tension between English positivistic attitudes to science on the one hand and, on the other, a more profound reading of history, coming to a large extent from German Romanticism, which made the older form of positivist social theory . . . seem inadequate”.¹⁴ Evolutionism was dom-

¹¹ Survivals were characterized by Tylor as “processes, customs, opinions, and so forth, which have been carried by force of habit into a new state of society different from that in which they had their original home, and they thus remain as proofs and examples of an older condition of culture out of which the newer has been evolved”; cf. Tylor, *Primitive Culture*, vol. I, p. 16 (first edition, p. 15); cf. Kippenberg, “Survivals. Conceiving of Religious History in an Age of Development”, in: Arie L. Molendijk & Peter Pels (eds), *Religion in the Making. The Emergence of the Sciences of Religion*, Leiden 1998, pp. 297–312; cf. Robert A. Segal, “Tylor: A Test Case of Kippenberg’s Thesis”, in: Brigitte Luchesi & Kocku von Stuckrad (eds), *Religion im kulturellen Diskurs/Religion in Cultural Discourse*. Festschrift Hans G. Kippenberg, Berlin–New York 2004, pp. 17–32.

¹² Cf. Gerhard Schlatter, “Evolutionismus”, in: Hubert Cancik et al. (eds), *Handbuch religionswissenschaftlicher Grundbegriffe*, vol. II, Stuttgart 1990, pp. 385–393; W. Rudolph, “Evolutionismus, kultureller”, in: *Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie*, ed. by J. Ritter, vol. II, Darmstadt 1972, cols. 835–835; James Waller & Mary Edwardsen, “Evolutionism”, in: Mircea Eliade (ed.), *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, vol. V, New York 1986, pp. 214–218.

¹³ J.W. Burrow, *Evolution and Society. A Study in Victorian Social Theory*, Cambridge 1966, pp. xiii–xiv; cf. Peter J. Bowler, *Theories of Human Evolution. A Century of Debate, 1844–1944*, Oxford 1986.

¹⁴ Burrow, *Evolution*, p. xv. Behind German Romanticism lurks German Idealism, which helped to establish a whole new paradigm of thinking in terms of historical development.

inant in early ethnology or, as it is now called, cultural anthropology. Tylor and James George Frazer are often mentioned as its main late nineteenth century representatives; developmental schemes such as “magic, religion, science” informed much research. Functionalistic anthropology gradually replaced the old evolutionism, stressing the fact that “magic”, “religion” and “science” could exist at the same time in one and the same culture, which ultimately had to be understood in its own context.¹⁵

Evolutionist schemes did not necessarily imply that religion was a superseded stage in human development, but could also be applied within the field of religion to demonstrate, for instance, that “primitive” forms of religion, such as animism and fetishism, developed through various sorts of polytheism to the highest stage of monotheism. This view, however, was not uncontested. Tylor’s pupil Andrew Lang (1844–1912) defended the thesis that a kind of theistic pre-animism was the earliest stage of religious development.¹⁶ In an undated letter Lang wrote: “To put it shortly, . . . most of the very backward races have a very much better God than many races a good deal higher in civilisation”.¹⁷ This view—known by the German term *Urmonotheismus*—found its most adamant defender in the person of the devout Catholic scholar Wilhelm Schmidt (1868–1954).¹⁸ On the basis of this assumption, which accords better with the biblical narratives, a “degeneration” must have taken place in a later phase of religious history. Most scholars at the time, however, did not accept the “degeneration hypothesis”, but had a more or less evolutionist view of religious history.¹⁹

¹⁵ Cf. Stocking, *Victorian Anthropology*, esp. pp. 314–329.

¹⁶ On pre-animism and its proponent R.R. Marett, see Hans G. Kippenberg, *Discovering Religious History in the Modern Age*, Princeton–Oxford 2002, pp. 125–126. According to Marett, Tylor’s concept of animism (“belief in spiritual beings”) was too intellectual to capture the human sense of awe and power, which lies at the origin of religion.

¹⁷ Quoted in Eric Sharpe, *Comparative Religion. A History*, second edition, London 1986, p. 63.

¹⁸ The Dutch ethnologist J.J. Fahrenfort wrote his dissertation about this subject and became involved in a polemic with Schmidt; cf. Fahrenfort, *Het hoogste wezen der primitieven. Studie over het “oermonotheïsme” bij enkele der laagste volken*, Groningen–Den Haag 1927; *Wie der Urmonotheismus am Leben erhalten wird*, Groningen–Den Haag 1930; on the controversy with Schmidt see A.J.F. Köbben, “J.J. Fahrenfort (1885–1975). Schoolmaster and Scholar”, in: Han Vermeulen & Jean Koppers (eds), *Tales from Academia. History of Anthropology in the Netherlands*, 2 vols, Saarbrücken 2002, vol. I, pp. 245–265.

¹⁹ For Tiele’s rejection of the “degeneration hypothesis”, see Tiele, *De plaats van*

By 1900, contemporaries pointed to “the ubiquity of evolution” in religious studies.²⁰ More often than not this was explained by reference to the influence of Charles Darwin. In 1909, the British scholar Jane Harrison (1850–1929), who acquired quite a reputation with her anthropologically inspired work on ancient Greek religion, talked about “the creation by Darwinism of the scientific study of religions”.²¹ The anthropologist R.R. Marett (1866–1943) spoke in much the same vein as Harrison,²² and, indeed, the notion of religious development was apparently the basis of much comparative research. In 1912, the British scholar Joseph Estlin Carpenter (1844–1927), lecturer in Comparative Religion at Manchester College (Oxford), wrote that the whole study of the history of religion is “firmly established” on the basis of the “great idea” of evolution.²³ How influential this “great idea” actually was within religious studies would be an excellent topic for further research. One should, however, avoid referring simply to Darwin in this context, as recent scholarship has shown that Darwinism and the evolutionary theory of culture are clearly to be distinguished from each other.²⁴

In his still frequently consulted history of comparative religion, Eric Sharpe does not entirely avoid this kind of misrepresentation when he claims that the establishment of the field is due to the evolutionary method. He writes the following:

de godsdiensten der natuurlvolken in de godsdienstgeschiedenis (Inaugural Address 1873), Amsterdam 1873, pp. 8–11.

²⁰ Robert Ackerman, “J.G. Frazer and the Cambridge Ritualists and the ‘Scientific’ Study of Religion”, in: Molendijk & Pels, *Religion in the Making*, pp. 129–158, p. 137; cf. Ackerman, *J.G. Frazer. His Life and Work*, Cambridge 1987.

²¹ Jane Harrison, “The Influence of Darwinism on the Study of Religion”, in: A.C. Seward (ed.), *Darwin and Modern Science*, Cambridge 1909, pp. 494–511, p. 494 (quoted by Ackerman, “Frazer and the Cambridge Ritualists”, p. 137); cf. Mary Beard, *The Invention of Jane Harrison*, Cambridge, Mass. 2000; Annabel Robinson, *The Life and Work of Jane Ellen Harrison*, Oxford 2002.

²² Sharpe, *Comparative Religion*, p. 48.

²³ J. Estlin Carpenter, *Comparative Religion*, London 1912, p. 33.

²⁴ Stocking, *Victorian Anthropology*, p. 325, summarizing the differences between Darwin and evolutionary anthropology: “[I]t provided reassurance that human life on earth was not governed by randomly motivated Darwinian processes, but had an overall progressive direction”; Peter J. Bowler, *The Invention of Progress. The Victorians and the Past*, London 1989, pp. 68f. and 193–195, shows that many theorists of social and religious evolution did not accept the materialistic implications of Darwinism and built some sort of teleology into their own theories. They could claim, as did Max Müller, that they had been “evolutionist” long before the *Origin of Species* appeared in 1859.

Before 1859 the student of the religions of the world, although he might have ample motive for his study, and more than enough material on which to base his researches, had no self-evident method for dealing with the material; after 1869, thanks to developments of the intervening decade, he had the evolutionary method.²⁵

In a footnote, Sharpe added that although challenged in the 1920s, the doctrine of evolution continued to dominate studies of religion throughout the period between the wars. These are strong claims, the more so since the alleged evolutionary method is not spelled out in great detail. The fact that there was “no further need for random and haphazard judgements” is not much of an explanation in this regard. Moreover, by means of a quotation Sharpe suggests that one of the main goals is the search for regularities: “the Reign of Law invaded every field of thought”.²⁶ The further characterization of the new method as “scientific, critical, historical and comparative” does not explain why it should be termed “evolutionary”.²⁷ Perhaps it is not so much a method that can be learned and practiced as a new way of looking at things. The claim of the importance of evolutionism in religious studies throughout the years between the wars should be critically examined. The Dutch evidence—as I will show in the final part of this chapter—seems not to corroborate this claim.

The following pages will hopefully contribute to unpacking at least some of the assumptions involved in this new paradigm. As said, I will do this by examining the work of C.P. Tiele. Yet, I do not claim that Tiele stands for the use of the concept of religious development within the scholarly study of religion as such, but surely his work represents a mainstream in evolutionary thinking. Firstly, I will outline Tiele’s basic assumptions as far as the concept of religious development is concerned (2). Secondly, I will deal with Tiele’s debates on this very topic with two prominent contemporary scholars in the 1870s, and pay special attention to his famous article on laws of development (3). Thirdly, I will scrutinize the “morphological” part of the Gifford Lectures which epitomizes his later views on religious development (4), and, finally, draw some conclusions (5).

²⁵ Sharpe, *Comparative Religion*, p. 27.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 27 (referring to James Hope Moulton, *Religions and Religion*, London 1911, p. 7).

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 31.

2. *Basic Assumptions*

During his entire career Cornelis Petrus Tiele (1830–1902) was preoccupied with the idea of religious development. One could say, with only slight exaggeration, that the development and refinement of this concept was his main concern. It was not just an important working tool, but the basic idea on which his science of religion was built. In his inaugural address of 1873 on the place of the religions of the “nature peoples” in the history of religion, he claimed that if the study of religion is to mature it has to be a developmental history (*ontwikkelingsgeschiedenis*).²⁸ The relevance of the nature religions depends primarily on their place in the general sequence of religious development. In his first monograph on the general history of religion, *Outlines of the History of Religion to the Spread of the Universal Religions*, Tiele maintained this principle. The explicit aim here was to outline a history of religion (in the singular) and not of religions:

It is the same history, but considered from a different point of view. The first lies hidden in the last, but its object is to show how that great psychological phenomenon which we call religion has developed among the different races and peoples of the world. By it we see that all religions, even those of highly civilised nations, have grown up from the same simple germs, and by it, again, we learn the causes why these germs have in some cases attained such a rich and admirable development, and in others scarcely grew at all.²⁹

In this way the essential unity of religion is presupposed, whereas differences can be explained by reference to various stages of development.

The germination metaphor suggests a biological model of development, which is conceived of as proceeding gradually. The same issue had already been addressed in earlier texts, where Tiele focused on the problem of classification. A good example is his book *The*

²⁸ Tiele, *De plaats van de godsdiensten der natuurvolken*, p. 7. I will use the word “development” and its derivatives to translate the Dutch word “ontwikkeling”; the term “evolution” is only used when the Dutch original has “evolutie”, which to Dutch ears is strongly linked to the notion of Darwinian evolution.

²⁹ Tiele, *Geschiedenis van den godsdienst tot aan de heerschappij der wereldgodsdiensten*, Amsterdam 1876, p. ix. The English translation appeared a year later: Tiele, *Outlines of the History of Religion to the Spread of the Universal Religions*, London 1877, p. x. It is to be noted that the original Dutch title has “wereldgodsdiensten” (= “world religions”). An equivalent used by Tiele is “universalistische godsdiensten”, which is best translated as “universalistic religions”.

Religion of Zoroaster (1864), which in the final chapter aims to determine the place of Parsism in religious history. Contrary to Max Müller, Tiele did not want to categorize religions on the basis of linguistic evidence. He distinguished two types of classification: the genealogical classification, based on the origin and mutual relationship between religions, and the morphological, which looks at the nature and stage of development of a particular religion. Tiele was especially interested in this last type, which made it possible to construe a scheme of the development of religion (in the singular). He claimed that the development of all religions is bound by the same fixed laws. There are four periods, which follow each other systematically and in the same order: the worship of nature, the mythological phase, the philosophical-dogmatic period, and, finally, the well-known triad of Buddhism, Christianity and “Mohammedanism”, “which we could call the universalistic or world religions”.³⁰ This classification has a clear chronological dimension: no religion reaches the later phases without first passing through the earlier stages. We can be certain about this, because the most highly developed religions still show clear marks of having ascended gradually from the lowest stage.³¹

In the *Outlines of the History of Religion*, Tiele wanted to give scholars and lay people a general survey which could “serve as a kind of guide or travelling-book on their journey through the immense fairyland of human faith and hope”.³² The short introduction informs the reader about the basics of Tiele’s approach:

The history of religion is not content with describing special religions (*hierography*), or with relating their vicissitudes and metamorphoses (the history of religions); its aim is to show how religion, considered generally as the relation between man and the superhuman powers in which he believes, has developed in the course of ages among different nations and races, and, through these, in humanity at large.³³

³⁰ Tiele, *De Godsdienst van Zarathustra van haar ontstaan in Baktrië tot den val van het Oud-Perzische Rijk*, Haarlem 1864, p. 275.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 271.

³² Tiele, *Outlines of the History of Religion* (1877), p. viii (this remark is not in the Dutch original).

³³ Tiele, *Outlines of the History of Religion* (1877), p. 1f. (*italics original*). The Dutch original does not speak on race but on *volkenfamiliën* (“families of peoples”). For a discussion of Tiele’s definition of religion see chapter V.3 above.

Religion is essentially a “universal human phenomenon”³⁴ and its various stages can be traced through the course of history. This does not imply a unilinear development in the sense that all religions “were derived from one single prehistoric religion”. It is “not improbable” that different families of religions sprang from different origins. Tiele thought this an issue for further research.

What was of major importance for Tiele here is “that all changes and transformations in religions, whether they appear from a subjective point of view to indicate decay or progress, are the results of natural growth, and find in it their best explanation”.³⁵ Consequently, the science of religion did not include supernatural explanations. Tiele listed the various factors that influence the process of development: “The history of religion shows how this development is determined by the character of nations and races, as well as by the influence of the circumstances surrounding them, and of special individuals, and it exhibits the established laws by which this development is controlled”.³⁶ On the one hand, Tiele allowed for “special individuals” to influence the course of historical development, on the other, he wanted to establish “laws” of religious development. The tension here cannot be overlooked. Therefore, we will have to take a closer look at the concept of “laws” below.

It was not just an arbitrary, morphological arrangement of religions, but a real history that was to be presented. The general line of development according to Tiele goes roughly as follows: from animism, mainly represented by “polydaemonic magic tribal religions”, to “polytheistic national religions resting upon a traditional doctrine”, to nomistic religions “founded on a law or holy scripture”, to pantheism and monotheism, and, finally, to “universal or world-religions”. Surprisingly, however, the book is not structured according to this presumed order of development. Why? Because Tiele does not want to confine himself “to a sketch of the abstract development of the religious idea in humanity”.³⁷ Leaving the cognitive flavour of this

³⁴ Tiele, *Geschiedenis van den godsdienst* (1876), p. 8 (my translation), *Outlines of the History of Religion* (1877), p. 6.

³⁵ Tiele, *Outlines of the History of Religion* (1877), p. 2, *Geschiedenis van den godsdienst* (1876), p. 3.

³⁶ Tiele, *Outlines of the History of Religion* (1877), p. 2 (I have slightly adapted the translation to the Dutch original), *Geschiedenis van den godsdienst* (1876), p. 3.

³⁷ Tiele, *Outlines of the History of Religion* (1877), p. 3, *Geschiedenis van den godsdienst* (1876), p. 4f.

statement aside, it casts some doubt on the historical character of the programme just outlined by Tiele, who also stated that “in actually describing the general history of religion, we are compelled to take into account, also, the *genealogical connection and historical relation of religions*”.³⁸ This seems to be the “real” historical part, and, as we will see, some of Tiele’s contemporaries were rather sceptical about the alleged historical character of the morphology of religions. By genealogical connections Tiele meant the “filiation of religions, one of which has obviously proceeded from the other, or both together from a third” (for instance, Confucianism and Taoism from the ancient Chinese religion). Religions, however, are not only related by descent, but “come into contact with each other, and if their mutual influence leads to the adoption by one of them of customs, ideas, and deities belonging to the other, they are said to be historically related” (for instance, the Roman related to the Greek religion).³⁹

Tiele did not explain how the morphological and the historical-genealogical approaches were connected to each other. The book divided the history of religion as follows: 1) religion under the control of animism, 2) religion among the Chinese, 3) religion among the Hamites and Semites, 4) religion among the Indo-Germans, excluding the Greeks and the Romans, and 5) religion among the Indo-Germans under the influence of the Semites and Hamites (dealing with Greek and Roman religion). Not all religions are included in the survey. The book gives a history “till the spread of the universal religions”. So, Buddhism, Christianity and Islam are left out,⁴⁰ but not completely: “The third division . . . will trace the development of Islâm out of the Semitic religion; the fourth, that of Buddhism from Brâhmanism; and the fifth will indicate how European Christianity arose out of the fusion of Semitic and Indo-Germanic religions”.⁴¹ In this way Christianity is construed as a kind of synthesis in religious history.

³⁸ Tiele, *Outlines of the History of Religion* (1877), p. 4 (italics ALM), *Geschiedenis van den godsdienst* (1876), p. 5.

³⁹ Tiele, *Outlines of the History of Religion* (1877), p. 4, *Geschiedenis van den godsdienst* (1876), p. 5.

⁴⁰ For different reasons the “so-called nature-religions”, Japanese religion (Shinto) and the religion of the Celts are not discussed either.

⁴¹ Tiele, *Outlines of the History of Religion* (1877), p. 5f., *Geschiedenis van den godsdienst* (1876), p. 7.

3. *Polemics: Doedes, Pfeleiderer, and the Laws of Development*

Already in the 1870s Tiele's view of religious development was severely criticized. His main opponents at the time were the apologetic theologian Jacobus Isaac Doedes (1817–1897), professor at the conservative theological faculty of the University of Utrecht,⁴² and the Jena theologian Otto Pfeleiderer (1839–1908), who was to become one of the leading German scholars in religion and philosophy after his appointment at the University of Berlin in 1875.⁴³ Pfeleiderer attacked Tiele's concept of development as such, whereas Doedes cast doubt on the historical character of the morphological type of development and accused Tiele of making unwarranted assumptions. It is amazing to see how fast this public debate developed. Doedes launched his attack in his farewell address as *rector magnificus* of the University of Utrecht held on the 26th of March 1874. Tiele's reply was dated May 1874 and appeared in the general cultural monthly *The Guide*.⁴⁴ Doedes for his part answered in an article dated 26th June of the same year, which he published in *Voices for Truth and Peace (Evangelical Journal for the Protestant Church)*.⁴⁵ The following is not a full-fledged discussion of these two controversies. All proponents take their time to deal with all sorts of niceties, which makes it sometimes hard to discern the main issues at stake.

The title of his rectorial address alone made Doedes' intentions abundantly clear: *The Application of the Theory of Development to the History of Religions is not to be Recommended*.⁴⁶ The most conspicuous objection is that Tiele concludes from the (historically) known to the (historically) unknown. We do not know the earliest stage(s) of religious devel-

⁴² Cf. BLGPN II, pp. 169–172; for Doedes' (growing) interest in the history of religion, see P.L. Schram, *Jacob Isaac Doedes*, Wageningen 1952, pp. 59–63.

⁴³ F.W. Graf, "Pfeleiderer, Otto", in: *TRE*, vol. 26, Berlin–New York 1996, pp. 429–437.

⁴⁴ Tiele, "De ontwikkelingsgeschiedenis van den godsdienst en de hypotheze waarvan zij uitgaat", in: *De Gids* 38/2 (1874) 421–450, p. 422.

⁴⁵ J.I. Doedes, "Over de ontwikkelingshypotheze in verband met de geschiedenis der godsdiensten", in: *Stemmen voor Waarheid en Vrede* 11 (1874) 771–788. Doedes briefly touched upon his discussion with Tiele about religious development in Doedes, *1843–1893. Biografische Herinneringen*, Utrecht 1894, pp. 213–215; cf. pp. 175–177 (on his interest in the history of religion).

⁴⁶ J.I. Doedes, *De toepassing van de ontwikkelingstheorie niet aanbevelen voor de Geschiedenis der Godsdiensten*, Utrecht 1874.

opment, and Tiele assumes, without having (hard) historical evidence,⁴⁷ that by way of comparison we can reach the conclusion that later forms (which we are familiar with) have developed out of these earlier forms (which we do not actually know).⁴⁸ This inference is not valid according to Doedes. In his reply Tiele tried to show that this type of “induction” is legitimate, but he did not deny that he proceeded this way. In his *Outlines of the History of Religion*, he was to repeat: “From the polydaemonistic magic tribal religions of the present day we shall endeavour to become acquainted with Animism, this being the form of religion which must have preceded [! ALM] the religions known to us by history, and served as their foundation”.⁴⁹ Doedes is not in favour of this method, and argues that either a development can be shown, in which case we are not in need of a hypothesis, or it cannot be shown, in which case the application of the development hypothesis is unwarranted.⁵⁰ Related to this criticism is the second main objection raised by Doedes, concerning Tiele’s attempt to reconstruct a developmental history of religion that is not in accordance with factual history. Developments that actually appear later in history may—seen from a structural point of view (my expression)—represent an earlier stage. This seems to be a “history without chronology”.⁵¹ Furthermore, Doedes was not convinced that always in religious history one religion developed out of another. Is there no place for reaction instead of development and for really new things to happen? In his view, Jesus’ teachings are not to be explained by reference to the Jewish religion, but represent a “new creation, the most beautiful creation”.⁵²

Tiele wrote a 30-page article “The Developmental History of Religion and Its Hypothesis” to answer Doedes’ objections, in which he stressed the fact that—contrary to what his opponent suggested—evidence of development in religious history is abundant. But sometimes we simply do not have sources and in these cases we have to apply the hypothesis, which admittedly still is to be corroborated. In a somewhat sophisticated vein, Tiele argued that he did not want to

⁴⁷ By definition, these earliest stages were “pre-historical”.

⁴⁸ Doedes, *De toepassing van de ontwikkelingstheorie*, esp. pp. 16–18.

⁴⁹ Tiele, *Outlines of the History of Religion* (1877), p. 5, *Geschiedenis van den godsdienst* (1876), p. 6.

⁵⁰ Doedes, *De toepassing van de ontwikkelingstheorie*, p. 42.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 84.

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 75.

speak of a *theory* of development and would not like to recommend to apply this *theory* to religious history. In this respect he said he agreed completely with his opponent.⁵³ If Doedes claimed that development “cannot be seen”, this was true, of course, in the most literal sense of the word, but it was fully justifiable, according to Tiele, to subsume perceived phenomena under the concept of development, as it is assumed that such developments are subjected to certain laws (to which I will return below). Tiele also criticized the fact that Doedes talked about the hypothesis of development as if it was one and indivisible, and even said that it was taken from natural science, more in particular from Darwin, which was a gross misunderstanding. Already the work of Benjamin Constant showed that the hypothesis of religious development is older than Darwin.⁵⁴

Tiele also addressed Doedes’ objection that a classification of religions with a view to development may never be called “history of religion”. According to Tiele the following has to be kept in mind. Firstly, a chronicle is not the ideal of history; secondly, the aim is not to give a *particular* history of a particular church or group, but a *general* history of religion, and, thirdly, such a general history is based on the findings of particular histories, but not in such a way that religious phenomena can only be treated in the chronological order in which they appear in world history. Because in some places growth occurs at a faster pace than in other places, and higher developments do not necessarily occur simultaneously in different areas, a history of religion in the singular cannot follow a chronological arrangement. Because there exists a—to use a German expression—*Gleichzeitigkeit des Ungleichzeitigen* (a simultaneity of the unsimultaneous) and, conversely, a unsimultaneity of the simultaneous, chronology cannot have the last word in these matters.

Finally, Tiele seized the opportunity to outline two methods that would produce the intended result. The first method—which had best be called the morphological type—sketches the successive stages of development (animistic or tribal, mythological or national religions, religious communities and, finally, world religions). But this approach

⁵³ Tiele, “De ontwikkelingsgeschiedenis van den godsdienst”, p. 422.

⁵⁴ Benjamin Constant, *De la religion considérée dans sa source, ses formes et ses développements*, 5 vols, Paris 1824–1831; cf. Tiele, “De ontwikkelingsgeschiedenis”, p. 242. Tiele often referred to this work and to C. Meiners, *Allgemeine kritische Geschichte der Religionen*, Hannover 1806–1807 as good examples of older works on the general history of religion; cf. Tiele, *Outlines of the History of Religion* (1877), p. 1.

has one shortcoming: it separates religions that are historically linked to each other. From a chronological point of view, "savage" religions exist up to the present day, whereas Egyptian or Greek religions belong to ancient times; yet, the latter represent a "higher" stage of development. The second method overcomes this difficulty by taking the genealogical aspect into account. Thus, several "streams of development" (which can actually be discerned in history) are put within the broader morphological framework, which outlines the stages of development from a structural point of view.⁵⁵ Tiele emphasized that he did not want to replace the history of religions by the history of religion in the singular, but he also explained why the issue was of such great importance to him: only if there is a morphological development can there be a science of religion, which treats religion as a psychological and ethnological phenomenon. The hypothesis of religious development was for Tiele not just a hypothesis on the same level as other hypotheses, but it was the founding stone of the new field. Without it there was no science of religion, only history of religions.

In his rejoinder Doedes stressed some points he had already made in his rectorial address. He stuck to his objection that Tiele's classification was not historical,⁵⁶ and he again hammered the point that developments have to be historically demonstrable and cannot be assumed.⁵⁷ Furthermore, the fact that some religions evolved out of earlier forms did not prove the hypothesis of a general religious development. Finally, Tiele had admitted in his reply that this type of history was the history of an abstraction, and this remark increased Doedes' worries even further. For instance, Doedes thought that the parallel with the history of art was misleading, because art history is not the history of an abstraction, but of a collection of various art forms and movements.⁵⁸ In my own phrasing: it is the history of

⁵⁵ Cf. Tiele, "De ontwikkelingsgeschiedenis", p. 450, in which a "synoptic table" of both methods is included. Unfortunately, the relationship between the morphological and genealogical approach is not completely clear here. They are presented as two—more or less—opposite approaches, but at the end of his article Tiele states that the second one combined both approaches (448). My interpretation is in line with this last statement. The *Outlines of the History of Religions* was written according to the second method.

⁵⁶ In the conclusion of this chapter I will come back to this issue.

⁵⁷ Doedes, "Over de ontwikkelingshypothese", p. 782f.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 786f.

a set of various phenomena, taken together under the heading of art. In sum, although some minor issues were solved (for instance, Tiele explained that to his mind religions did not necessarily originate in one single primeval religion), the difference of opinion between the two scholars remained fundamentally unchanged.

In his reply to Doedes, Tiele had referred various times to an article he had written before Doedes' attack was published, and which was a first attempt to specify not only the central idea of religious development, but also the laws which governed it.⁵⁹ To understand his line of approach this earlier article is important. As Tiele modified his view in certain respects in his later work, I will not deal with all the niceties of this early piece, but focus on its core ideas. It is divided into four parts: 1) course of development, 2) conditions of development (general laws), 3) special laws of development, and 4) the general law of development. The *course* of development is what Tiele elsewhere called "the morphology of religion". What does the structural development of religion look like? Tiele described the course of development explicitly in terms of expansion, from family to tribal to national and, finally, to world religion.⁶⁰ Parallel to this, the forms and contents of religious thinking and inclination (*gezindheid*) develop, which again influence religious practice. Sacrifice, for instance, is no longer a way of manipulating the gods, but a way to appease and to thank God ("thy will be done"). In sum, religion becomes more rational, superior and pure.⁶¹

However, this is not a necessary development taking place as a matter of course. Certain *conditions* have to be fulfilled, and in this context Tiele formulated two general laws for the development of religion. The first law says that the need for the development of religion occurs only in those cases where advancement of "general education" (civilization) took place first. This so-called Law of the Unity of the Human Mind (or Spirit) claims that the advancement of civilization precedes and urges the advancement of religion. For the

⁵⁹ Tiele, "Over de wetten der ontwikkeling van den godsdienst", in: *Theologisch Tijdschrift* 8 (1874) 225–262 (signed: March 1874); shortened French translation: "Les lois du développement religieux", in: *Revue politique et littéraire*, deuxième série 11 (1876) 154–159 ("D'après M.[onsieur] C.P. Tiele", translated by Ch. Vincens).

⁶⁰ Tiele, "Over de wetten", p. 227.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 234.

liberal Protestant Tiele, it was evident that man needs unity and harmony in his spiritual life, and that there is no conflict between religion and civilization, between faith and knowledge.⁶² This means, again, that education should not be considered to be detrimental to religion; on the contrary, it is a great aid to religious development.

Besides education, Tiele was greatly in favour of free trade and exchange between peoples and nations, as they can bring people into contact with higher civilizations and religions. This type of liberalism completely overlooks, of course, the power relations involved in the transfer of material and spiritual goods. Tiele represents a conservative and elitist form of liberalism, which was current at the time, and he probably had no doubt at all about the fact that *we* have to educate *them*, and that *they* will be thankful to *us* for doing so. The history of Dutch religion, and Protestantism in particular, has proved men like Tiele wrong on this point. Orthodox Protestants did not want to be educated in this way and were not thankful at all. At the end of the nineteenth century they even founded their own churches, which caused an enormous trauma among leading Dutch protestants who were members of the Dutch Reformed Church, or of smaller liberal churches such as the Remonstrant Brotherhood to which Tiele belonged.⁶³

The second law—the Law of Balance—also shows Tiele's own preferences. According to this law, religious development is only possible if there is a good balance between authority and freedom. The “historically given” must be taken as the “starting-point of the advancement”.⁶⁴ A necessary condition of development is the existence of a tradition, which has to be carefully guarded by a class of priests, ministers or theologians. This does not mean, Tiele added, that there is no room for freethinkers and the free preaching of the Gospel. However, one should not underestimate the importance of an educated class of ministers and theologians, who protect us from falling into anarchy. Absolute democracy—Tiele explicitly denied the “unknowing mob” the right to vote⁶⁵—is as dangerous for religious

⁶² Ibid., p. 241f.

⁶³ Cf. Peter van Rooden, “Secularization, Dechristianization and Rechristianization in the Netherlands”, in: Harmut Lehmann (ed.), *Säkularisierung, Dechristianisierung und Rechristianisierung im neuzeitlichen Europa*, Göttingen 1997, pp. 131–153.

⁶⁴ Tiele, “Over de wetten”, p. 244.

⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 247.

development as the absolute sovereignty of one leader or an oligarchy. A “real aristocracy”—“the natural, lawful rule of the best people, regardless of rank and class”—was the ideal for which Tiele strove.⁶⁶

The *special laws* of development discussed in the third part of the article are the Law of Reformation, the Law of Survival and Revival, and the Law of Advancement by Reaction. Tiele viewed development as a gradual and primarily “natural” process. Artificial reformations, which do not tie in with existing traditions and forces, will not last. It is useless to change the outer forms. Instead, fruitful development has to begin with the improvement of the religious consciousness. The second special law, which according to Tiele may be called Tylor’s law, explains that older ideas and customs may “survive” in lower circles of society and may be revived at the moment when a higher stage of religion becomes weaker. Apparitions of the Virgin Mary, simple miracles and spiritist séances are examples given by Tiele. The third law formulates the notion that some developments are reactions against earlier, one-sided forms of religion. This does not mean that there was no grain of truth in the older forms. If one realizes this and does not consider one’s own position to be absolute, a true tolerance is possible, which values diversity as conducive to progress.⁶⁷

The last section deals with the *general law* of development, which essentially maintains the thesis that the highest developed religion, and hence the principle of rationality and morality in religion, always triumphs over lower forms of religion, even if this principle is temporarily rejected in some special cases.⁶⁸ The highest form of religion also maintains a balance between the ethical and the religious element. Christianity has not yet reached this final balance, but if it develops into the spiritual worship of God as the Father of all people, which reveals itself in the form of compassionate love of fellow human beings, then at that time it will be, by forming the “foundation of true, complete humanity”, the religion of the whole of mankind.⁶⁹ With this, we have reached Tiele’s final verdict on the laws of religious development.

⁶⁶ Ibid., p. 248.

⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 258f. Tiele here referred to Samuel Johnson, *Oriental Religions and Their Relation to Universal Religion*, 2 vols, London 1879, vol. I, p. 18f.

⁶⁸ Ibid., p. 261.

⁶⁹ Ibid., p. 262.

Just one last remark about the name Tiele gave to the general law of development. In Dutch it is called the law of *redekeus*, which can be translated as “rational choice”, if “rational” is taken in the broad sense of the German *Vernunft* (which does not only calculate, but evaluates possibilities with a view to the Good Life, as it is called nowadays in moral theory). This law is certainly not to be confused with Rodney Stark’s theory of rational choice. Interestingly, Tiele commented that he chose the term because of its analogy to *natuurkeus*, which was at that time the translation of “natural selection”. Tiele said that the term *keus* implied a conscious decision, and was, therefore, inappropriate if applied to unconscious natural forces and processes.

The second controversy began with a contribution on the question of the beginning and development of religion that Otto Pfeleiderer published in the first issue of the German theological journal *Annals of Protestant Theology*.⁷⁰ I will restrict myself here to the issue of development, and touch upon several other aspects when I discuss Tiele’s reply. According to Pfeleiderer the “dominant stream” in the study of religion had replaced the old abstract idealism by an abstract, external, idea-less realism.⁷¹ Pfeleiderer accused Tiele of dogmaticism and seemed angry about Tiele’s remark that new scholarship had shown Hegel’s and Schleiermacher’s philosophy of religion to be useless.⁷² The new approach calls itself “theory of development”, but is this claim justified? Pfeleiderer denied this question. Development is not equivalent to going from a to b, and, then, from b to c. In the proper sense of the word it means that out of the general, the undifferentiated, the indefinite we progress to the particular, the differentiated, the definite.⁷³ It is the same with Darwinism, which sees the principle of change only in external causes, and does not accept an internal law of development.⁷⁴

⁷⁰ O. Pfeleiderer, “Zur Frage nach Anfang und Entwicklung der Religion”, in: *Jahrbücher für Protestantische Theologie* 1 (1875) 65–116.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 73.

⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 75, with reference to Tiele, “Een probleem der godsdienstwetenschap”, in: *De Gids* 35/1 (1871) 98–128, translated as *Max Müller und Fritz Schultze über ein Problem der Religionswissenschaft*, Leipzig 1871, p. 38.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 75: “So lange man den Begriff ‘Entwicklung’ noch in seinem einzig möglichen und klar anschaulichen Sinn braucht, wird sie einen Fortgang vom Allgemeinen, Unbestimmten, Indifferenten zum Besondern, Bestimmten, Differenzirten bezeichnen müssen, nicht aber einen Fortgang vom Einen zu einem Andern und noch Andern u.s.f.”

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 76, note 1: “Es soll . . . keineswegs die hohe Bedeutung des Darwinismus

Tiele answered Pfeiderer in Dutch in the then famous liberal journal *Theological Journal* (*Theologisch Tijdschrift*), in which he published many articles and a multitude of reviews in the field of religious studies, which were also read abroad. In his article Pfeiderer had referred to Tiele's essay on the essence and origin of religion that had appeared a couple of years earlier in the same journal.⁷⁵ Tiele began his reply with the remark that scientific theologians are used to more polite forms of polemics (he mentioned the debate he had just had with Doedes), and was apparently appalled by the fact that Pfeiderer had attacked him in the *Annals*, the very journal that had invited him to collaborate.⁷⁶ Addressing the content of Pfeiderer's article, Tiele noticed first that Pfeiderer's claim that he (Tiele) saw fetishism as the beginning of all religion was based on a misunderstanding that perhaps could have been avoided, if Pfeiderer had not limited himself to reading only two of Tiele's articles.⁷⁷ Fetishism—the worship of observable objects as spiritual, living beings—is only one side of “what could be best called” animism; the other side being the worship of spirits and souls (best called spiritism). According to Tiele fetishism had best be called a “primitive philosophical” (instead of a “religious”) phenomenon.⁷⁸

Secondly, answering Pfeiderer's criticism that the origin of religion cannot be found in the human urge to seek explanations for phenomena man does not understand, Tiele defended his position by stating that the urge to seek for causes (*Causalitätsdrang*) is not external in the way Darwin speaks of external factors. And even if

als des ersten consequenten Versuchs einer streng causalen Erklärung der organischen Formen in Abrede gezogen werden. Nur sollte darüber seine starke Einseitigkeit nicht übersehen werden, die eben darin besteht, dass er das Veränderungsprinzip nur in einem Zusammen von lauter äussern Ursachen sucht und *kein inneres Entwicklungsgesetz* kennt, nach welchem Richtung und Ziel ihrer Entwicklung den Lebewesen durch ihr eigenes Wesen bestimmt wäre” (italics original).

⁷⁵ Tiele, “Het wezen en de oorsprong van den godsdienst”, in: *Theologisch Tijdschrift* 5 (1871) 373–406.

⁷⁶ Tiele, “Over den aanvang en de ontwikkeling van den godsdienst. Een Verweerschrift”, in: *Theologisch Tijdschrift* 9 (1875) 170–192, p. 171. The Leiden Theological Faculty was mentioned on the title page of the *Jahrbücher* as one of the collaborating faculties, in fact the only one outside the German-speaking world. The correspondence between the two men, kept in the Leiden University Library (sign. BPL 2710), contains 7 items (dating from 1878–1899) and shows some kind of rapprochement.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 172, note 1.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 172.

this urge is considered to be external, the development of reason (*Vernunft*) and, thereby, of religion itself is of an immanent nature. The purification of faith (which is the essence of religion) occurs by faith itself, and hence is internal. In Tiele's opinion, this is not altered by the fact that this purification is necessitated by clearer consciousness and more reasonable insight.⁷⁹ This argumentation is hardly convincing, as to Tiele faith seems to be dependent on reason, in which case it becomes doubtful if faith can be purified by itself alone. In any case, for Tiele the development of religion is not determined by external causes. This talk of religious development has a strong teleological flavour, and in this respect it is understandable that Tiele defended himself against being put in the same box with Darwin. He claimed that his concept of development corresponded to that of Pfleiderer: from the general and undetermined to the particular and determined. Fine philosophical distinctions were not Tiele's forte, but he was justified in feeling misunderstood by Pfleiderer, who had put him in the naturalistic, materialistic camp, whereas Tiele made a strong case for reason as an independent and powerful force in (religious) history.

4. *Development and Classification (Gifford Lectures)*

The importance to Tiele of the idea of development has been recognized early on. In his obituary for Tiele, Pierre Daniël Chantepie de la Saussaye called it the core idea of his entire science of religion.⁸⁰ More recently, Tiele's Gifford Lectures *Elements of the Science of Religion* were labelled the "clearest and most adamant post-Darwinian use and defence of the concept of development".⁸¹ Indeed, the first part of the Gifford Lectures, the so-called morphology of religion, can be considered Tiele's major discussion on the topic. Here he

⁷⁹ Ibid., p. 177.

⁸⁰ P.D. Chantepie de la Saussaye, "Cornelis Petrus Tiele", in: *Jaarboek van de Koninklijke Akademie van Wetenschappen* (1902) 125–154; reprinted in: id., *Portretten en Kritieken*, Haarlem 1909, pp. 82–120, p. 116.

⁸¹ Tim Murphy, "The Concept 'Entwicklung' in German *Religionswissenschaft*. Before and After Darwin", in: *Method and Theory in the Study of Religion* 11 (1999) 8–23, p. 15. Without noticeable hesitation Murphy includes the Dutchman Tiele in the "German schools of *Religionswissenschaft*", which employ an "inherently anti-empiricist and anti-materialist" concept of development.

dealt with the *morphai* (the “ever-changing” elements of religion), whereas the second (“ontological”) part of the Gifford Lectures investigated the “true being or essence of religion”.⁸² In the eighth lecture of the first series Tiele briefly looked back on his earlier work, especially on the article about the laws of development of 1874, which I have discussed above.

Much of what I then wrote I should now formulate otherwise, and I have indeed several times modified my university lectures on the subject accordingly. And I must now admit that the title of the article was not quite accurate. I should not have said “Laws of the Development of Religion”, but “Laws of Development in their Application to Religion”. For in point of fact I only meant even then to maintain that the laws which govern the development of the human mind hold true of religion also, though their application may differ in form and in details. But I still adhere to the article as a whole, and have not altered my opinion in point of principle. If such laws—or call them the rules, forms, necessary conditions, if you will, by which spiritual development is bound—did not exist, and if we were unable to form some idea of them corresponding with reality, it would be better to give up the science of religion altogether as a fond illusion. We should not even be entitled to speak of development at all, for this idea necessarily involves that of rules and laws.⁸³

This quotation indicates both how important and at the same time how complex are the concepts of “development” and “laws”.

In the following I will focus on how the idea of development functions in the first series of the Gifford Lectures. In my analysis I will also make use of the influential article “Religions”, which Tiele wrote for the ninth edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (1886), and the short manual of his philosophy of religion *Outlines of the Science of Religion* (1901), which presents his views, so eloquently stated in the Gifford Lectures, in a much briefer compass.⁸⁴ Firstly, I will consider the concept of religious development itself in more depth (a), secondly, the basic dichotomy between nature and ethical religions (b), and, finally, Tiele’s idea of the laws of development (c).

⁸² Tiele, *Elements of the Science of Religion*, 2 vols, Edinburgh–London, 1897–1899, vol. II, p. 188.

⁸³ Tiele, *Elements*, vol. I, p. 214.

⁸⁴ Tiele, “Religions”, in: *The Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 9th edition, vol. XX, Edinburgh 1886, pp. 358–371; Tiele, *Hoofdtrekken der Godsdienstwetenschap*, Amsterdam 1901.

(a) According to Tiele, the metaphor of *development* is borrowed from natural history, and is only by analogy applied to the spiritual life of man. "Development is growth. From the green bud the flower bursts forth as from its sheath, and reveals the wealth and brilliance of its colours. From the tiny acorn springs up the mighty oak in all its majesty".⁸⁵ The examples given all point to organic growth. Entities develop out of germs that potentially contain the later phases of development. Destroying one thing and putting another in its place is not called development. Tiele mentioned two implications: firstly, that the object undergoing development is a unity, and, secondly, "that each phase of the evolution has its value, importance, and right of existence, and that it is necessary to give birth to a higher phase, and continues to act in that higher phase".⁸⁶ Instead of giving his own definition, Tiele quoted "an American scholar", who characterized development as follows: "a continuous progressive change according to certain laws and by means of resident forces".⁸⁷

One would like a somewhat more precise definition. Instead, Tiele specified the type of history he had in mind, which is expounded in such statements as "religions die, but religion itself does not". Ultimately, he was not interested in local or temporal religious developments but in the development of religion in mankind. "Its development may be described as the evolution of the religious idea in history, or better as the progress of the religious man, or of mankind as religious by nature".⁸⁸ As according to Tiele the core of religion lies in the inner disposition towards God, outer forms change as a result of inner change. This is an "idealist" view of religious development. In all the changes and vicissitudes Tiele discerned "not a puzzling, but a grand and instructive spectacle—the labour of the human spirit to find fitter and fuller expression for the religious idea as it becomes ever clearer, and for religious needs as they become ever loftier—not the mere fickle play of human caprice, but, to use the language of faith, the eternal working of the divine Spirit".⁸⁹ In this way, the

⁸⁵ Tiele, *Elements*, vol. I, p. 28.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 30.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 30. In a footnote the American scholar is identified as Professor Le Conte, who was cited in an article by Lyman Abbott in the *New World*, No. 1, p. 1.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 32.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 38. In the Dutch edition the passage between dashes is emphasized; cf. Tiele, *Inleiding tot de godsdienstwetenschap* (1897–1899), 2 vols, second [slightly] revised edition, Amsterdam 1900, vol. I, p. 37.

history of religion is given a teleological perspective, which accords perfectly with Tiele's liberal Protestantism.

The element of continuity is essential here. Tiele took great pains to demonstrate that development had to be understood in terms of assimilation. Even in those cases—Tiele mentioned missions—in which there seems to be discontinuity, a closer look proves the contrary. Of course, “zealous apostles . . . demand the total abjuration of the old and the unconditional acceptance of the new”, but this approach is doomed to fail. “The ancient gods return, some still retaining their old characters and the parts they played in the ancient mythology, as demons, but most of them as angels, saints, or prophets . . . The observance of their holy days [of the old religion], and especially of their great annual festivals, is soon revived; prohibitions against them avail nothing; ecclesiastical authority has to acquiesce and to rest content with giving them a different complexion or modifying them in some details”. If one pushes too hard to impose the new, the old will return. One can only succeed by means of assimilation, by relating the new to the old in an organic way.⁹⁰ It is not merely succession, but natural growth that occurs in the history of religion, and the task of the historian will therefore be to show how “the more developed form contains nothing essential that cannot be found, though in less perfect shape, or merely as a germ, in all the preceding forms from the very first”.⁹¹

(b) After this exposition of the concept of development, Tiele treated the *stages* of development. Three lectures, discussing the “lowest nature-religions”, the “highest nature-religions” and the “ethical religions” successively, are concerned with this subject. I will not summarize these chapters, but highlight the basic dichotomy between *ethical* and *nature religions* that underlies Tiele's treatment. One has to keep in mind that in this view historical research involves a classification. First, Tiele claimed that the old classifications by scholars such as Hegel were no longer of any use, because they were based

⁹⁰ Ibid., p. 44f. Even if one rejected this line of argument, it still has to be admitted according to Tiele that development must be seen in terms of an organic connection: “Or if it is thought that something more takes place [than simple assimilation], it may be compared with the grafting of a fresh branch on an old stem, or with the crossing of two different breeds, which produces a new variety and thus helps rather than hinders development”. For Tiele development can never mean that one thing is replaced by another.

⁹¹ Ibid., p. 55.

on insufficient data.⁹² In his contribution to the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Tiele gave Max Müller some credit for his criticism of “the most usual modes of classification applied to religion, viz. (1) that into true and false, (2) that into revealed and natural, (3) that into national and individual, (4) that into polytheistic, dualistic, and monotheistic”.⁹³ But Tiele did not believe that—as Müller argued—the classification of religions runs parallel to that of languages. “[T]he farther history advances the more does religion become independent of both language and nationality”.⁹⁴ Furthermore, Tiele made an exception for the third classification, which contains more truth than Müller presumed. There seems to be some ambivalence on Tiele’s part here. First, he criticized W.D. Whitney’s classification of religions into national and individual,⁹⁵ but in the end he made it the foundation of his own classification, the principle of the first allegedly being nature, and of the second ethics. This “grafting” of his own dichotomy on that of Whitney makes a somewhat artificial impression.

Although the difference between nature and ethical religions is one of principle, the transition from the former to the latter cannot be described in terms of a rift. However, it is not a smooth, easy development either. On the one hand, the element of continuity is emphasized. For instance, ethical attributes can also be ascribed to the gods at the level of nature religion, but in these cases the “ethical personifications are simply incorporated in the old system, and not only not distinguished from the nature gods, but even subordinated to them”.⁹⁶ On the other hand, the transition from the higher nature religions to ethical forms of religions apparently implies a discontinuity: it “is invariably accomplished by means of a designated reformation, or sometimes even by a revolution”.⁹⁷ The opposition is described in various ways. Whereas nature religions tend to polytheism, ethical religions tend to monotheism. Ethical religions do not

⁹² Ibid., p. 58.

⁹³ Tiele, “Religions”, p. 365. Tiele referred here to Max Müller, *Lectures on the Science of Religion*, pp. 123–143, by which Müller’s *Introduction to the Science of Religion. Four Lectures* (London 1873) must be meant.

⁹⁴ Ibid., p. 365.

⁹⁵ William Dwight Whitney (1827–1894) was an eminent Sanskritist, student of Franz Bopp, F.A. Weber, and Rudolf Roth, and ruthless critic of Max Müller; cf. Whitney, *Max Müller and the Science of Language*, New York 1892.

⁹⁶ Tiele, “Religions”, p. 366.

⁹⁷ Tiele, *Elements*, vol. I, p. 121.

depend on the common belief in national traditions but on the belief in a doctrine of salvation, and are founded by individuals or in some cases by a body of priests or teachers. Tiele sketched the opposition in a multifaceted way, which I have only roughly outlined here. He did not stop at this point but discussed the various “subdivisions of each of the two principal categories” in some detail.⁹⁸

I will not go into the various ramifications and stages within the history of nature religions, but turn to Tiele’s discussion of ethical religions. He started with a question that had already been raised by Abraham Kuenen in his Hibbert Lectures:⁹⁹ “What right have we to divide [the religions] into nomistic or nomothetic communities, founded on a law or Holy Scripture, and universal or world religions, which start from principles and maxims, the latter being only three—Buddhism, Christianity, and Mohammedanism?”¹⁰⁰ Although the category “world religions” may have some practical use (“to distinguish the three religions which have found their way to different races and peoples and all of which profess the intention to conquer the world”), Tiele preferred to drop the term, which he had used himself many times in his earlier work.¹⁰¹ This is not to say that there is no difference between these three religions, on the one hand, and “Confucianism, Brahmanism, Jainism, Mazdaism, and Judaism on the

⁹⁸ Tiele, “Religions”, p. 366f., where he made the following adjustment: “The different stages of development have been characterized by C.P. Tiele (*Outlines of the History of Religion*, § 3) as follows:—(a) a period in which animism generally prevailed, still represented by the so-called nature religions (in the narrower sense), or rather by the polydaemonistic magical tribal religions; (b) polytheistic national religions resting on a traditional doctrine; (c) nomistic . . . religions, or religious communities founded on a law or sacred writing and subduing polytheism more or less completely by pantheism or monotheism; (d) universal or world-religions, which start from principles and maxims. Though in general maintaining this division, at least for practical use, if we wish to draw up a morphological classification of religions, we shall have to modify and complete it, and to arrange the different stages under the two principal categories of nature religions and ethical religions”. For a summary see Jonathan Z. Smith, “Religion, Religions, Religious”, in: Mark C. Taylor (ed.), *Critical Terms for Religious Studies*, Chicago–London 1998, pp. 269–284, p. 268f.

⁹⁹ Abraham Kuenen, *National Religions and Universal Religions*, London 1882.

¹⁰⁰ Tiele, “Religions”, p. 368.

¹⁰¹ An early example is Tiele, *De Godsdienst van Zarathustra*, pp. 2, 275f.; cf. Jan N. Bremmer, “Methodologische en terminologische notities bij de opkomst van de godsdienstgeschiedenis in de achttiende en negentiende eeuw”, in: *Nederlands Theologisch Tijdschrift* 57 (2003) 308–321, p. 317f.; cf. Tiele, “Religions”, p. 367: “Strictly speaking, there can be no more than one universal or world religion, and if one of the existing religions is so potentially it has not yet reached its goal. This is a matter of belief which lies beyond the limits of scientific classification”.

other".¹⁰² Tiele made an attempt to distinguish the two categories as follows: particularistic versus universalistic (not universal), national versus human, and those bound to special doctrines and rites versus others, which, although equally embodied in doctrines and rites, are "nevertheless really free from them", as they start from principles and maxims.¹⁰³

This does not mean that the three universalistic religious communities are on the same level. "Both Islam and Buddhism, if not national, are only relatively universalistic, and show the one-sidedness, the one of the Semitic, the other of the Aryan race".¹⁰⁴ Whereas Islam exalts the divine and opposes it to the human, Buddhism neglects the divine and preaches salvation through self-renunciation. Moreover, Buddhism is atheistic in its origin and becomes easily infested by the "most childish superstitions". Evidently, Islam is worse than Buddhism; because of its ritualistic features it "is little better than an extended Judaism". Buddhism comes close to Christianity, because its worship is not "necessarily bound to place or time". However, because of its capacity to adapt itself to ever new circumstances, "which is the natural result of its purely spiritual character, Christianity ranks incomparably high above both its rivals".¹⁰⁵ Tiele added a footnote to stress that this statement is not a confession, but is made from a scholarly point of view.

In the Gifford Lectures he argued that these religions were called "ethical", "because, arising out of an ethical awakening, they aim at a more or less lofty ethical ideal, an ideal no longer merely coordinated with religion, but conceived as God's own will, and an emanation of His being—or in more abstract philosophical language, an ideal objectivised in, and projected into the conception of God".¹⁰⁶

¹⁰² Tiele, "Religions", p. 368.

¹⁰³ Ibid., p. 369; cf. Tiele, *Elements*, vol. I., p. 294: "In the higher ethical religions, although the law is not abrogated, and is sometimes even extended, the doctrines deemed essential are gradually summarised in several leading precepts, until, when we reach the highest stage of religious development known to us, the great all-embracing principle of Love, expressed in the two commandments on which hang all the law and the prophets, is revealed as the perennial source of true religious life".

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., p. 369.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., p. 369. Tiele here referred to the work of the German liberal theologian Richard Rothe (1799–1867), who had put much emphasis on the flexibility of the Christian religion.

¹⁰⁶ Tiele, *Elements*, vol. I, p. 120f.

Whereas Tiele subscribed wholeheartedly to the differentiation thesis (in the course of history religion becomes a more or less autonomous phenomenon), this did not imply that religion and the ethical element were to be separated from each other. The universalistic tendency of the “ethical religions” implied an inclusiveness. All fellow human beings were to be included in the ultimate religion, which should evolve out of—liberal Protestant—Christianity.

(c) In the first series of the Gifford Lectures Tiele readjusted his views concerning the *laws* of religious development. Firstly, he rejected the idea of special laws of *religious* development; secondly, he clearly distinguished the (general) “laws which govern the development of the human mind” from the laws of natural science,¹⁰⁷ and, thirdly, he clarified which “laws” were actually basic to religious development. It remains difficult to specify exactly Tiele’s view in this matter, as we find different laws of development in his last book *Outlines of the Science of Religion*, which appeared only a couple of years after the Gifford Lectures. To a large extent, the difference can be seen as a difference of expression, stating more or less the same insights, but nevertheless it was apparently not easy for Tiele to settle the whole issue in an unambiguous way.

In the *eighth* chapter of the Gifford Lectures Tiele formulated two laws: (1) the Law of the Unity of the Human Mind (essentially the same law as stated in his article of 1874 discussed above),¹⁰⁸ and (2) the Law of Intellectual Intercourse, which runs as follows: “All development, apart from the natural capabilities of men and peoples, results from the stimulus given to self-consciousness by contact with a different stage of development, whether higher or lower”.¹⁰⁹ Tiele was very much against isolation and in favour of free economic, intellectual and spiritual exchange. If we apply this general law to religion, two “practical rules” follow from it: (1) “The religion that will attain the highest development is that which is most alive to the genuinely religious elements in other forms”, and (2) “Religious development is best promoted by the free intercourse of its most diverse

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 214–219, esp. p. 218: “Let us admit . . . that we cannot determine by fixed laws what must happen, because it does not only depend solely on conditions that we can ascertain, but also on the incalculable element of individuality, of the personal free-will of each individual”.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 232; cf. Tiele, “Over de wetten der ontwikkeling van den godsdienst” and Tiele, *Hoofdtrekken*, p. 47f.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 239; cf. Tiele, *Hoofdtrekken*, pp. 48–50.

manifestations".¹¹⁰ This conforms perfectly, of course, to the idea of growth by assimilation, both in cultural and religious ways: "religion assimilates whatever is good and true in general culture; and each form of religion assimilates whatever is true and good in other forms".¹¹¹ Both laws can be seen as expressions of the "great Law of Assimilation", which is the most important factor of development.¹¹²

The *ninth* chapter of the Gifford Lectures addresses the issue of the "influence of the individual in the development of religion".¹¹³ This influence should not be underrated in Tiele's view, as "all progress, reform, discovery, invention, must have originated in the brain of a single individual".¹¹⁴ "Religion develops through the medium of persons".¹¹⁵ Because so much depends on the creativity of individuals, there is an element which cannot be explained in (religious) development.¹¹⁶ Interestingly enough, in this chapter, which focuses on the role of the individual and thus points to the inexplicable element in history, Tiele also elaborated on the continuity of human history in general and religious history in particular, which leads to the formulation of the "great law of *the continuity of religious development*".¹¹⁷ Whether or not this is actually a law in any precise sense of the word, it is fundamental to Tiele's understanding of development. Even in periods of apparent decay, "there arise mighty spirits from whom emanates a new revelation of religious life, a higher than the preceding, yet rooted in it".¹¹⁸ Development must not be seen as the "supersession of the old by something new, something different", but as "growth from a germ, in which lies latent everything that later springs from it".¹¹⁹

Besides the laws of the unity of the human mind, of human intercourse, and of progressive development, in his *Outlines* (1901) Tiele also listed the law of *balance or synthesis*, which we already encountered

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 239f.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 242.

¹¹² Tiele, *Inleiding tot de Godsdienstwetenschap*, vol. I, p. 220. This remark is an addition Tiele made to the revised, second Dutch edition, and is therefore not to be found in the English edition of the Gifford Lectures; cf. Tiele, *Elements*, vol. I, p. 242. Tiele did not elaborate on this "great law".

¹¹³ Tiele, *Elements*, vol. I, p. 244.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 246.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 271.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 258.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 271 (*italics original*); cf. Tiele, *Hoofdtrekken*, pp. 50–52.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 268.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 272.

in the article of 1874. Applied to religion, it means that there has to be a balance between authority and tradition, on the one hand, and freedom of individual consciousness on the other.¹²⁰ In the Gifford Lectures Tiele was less outspoken. He more or less rejected the law of self-recovery by reaction, stressed the need for an equilibrium between various *directions* of development,¹²¹ and concluded by saying: “If . . . there be any such law at all, we prefer to call it the law of progress by synthesis or reconciliation. But we shall see afterwards that it is only one phase, a single manifestation, of the main law that governs all development, including that of religion”.¹²²

This main law is addressed in the *tenth* and last chapter of the first series of the Gifford Lectures about the essentials of the development of religion. Ultimately it is a twofold process: “ever-increasing differentiation, coupled with efforts for reconciliation and unity”.¹²³ I will give a somewhat longer quotation to show how Tiele saw this as an interrelated process:

From an originally somewhat motley and chaotic, yet monotonous, multiplicity of forms, several more developed groups gradually detach themselves, formed by the confluence of a number of hitherto distinct modes of worship. This is the genesis of a certain unification, and the beginning of differentiation at the same time, because new and more pronounced varieties constantly arise. And so the process goes on: union and partition, the formation of great unities which again break up into new varieties, until new combinations are again effected. Yet the general tendency of religious development indicates ever-diminishing particularism, ever-increasing universalism, and an aspiration, whether conscious or not, for true catholicity.¹²⁴

The dialectic between differentiation and unification is to be read within a teleological framework. The articulation of different forms does not preclude a tendency to unification and “simplification” (as it was also called), by which Tiele meant that religions are “reduced to a fixed system, to a few cardinal points, and at last to a single fundamental principle”.¹²⁵

¹²⁰ Cf. Tiele, *Hoofdtrekken*, pp. 52–54.

¹²¹ Tiele, *Elements*, vol. I, p. 151: “By the term direction I understand a spiritual current which sweeps along a single principle of religion, or some fundamental religious idea, more or less regardless of others, to its extreme consequences”.

¹²² *Ibid.*, p. 205.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, p. 295.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 289.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 294. By this principle is, no doubt, meant the Christian principle of love.

Tiele pointed to a similar dialectic regarding the relationship between religions and other cultural domains. On the one hand, religion “conquers a province of its own, and in that province attains ever greater independence . . . , but not in the sense of being indifferent to the influence of advancing civilization and the development of art, science, morality, and society”.¹²⁶ According to the law of the unity of the human mind, the ever-growing independence of the religious sphere does not preclude efforts “to reconcile religion with the interests of science and art, of philosophy and morality, of society and the State”.¹²⁷ Ultimately, Tiele related the development of religion to a progress of self-consciousness. Man “becomes ever more clearly conscious of what he is and what he requires as a religious being, and of the nature and the demands of the religion within him”.¹²⁸ The engine, so to speak, of religious development is the growth of (religious) self-consciousness, which is not to be equated with a plea for a purely spiritual religion. Although the forms are always “imperfect and inadequate expressions of the infinite within us”, religion will always express itself.¹²⁹ Notwithstanding this assurance it is evident that Tiele located religions primarily in the inwardness of human beings, in the inner relationship between man and God, which is the main topic of the second series of the Gifford Lectures, where “we shall . . . endeavour to form an idea, not merely of the development of, but of the essential and permanent elements in religion, and thus ascend to its true and ultimate source”.¹³⁰

5. *Conclusion*

On various occasions Tiele noted that without the concepts and laws of development there would be no science of religion in the proper sense of the word. In his paper for The World’s Parliament of Religions (Chicago 1893) he proclaimed: “What should be done first of all is to trace religion in the course of its development, that is to say, in its life, to inquire what every family of religions, as for instance the Aryan and the Semitic, what every particular religion, what the

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 296.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 298.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 299f.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 301.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 302; cf. chapter V above.

great religious persons have contributed to this development, to what laws and conditions this development is subjected and in what it really consists".¹³¹ This objective was to be achieved in the morphological part of Tiele's work, as exemplified by the first series of the Gifford Lectures. Various assumptions are involved in this programme. Several of them were listed by Tiele himself: the idea of the unity of man and the human species, the idea of continuity and progress, and the comparative method, which brings non-simultaneous phenomena into line. The great historian of cultural anthropology George W. Stocking gave a longer list, when he suggested that classical evolutionism embraced the following assumptions:

that sociocultural phenomena, like the rest of the natural world, are governed by laws that science can discover; that these laws operate uniformly in the distant past as well as in the present; that the present grows out of the past by continuous processes without any sharp breaks; that this growth is naturally from simplicity to complexity; that all men share a single psychic nature; that the motive force of sociocultural development is to be found in the interaction of this common human nature and the conditions of external environment; that the cumulative results of this interaction in different environments are manifest in the differential development of various human groups; that these results can be measured, using the extent of human control over external nature as the primary criterion; that other sociocultural phenomena tend to develop in correlation with scientific progress; that in these terms human groups can be objectively ordered in a hierarchical fashion; that certain contemporary societies therefore approximate the various earlier stages of human development; that in the absence of adequate historical data these stages may be reconstructed by a comparison of contemporary groups; and that the results of this "comparative method" can be confirmed by "survivals" in more advanced societies of the forms characteristic of lower stages.¹³²

This list is also helpful to understand Tiele's programme. Leaving the scientific flavour of some formulations and the emphasis on the interaction between human nature and external environment as the main explanation of the course of history for what they are, the other assumptions have to a great extent determined Tiele's endeavour. It

¹³¹ Tiele, "On the Study of Comparative Theology", in: John Henry Barrows (ed.), *The World's Parliament of Religions*, 2 vols, London 1893, vol. I, pp. 583–590, p. 589.

¹³² Stocking, *Victorian Anthropology*, p. 170; cf. Stocking, *After Tylor. British Social Anthropology 1888–1951*, London 1996, p. 124f.

was very much a progressive view of history, which, as we have seen, in Tiele's case was framed in "idealistic" terms.

History and comparison go hand in hand: "[L]ike every genuine scientific study, historical investigations, if they are to bear fruit, must be comparative". In this way, we may determine the similarities and the differences between religious phenomena and religions as such.¹³³ The introduction of the comparative method into the history of religions is one way to explain the fact that these early practitioners saw the study of religion as a "science", based on induction and sound reasoning. Max Müller was very outspoken in this respect: "People ask, What is gained by comparison?—Why, all higher knowledge is acquired by comparison, and rests on comparison. If it is said that the character of scientific research in our age is pre-eminently comparative, this really means that our researches are now based on the widest evidence that can be obtained, on the broadest inductions that can be grasped by the human mind".¹³⁴ Tiele, too, was rather self-conscious about the achievements of the new science of religion, which he often contrasted in a harsh way to the old, biased scholarship. Pfeiderer, for one, did not like the way Tiele disqualified the work of Schleiermacher and Hegel as completely obsolete.

However, Tiele himself was attacked as well for his allegedly speculative way of construing a developmental history of religion. It is not the genealogy of religions, which traces actual dependencies, but the morphology that was object of criticism. Tiele's ultimate goal was to outline the development of religion in mankind, "the progress of the religious man, or of mankind as religious by nature".¹³⁵ In the various religious manifestations he looked for an ever-increasing purification of religion, which gets ever more interiorized, spiritual and ethical. At the same time he also detected a movement that synthesizes the two main directions in religious history, the "theanthropic" and the "theocratic". The former is dominant in Aryan religions and conceives of the deity as immanent in man; the latter is dominant in Semitic religions and sees God as a ruler outside man.¹³⁶ The two

¹³³ Tiele, "Religions", p. 358; cf. Tiele, "Theologie en Godsdienstwetenschap", in: *De Gids* 30/2 (1866) 205–244, p. 216.

¹³⁴ Müller, *Introduction to the Science of Religion*, London 1873, pp. 11–12.

¹³⁵ Tiele, *Elements*, vol. I, p. 32.

¹³⁶ Cf. Kippenberg, "Religionsentwicklung", in: Hans G. Kippenberg & Martin Riesebrodt (eds), *Max Webers "Religionsystematik"*, Tübingen 2001, pp. 77–99, esp. pp. 91–93.

elements are brought together as follows: “In adoration are united those two phases of religion which are termed by the schools ‘transcendent’ and ‘immanent’ respectively, or which, in religious language, represent the believer as ‘looking up to God as the Most High’, and as ‘feeling himself akin to God as his Father’”.¹³⁷

The core of the critique concerned the combination of history and classification. History is about real developments, his opponents objected, whereas Tiele’s morphology classifies different types of religion and “presents” this classification as a developmental history. In the preface of the *Outlines of the History of Religion* Tiele thanked his “friend and colleague Dr. H. Kern, who knows all, or nearly all, about ancient India, and who made such a profound study of German mythology” for his kind review of the Dutch edition, which had appeared a year earlier. However, Tiele did not address the criticism that Kern had made: that every classification will more or less collide with historiography.¹³⁸ Even Tiele’s close colleagues had difficulties with this type of “history”, as he was well aware: “My old friend and colleague, the late Professor Acquoy, an authority of the highest rank among the historians of Christianity, could not speak without a smile of what he called, with a kind of ironical respect, the higher kinds of historical writing, and particularly of what he termed nomological hierography. No serious historian need trouble himself with the question whether there is a law in accordance to which history grows. ‘Let the philosopher study this question *if he pleases*’. Well, we do please to examine the question . . .”¹³⁹ Tiele was not thrown off balance by such remarks, and went his own way.

P.D. Chantepie de la Saussaye, too, was rather sceptical about Tiele’s laws of religious development. In his obituary, he cited the above-mentioned Acquoy, who in his manual of church history had written that no historical law had been discovered so far and that such laws probably lie outside the scope of the human mind, in which case it was improbable that any human being would ever discover them.¹⁴⁰ The irony is evident. In the introduction to the first

¹³⁷ Tiele, *Elements*, vol. II, p. 198.

¹³⁸ Tiele, *Outlines of the History of Religion* (1877), p. xi; H. Kern, Review of Tiele, *Geschiedenis van den godsdienst* (1876), in: *De Gids* 41/2 (1877) 365–372.

¹³⁹ Tiele, *Elements*, vol. I, p. 215 (*italics original*).

¹⁴⁰ P.D. Chantepie de la Saussaye, “Cornelis Petrus Tiele”, p. 118; cf. J.G.R. Acquoy, *Handleiding tot de kerkgeschiedvorsing en kerkgeschiedschrijving*, ’s-Gravenhage 1894, p. 105.

edition of his famous handbook, La Saussaye pointed to the complexities surrounding the concept of religious development, and in the second edition he dropped the idea of a developmental history of religion (in the singular) altogether.¹⁴¹ W. Brede Kristensen was critical of evolutionism,¹⁴² as was his pupil Gerardus van der Leeuw. In his contribution on this topic to the second edition of the German encyclopaedia *Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, Van der Leeuw rejected the idea of religious progress because it did not comply with the unique and absolute character of religious experience.¹⁴³ Phenomenology of religion, as it emerged on Dutch soil at the beginning of the twentieth century and culminated in Van der Leeuw's *Phänomenologie der Religion* (1933), had great difficulties with the idea of progressive religious development, and the idea slowly faded away from Dutch science of religion, as it did from cultural anthropology. Contrary to Eric Sharpe's suggestion, evolutionism was not dominant in Dutch religious studies throughout the years between the wars.¹⁴⁴

After the paradigm of development had been abandoned it was hard to see how it could have been so influential. As Evans-Pritchard said in his 1950 Marett Lecture: "It will readily be seen how a combination of the notion of scientific law and that of progress leads in anthropology, as in the philosophy of history, to procrustean stages, the presumed inevitability of which gives them a normative character".¹⁴⁵ Nevertheless, there is little doubt that the idea of development—involving a complex whole of theoretical assumptions, values and key examples—had been the basis of a major current in cultural research. It functioned as a paradigm, as is evident from the fact that Tiele stuck to it in the face of strong criticism from colleagues, who insisted on doing "real history". It was evident to him that the only way to relate all the different religions to each other was to accommodate them in a scheme of development. Otherwise, there would be no science of religion, but only history of religions.

¹⁴¹ P.D. Chantepie de la Saussaye, *Lehrbuch der Religionsgeschichte*, 2 vols, Freiburg i.B. 1887–1889; second edition, Freiburg i.B.–Leipzig 1897, vol. II, p. vi: "Das Buch bringt Geschichte der Religionen, keine Entwicklungsgeschichte der Religion".

¹⁴² Kristensen, *Inleiding tot de godsdienstgeschiedenis*, Arnhem 1955, p. 23.

¹⁴³ G. van der Leeuw, "Religion III: Religionsgeschichtliche Entwicklung", in: *Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, second edition, vol. IV, Tübingen 1930, col. 1875–1877.

¹⁴⁴ Sharpe, *Comparative Religion*, p. 27, note 1.

¹⁴⁵ E.E. Evans-Pritchard, "Social Anthropology. Past and Present" (1950), in: id., *Essays in Social Anthropology*, London 1962, pp. 13–28, p. 17.

To simply create a classification with Christianity at the top would be unscientific and unhistorical. From Tiele's point of view, the various types of religion arise in history and (morphologically spoken) develop out of each other; in this way, the variations can be understood in a historical way. Therefore, classification and history are not incompatible but inextricably bound up with each other.

Ultimately it is Tiele's concept of history that makes it hard for present-day scholars to understand him. The problem is not so much the notion of the *Gleichzeitigkeit des Ungleichzeitigen*, or "the idea that in the absence of historical evidence, the earlier phases could be reconstructed by using data derived from the observation of peoples still living in earlier 'stages' of development",¹⁴⁶ but the teleological view of history. Walter Benjamin has told us the famous story of the angel of history who would like to have stayed and mourn the losses but is driven into the future by a storm coming from Paradise. As he turns his back to the future, the angel sees "eine einzige Katastrophe, die unablässig Trümmer auf Trümmer häuft". This storm, which we call progress, leaves behind a pile of debris mounting to the sky.¹⁴⁷ Tiele's "observant spectator", however, saw something completely different. Beneath change and kaleidoscopic variety he detected constant progress: "Human society and culture, as a whole, do not only assume new forms, but are continually growing; and these new forms are on the whole richer, ampler, purer and higher than those they supersede".¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁶ Stocking, *Victorian Anthropology*, p. 15.

¹⁴⁷ Walter Benjamin, *Illuminationen. Ausgewählte Schriften*, Frankfurt a.M. (Suhrkamp) 1977, p. 255.

¹⁴⁸ Tiele, *Elements*, vol. I, p. 263.

CHAPTER SEVEN

ETHNOLOGY AND RELIGION

1. *Sciences of Religion*

When writing the history of the emergence of the study of religion in the Netherlands, it makes good sense to focus on “science of religion” in the strict sense of the word, as it was established as a separate field of study in the theological faculties by the Higher Education Act of 1876.¹ The fame of early Dutch science of religion is to a great extent based on the work of the first chairholders, such as C.P. Tiele, P.D. Chantepie de la Saussaye and Gerardus van der Leeuw. However, as I have argued earlier, it would be wrong to focus exclusively on these pioneers of the scholarly study of religion.² The aim of the present chapter is to sketch the broader, scholarly study of religion in the Netherlands at the time, a subject that could easily fill another book. Michel Despland has given a splendid overview of the French *sciences religieuses* of more than 500 pages.³ He uses the plural “sciences of religion”, which also makes sense with regard to the Netherlands, although one has to keep in mind that—unlike, for instance, anthropology or psychology—the science of religion was the only field that was directly constituted by its reference to “religion”. Before as well as after the rise of the science of religion, scholars from various fields studied religion. Specialists in Sanskrit wrote about Buddhism and anthropologists about animism. Relations between “scientists of religion”⁴ and those who worked on religion within other academic branches were in the Netherlands usually friendly.⁵

¹ Cf. chapter III.4 above.

² Cf. chapters I.2 and III.1–3 above.

³ Michel Despland, *L'émergence des sciences de la religion. La Monarchie de Juillet: un moment fondateur*, Paris–Montréal 1999, p. 11: “Notre objectif est de rassembler, de tenter de construire une histoire de l'accroissement de *toutes* connaissances en matière de religions” (italics original).

⁴ I put this term between quotation marks to refer to those scholars who were engaged in the science of religion in the strict sense of the word (and not to those working on religion in other fields).

⁵ This was not a matter of course. For a discussion of French controversies at

Linguists and historians may have been a bit sceptical about what they saw as grand schemes of religious development and speculations concerning the origin of religion, but the historical work that the “scientists of religion” did on specific religions was taken seriously.

Moreover, there was regular border traffic between the various fields: a philologist could occupy a chair in ethnology, and an Old Testament scholar could make a contribution to comparative religion. Even the choice of the term “border traffic” is not entirely apt, as this presupposes more or less established borders, which can be crossed. Many fields pertaining to the study of religion, however, were in a process of defining and establishing themselves (and had not reached the status of a discipline with its own classical texts, methods and institutions). Therefore, it is a bit anachronistic to distribute the whole scholarly endeavour over nicely distinguished fields, but of course this happens in many books on the history of sociology, science, or psychology of religion. And even if one rejects a “presentist” way of doing historiography, it is hard to overcome the inclination to divide the area of research into various parts.⁶ In one way or another one has to come to grips with the multi-faceted, heterogeneous study of religion in the late-nineteenth century.

An obvious possibility is to survey the research according to the various religions studied: Israelite Religion and Christianity (mainly studied by theologians), the ancient religions of Egypt and Mesopotamia (also studied by theologians, who were as a matter of course interested in the *Umwelt* of the biblical religions), Islam (studied by philologists and missionaries), Hinduism and Buddhism (largely studied by philologists and archaeologists) and “primitive” religions, especially those of the Dutch East Indies (studied foremost by philologists and anthropologists). With the exception of the last type of religions, the emphasis is clearly on the history of so-called “world religions” and not so much on their present-day forms. Furthermore, it is remarkable that Dutch “scientists of religion” did so much work on Egyptian religion.⁷ Tiele wrote a comparative history of the religions of Egypt

the time, see Ivan Strenski, “The Ironies of *Fin-de-Siècle* Rebellions against Historicism and Empiricism in the *École Pratique des Hautes Études*, Fifth Section”, in: Arie L. Molendijk & Peter Pels (eds), *Religion in the Making. The Emergence of the Sciences of Religion*, Leiden 1998, pp. 159–179.

⁶ Arie L. Molendijk, “*In hoc signo vinces*. De geschiedschrijving van de godsdienstwetenschap”, in: *Nederlands Theologisch Tijdschrift* 57 (2003) 291–307.

⁷ D.J. Hoens, “A Short Survey of the History of the Study of Egyptian Religion

and Mesopotamia,⁸ and W.B. Kristensen and his pupil Van der Leeuw wrote their theses on Egyptian ideas of the afterlife and concepts of deities, respectively, and later in their careers presented several studies of Egyptian religion.⁹

A second possibility—notwithstanding the many demarcation problems—is to distinguish several (emerging) disciplines concerned with religion, such as science of religion *stricto sensu*, theology, philosophy, history and philology (languages and cultures of a specific area), ethnology (cultural anthropology), sociology and psychology. This list is not an exhaustive enumeration of disciplines, but an attempt to outline the “main players” in the field of the study of religion in the nineteenth century. The inclusion of philosophy in this list can be disputed, as the development of the scholarly study of religion in the second half of the nineteenth century is generally described in terms of an emancipation from philosophical speculation by turning to empirical and historical approaches. This observation is no doubt correct, but in my view this was a gradual process, and with regard to the Netherlands we should not forget that by the Act of 1876 not only history, but also philosophy of religion was introduced into the theological curriculum, and that both fields were seen by many practitioners as the twin subdisciplines of the science of religion.¹⁰ On the other hand, it can not be denied that there was a tendency to exclude “typical” philosophical work from the new field.¹¹ Not only the relationship between the history and the philosophy of religion was much discussed, but also the question how the overarching

in the Netherlands”, in: M. Heerma van Voss et al. (eds), *Studies in Egyptian Religion. Fs. Jan Zandee*, Leiden 1982, pp. 11–27.

⁸ C.P. Tiele, *Vergelijkende geschiedenis van de godsdiensten van Egypte en Mesopotamië*, Amsterdam 1872.

⁹ For a bibliography of the work of W.B. Kristensen, see Sigurd Hjelde (ed.), *Man, Meaning & Mystery: Hundred Years of History of Religions in Norway. The Heritage of W. Brede Kristensen*, Leiden 2000, pp. 287–293; for a bibliography of the work of Van der Leeuw, see W. Vos, “Dr. G. van der Leeuw. Bibliographie zijner geschriften”, in: W.J. Kooiman & J.M. van Veen (eds), *Pro Regno Pro Sanctuario*, Nijkerk 1950, pp. 553–638; cf. Willem Hofstee, *Goden en Mensen. De godsdienstwetenschap van Gerardus van der Leeuw. 1890–1950*, Kampen 1997.

¹⁰ Cf. chapter IV above.

¹¹ As for instance S. Hoekstra (1822–1898) and Allard Pierson (1831–1896) did. The work of C.W. Opzoomer (1821–1892) and L.W.E. Rauwenhoff (1828–1889) could also be mentioned in this respect; cf. Arie L. Molendijk, “Aan de grenzen van het weten. Het begin van de godsdienstwijsbegeerte in Groningen”, in: Arjo Vanderjagt et al. (eds), *Zeer kundige professoren. Beoefening van de filosofie in Groningen van 1614 tot 1996*, Hilversum 1997, pp. 209–220, esp. pp. 212–214.

science of religion related to the other disciplines within the theological faculties. Was not the old theology (dealing with the Christian religion) part and parcel of the science of religion, which dealt with all religions?¹² Such problems cannot be solved by means of stipulatory definitions, which tend to destroy historical niceties and connections. Discussing one of the sciences of religion (in the broad sense of the word), the historian has to pay attention to the ways these nineteenth-century scholars saw themselves and conceptualized religion.

In this chapter I will focus on ethnology and on how this field developed, with a view to the heterogenous field of the study of religion in general. To some extent, this choice is arbitrary; I could also have taken the case of Dutch “oriental studies”,¹³ but for various reasons ethnology is especially interesting here. Firstly, it was institutionalized in the same period as the science of religion; secondly, the two disciplines share a comparative perspective; thirdly, it was very much concerned with the Dutch East Indies, which enables us to touch upon the colonial dimension involved in the study of religion.¹⁴ The most substantial part of this chapter will be devoted to a sketch of the work of the first academic ethnologists (2). In the subsequent sections I will try to contextualize these academic beginnings in several ways, without any pretension to be exhaustive. Broadening the perspective, I will present a survey of literature on the Dutch colonies with an eye to the treatment of religion (3). Missionaries and museums played a significant role in collecting ethnographical materials and shaping the idea of what the cultures—including the religions—of the colonies were about. I will discuss a few key examples (4). Dutch ethnology had to define itself *vis-à-vis* “neighbouring” fields, such as sociology and—to a lesser extent—psychology, which I will treat briefly (5). In the final section (6) an attempt will be made to draw the various lines of this chapter together.

¹² Cf. Sigurd Hjelde, “The Science of Religion and Theology. The Question of Their Interrelationship”, in: Molendijk & Pels, *Religion in the Making*, pp. 99–127.

¹³ Cf. G.W.J. Drewes, “Oriental Studies in the Netherlands. An Historical Survey”, in: *Higher Education and Research in the Netherlands* 1 (1957), No. 4, pp. 3–13; cf. D.J. Hoens, “Korte schets van de geschiedenis van de bestudering van het Hindoeïsme en Boeddhisme in Nederland”, in: *Godsdienstwetenschap in Nederland. Terugblik, reken-schap en toekomst* (Referaten en discussies, gehouden op de Landelijke Studiedag te Utrecht op 16 mei 1972), s.l. s.a. (a copy is kept in the Library of the University of Groningen), pp. 24–31, who focuses on the work of Hendrik Kern (1833–1917), J.S. Speyer (1849–1913), W. Caland (1859–1932), J.Ph. Vogel (1871–1958) and J. Gonda (1905–1991).

¹⁴ Cf. also chapter VIII below.

2. *The Chair of Ethnology*

The study of ethnology in the Netherlands—various terms such as *volkenkunde*,¹⁵ *ethnographie*, *ethnologie*, and (*culturele*) *anthropologie* were used at the time to denote this endeavour—was closely related to its main colony: *Nederlandsch-Indië* (Dutch East Indies). With the same Act of 1876 by which the history and the philosophy of religion were established within the theological faculties, ethnology was introduced in Dutch higher education. Its actual name was “linguistics, literature, geography and ethnology of the East-Indian archipelago”.¹⁶ The only chair for this large field was situated at the University of Leiden, which means that the following discussion will focus on Leiden-based scholars. As is immediately clear from the wording of the teaching assignment, the colonial experience has been crucial for the start of Dutch ethnology.¹⁷ In addition to professional scholars, it was amateurs, colonial officers and missionaries, together with various learned and missionary societies, who contributed to the knowledge of the colonies, of which the Dutch East Indies were seen as by far the most important.¹⁸

¹⁵ The Dutch word “volkenkunde” is more or less the equivalent of the German “Völkerkunde”, and is probably best translated by “ethnography” (more descriptive) or “ethnology” (more comparative). I will generally refer to the field by the term “ethnology”, and only use the word “ethnography” in contexts where description is the main thing. In addition to “volkenkunde” there is the term “volkskunde”, which is probably best translated as “folklore”. In the Netherlands this field is focused on (oral) traditions of the customs and beliefs of “ordinary” people in Dutch regions. On the history of “volkskunde”, see Ton Dekker, “Ideologie en volkscultuur ontkoppeld. Een geschiedenis van de Nederlandse volkskunde”, in: Ton Dekker, Herman Roodenburg & Gerard Rooijackers (eds), *Volkscultuur. Een inleiding in de Nederlandse etnologie*, Nijmegen 2000, pp. 13–65; W.Th.M. Frijhoff, *Volkskunde en cultuurwetenschap. De ups en downs van een dialoog*, Amsterdam 1997.

¹⁶ Higher Education Act of 1876, Art. 43 (5c): “taal-, letter-, land- en volkenkunde van den Oost-Indischen Archipel”; cf. B.J.L. de Geer van Jutfaas (ed.), *De Wet op het Hooger Onderwijs. Uit de gewisselde stukken en de gehouden Beraadslagingen toegelicht*, Utrecht 1877, p. 196.

¹⁷ Cf. Roy Ellen, “The Development of Anthropology and Colonial Policy in the Netherlands: 1800–1960”, in: *Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences* 12 (1976) 303–324, p. 304: “The importance of the Indonesian experience in shaping the character of Dutch anthropology cannot be overemphasized, to the extent that it is impossible to understand its creation, development, and institutionalization as a professional discipline except in relation to colonial policy there”. For a survey of the history of Dutch anthropology, see Han Vermeulen & Jean Kommers (eds), *Tales from Academia. History of Anthropology in the Netherlands*, 2 vols, Saarbrücken 2002. On the “anthropology of colonialism” see Peter Pels, “The Anthropology of Colonialism. Culture, History, and the Emergence of Western Governmentality”, in: *Annual Review of Anthropology* 26 (1997) 163–183.

¹⁸ Ellen, “The Development of Anthropology”, p. 311f., singles out three events

The first occupant of the Leiden chair was the grand old man of the study of the Dutch East Indies, Pieter Johannes Veth (1818–1895), who more or less shaped the Dutch view of this colony. “Anybody who is not astonished by Professor Veth’s knowledge does not know anything about knowledge”. These are the words of the nineteenth-century Dutch writer Multatuli (Eduard Douwes Dekker, 1820–1887), whose famous and controversial novel *Max Havelaar*—a strong protest against the suppression of the Javanese—had been favourably reviewed by Veth.¹⁹ Veth translated Alfred Russel Wallace’s *The Malay Archipelago. The Land of the Orang-Utan, and the Bird of Paradise. A Narrative of Travel, with Sketches of Man and Nature* (original edition of 1864),²⁰ and was a prolific author and influential popularizer himself.²¹ Earlier, Veth had been involved in the training programme of civil servants for the colonies at the National Institute for the Teaching of [East] Indian Linguistics, Geography and Ethnology in Leiden.²² This institute had to compete with a similar centre in Delft, which gave students a more practical preparation for the state examinations. The Leiden

with special significance for the development of anthropology in the Netherlands: “The first is the founding of the *Instituut voor de Tropen*, in Amsterdam in 1850, financed by money provided by private capital. The second is the founding, in 1851, of the *Koninklijk Instituut voor Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde*, in Delft, at the instigation of J.C. Baud, which later moved to the Hague and then Leiden”. The third is the establishment of the chair of ethnology in 1877 (referred to above). For the earlier history of Dutch ethnology see—besides Ellen—also H.F. Vermeulen, *Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde in de achttiende eeuw*, Leiden 1996.

¹⁹ P.J. Veth, “Multatuli versus Droogstoppel, Slijmering & Co.”, in: *De Gids* 24/1 (1860) 58–82, 233–269; cf. P.G.E.I.J. [= Paul] van der Velde, “Nederlands-Indië op papier”, in: Van der Velde & Jan Justus Witkam (eds), *Nederlands-Indië op papier. De wetenschappelijke beschrijving van de archipel door P.J. Veth (1814–1895) en enkelen van zijn tijdgenoten in boeken, prenten, foto’s, kaarten en brieven. Catalogus bij een tentoonstelling in de Leidse Universiteitsbibliotheek van 8 april tot 12 mei 1995*, Leiden (Legatum Warnerianum) 1995, pp. 7–24; Van der Velde, *Een Indische Liefde. P.J. Veth (1814–1895) en de inburgering van Nederlandsch-Indië*, Amsterdam 2000.

²⁰ Independently from Charles Darwin, Wallace developed the idea of the survival of the fittest, and gave a strong impetus to the new paradigm of “social evolutionism” in Victorian anthropology; cf. George W. Stocking, *Victorian Anthropology*, New York etc. 1986, pp. 96–101.

²¹ [Veth (ed.)], *Insulinde. Het land van den orang-oetan en den paradisijsvogel* (door Alfred Russel Wallace), uit het Engelsch vertaald en van aantekeningen voorzien door P.J. Veth, 2 vols, Amsterdam 1870–1871; cf. also the bibliography in *Feestbundel van taal-, letter-, geschied- en aardrijkskundige bijdragen ter gelegenheid van zijn tachtigsten geboortedag aan Dr. P.J. Veth*, Leiden 1894, pp. 295–313.

²² Rijksinstelling van Onderwijs in Indische Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde.

institute was finally closed in 1877,²³ the same year in which Veth's chair was transferred to the University of Leiden.²⁴

Veth is often considered one of the best examples of an inclusive, not to say comprehensive approach. He wrote multi-volume books on Borneo and Java, which presented a gamut of geographical, ethnological, and historical information.²⁵ Up to the sixties and seventies of the nineteenth century, geography and ethnology were not seen as separate disciplines in the Netherlands.²⁶ An indication of a stronger differentiation in this respect was the specification of the examination ordinance for the studies of the East-Indian archipelago, in which the study of the history, literature, institutions, and customs was mentioned separately from the study of the physical geography.²⁷ The study of indigenous religions was part and parcel of this undertaking. As a matter of course, Veth also prepared the three-volume catalogue for the section devoted to the Dutch colonies at the 1883 Amsterdam world exhibition, in which a variety of religious items

²³ On the training of colonial civil servants, see Cees Fasseur, *De Indologen. Ambtenaren voor de Oost, 1825–1950*, Amsterdam 1993.

²⁴ Cf. Paul van de Velde, "The Indonesia and Africa Specialist P.J. Veth (1814–1895). Founder of the First Chair of Anthropology in the Netherlands (1877)", in: Vermeulen & Kommers, *Tales from Academia*, vol. II, pp. 647–672, esp. p. 657f.; P.E. de Josselin de Jong & H.F. Vermeulen, "Cultural Anthropology at Leiden University. From Encyclopedism to Structuralism", in: W. Otterspeer (ed.), *Leiden Oriental Connections 1850–1940*, Leiden etc. 1989, pp. 280–316, p. 284; actually, several of Veth's colleagues at the National Institute were transferred as well: J. Pijnappel for Malay, A.C. Vreede for Javanese and Madurese, P.A. van der Lith for Mohammedan law and colonial law, and G.J. Grashuis for Sundanese; cf. H.T. Colenbrander, "Leiden en Indië", in: *Pallas Leidensis MCMXXV*, Leiden 1925, pp. 243–258, p. 252f.

²⁵ Veth, *Borneo's Wester-afdeeling, geografisch, statistisch, historisch, voorafgegaan door eene algemene schets des ganschen eilands*, 2 vols, Zaltbommel 1854–1856; *Java. Geografisch, Ethnologisch, Historisch*, 4 vols, Haarlem 1875–1884 (the second edition appeared in 1896–1907). These four volumes together contain more than 2000 pages.

²⁶ Cf. Jos D.M. Platenkamp & Michael Prager, "A Mirror of Paradigms. Nineteenth- and Early Twentieth-Century Ethnology Reflected in *Bijdragen*", in: *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* 150 (1994) 703–727, p. 706. Cf. S.R. Steinmetz, *Het goed recht van Sociologie en Ethnologie als universiteitsvakken*, 's-Gravenhage 1895, which is a plea to establish and acknowledge sociology and ethnology as academic disciplines. For Steinmetz, see section 5 below.

²⁷ De Josselin de Jong & Vermeulen, "Cultural Anthropology at Leiden University", p. 287 (K.B. [Royal Decree] 87, April 27, 1877, Art. 5, Par. d). Cf. G.A. Wilken, *De vrucht van de beoefening der ethnologie voor de vergelijkende rechtswetenschap* (inaugural lecture), Leiden 1885, who stated that ethnology had managed to establish itself as an autonomous field of study, next to and separate from geography.

were described. Veth's observations in this context show more methodological awareness than is generally acknowledged by historiographers. It is not correct, he claimed, to conclude from similarities to unity of folk or race, because the religion of primitive peoples is basically the same all over the world. It is very hard, therefore, to determine whether likenesses should be explained by kinship relations or by "peculiarities which return with all races on the same level of development or civilization".²⁸ Thus, two competing paradigms of explanation are opposed to each other: the evolutionary (which looks for a generally applicable scheme of development) and the diffusionist point of view (which explains similarities on the grounds of social intercourse).²⁹

Whereas Veth came under the influence of evolutionism late in his career,³⁰ his successor George Alexander Wilken (1847–1891) pursued an evolutionary line in numerous publications right from the start. He was an adamant proponent of the "development hypothesis", according to which "the so-called savage ('wild') peoples did not descend from a higher level of civilisation to the lower one on which they presently find themselves, they did not degenerate into savagery, but simply stopped growing: they do not, therefore, show us bastardised but primitive conditions, they do not show us what can

²⁸ P.J. Veth (ed.), *Catalogus der Afdeling Nederlandsche Koloniën van de Internationale Koloniale en Uitvoer-Handel Tentoonstelling (van 1 mei tot ult^o. October 1883) te Amsterdam*, 3 vols, Leiden 1883; *Catalogue de la section des colonies néerlandais à l'exposition internationale coloniale et d'exportation générale, tenue du 1 mai au 31 octobre 1883, à Amsterdam*, 3 vols, Leiden 1883, vol. II, p. 307 (Dutch edition: p. 320): "L'étude de l'ethnologie comparée, en tant qu'elle a pour but la recherche de l'origine et de la parenté des peuples, est rendue bien difficile par la difficulté que l'on éprouve à décider si des points de ressemblance pareils peuvent être attribués à une communauté d'origine, ou si ce ne sont que des particularités qui se présentent chez toutes les races arrivées au même degré de développement, ou de civilisation". My translation in the main text is based on the Dutch original.

²⁹ Cf. Stocking, *After Tylor. British Social Anthropology 1888–1951*, London 1996, p. 11: "Reduced to the alternative of 'independent invention' or 'diffusion' (intercourse and racial inheritance being two different historical manifestations of a common historical source), this issue serves as a marker of several major transitions in the history of anthropology. The first was the transition from diffusionary 'ethnology' to evolutionary 'anthropology' in the 1860s, in which Tylor emerged as the preeminent British anthropologist of the later nineteenth century; the second was the reaction against evolutionism and the international reassertion of diffusionary ethnology in the early twentieth century".

³⁰ Cf. Van de Velde, "The Indonesia and Africa Specialist P.J. Veth", p. 664: "[A]t the end of his life Veth switched from the encyclopaedic ethnology to evolutionist ethnology".

become of our civilisation, but rather what the civilisation of our first fathers was like . . . Whoever wants to get to know the development of society must of necessity begin with the society of savages".³¹ This theory, of course, supported an educational, colonial programme to raise the level of the native population.

Moreover, the idea of a general pattern in the worldwide development of societies, cultures, and religions underpinned the comparative method, which Wilken practised.³² In this context he paid tribute to C.P. Tiele's work, and pointed to the fact that the representatives of the "science of religion" acknowledged the importance of ethnology for their own field of study.³³ Wilken used comparisons rather freely. In his inaugural address, for instance, he refuted Fustel de Coulanges' thesis that religion determined the structure of the ancient family, by pointing to examples taken from North America and the Dutch East Indies.³⁴ According to most historiographers, Wilken brought a paradigm shift to Dutch ethnology. "Wilken introduced a paradigm entailing a systematic attempt to explain social phenomena recorded in different societies in the Indonesian archipelago as the outcome of general social processes rather than of contingent historical influences to which societies had been exposed to a varying degree".³⁵ Because of the alleged similarities between all peoples, and worldwide patterns of behaviour, comparisons drawn

³¹ G.A. Wilken, *De vrucht van de beoefening der ethnologie voor de vergelijkende rechtswetenschap*, Leiden 1885, reprinted in: [Wilken], *De verspreide geschriften van prof. dr. G.A. Wilken*, ed. by F.D.E. van Ossenbruggen, 4 vols, Semarang, Soerabaja, 's-Gravenhage 1912, vol. II, pp. 83–110, p. 88 (quoted after Reimar Schefold, "Indonesian Studies and Cultural Anthropology in Leiden. From Encyclopedism to Field of Anthropological Study", in: Vermeulen & Kommers, *Tales from Academia*, vol. I, pp. 69–93, p. 77).

³² Auguste Barth, "George-Alexandre Wilken (1847–1891)", in: *Méhusine. Recueil de mythologie. Littérature populaire, traditions & usages* 6 (1892–1893) 4–12, p. 6: "Sa méthode était la méthode comparative, qu'il maniait avec beaucoup de compétence et de circonspection . . . Comme doctrine, il était évolutionniste convaincu. Il excellait à ramener les croyances et les pratiques à un petit nombre de germes qu'il trouvait au fond de l'animisme primitif et dans les institutions rudimentaires des sociétés les plus voisines de l'état de nature". For other contemporary judgements on Wilken, see M. de Goeje, "George Alexander Wilken", in: *Jaarboek van de Koninklijke Akademie van Wetenschappen* 1892, pp. 27–45; J.H.C. [= H.] Kern, [necrology G.A. Wilken], in: *Internationales Archiv für Ethnographie* 4 (1891) 263–264.

³³ Wilken, *Het animisme bij de volken van den Indischen Archipel*, Leiden 1885, pp. 1–2 (reprinted in [Wilken], *De verspreide geschriften*, vol. III, pp. 1–287); Wilken, *De vrucht van de beoefening der ethnologie*, p. 10.

³⁴ Wilken, *De vrucht van de beoefening der ethnologie*, p. 31f.

³⁵ Platenkamp & Prager, "A Mirror of Paradigms", p. 710; cf. De Josselin de Jong & Vermeulen, "Cultural Anthropology", p. 288f.

from different times and areas do make sense: the same stages of development are to be found all over the world.

Wilken was held in high esteem by his colleagues. One could even say that the good reputation of Dutch ethnology was first of all due to his work. The story goes that J.G. Frazer learned Dutch to be able to read anthropological literature in Dutch.³⁶ In the first edition of the *Golden Bough*, he paid due respect to Wilken: “The works of Professor G.A. Wilken of Leyden have been of great service in directing me to the best original authorities on the Dutch East Indies, a very important field to the ethnologist”.³⁷ There were other voices, however, especially from France, that criticized the lack of theory in Dutch research.³⁸ Wilken’s fame was based in particular on his work on religions and religious practices of the Dutch East Indies.³⁹ Frazer discussed to some length Wilken’s theory of totemism as originating in the belief in the transmigration of souls.⁴⁰ One of the four volumes of Wilken’s collected works was entirely devoted to his “writings on animism and related religious expressions”, and in the other volumes one also finds contributions to the field of religious studies, such as an extensive discussion of William Robertson Smith’s *Lectures on the Religion of the Semites*.⁴¹ With regard to the religions of primitive peoples, Wilken challenged Smith’s view of the totemic meal as a means of entertaining the relationship with the gods (which is, according to

³⁶ Cf. Robert Ackerman, “J.G. Frazer and the Cambridge Ritualists and the ‘Scientific’ Study of Religion”, in: Molendijk & Pels, *Religion in the Making*, pp. 129–158, p. 136, note 24.

³⁷ J.G. Frazer, *The Golden Bough. A Study of Comparative Religion* (first edition: 1890), New York 1981, p. xiii; cf. also Tylor, “Anniversary Address”, in: *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 21 (1892) 376ff., who commemorated the death of Wilken in his Anniversary Address for the Royal Anthropological Institute.

³⁸ Marcel Mauss said he experienced “nulle excitation philosophique” during his trip to Holland (Marcel Fournier, *Marcel Mauss*, Paris 1994, p. 127). Arnold van Gennep (*Religions, Moeurs et Légendes. Essais d’Ethnographie et de Linguistique*, Paris 1908) was equally critical: “si on se cantonne dans la description en ignorant la synthèse et la théorie, on fait de mauvaise description, par ignorance de ce qu’il faut voir et chercher” (177f.). Moreover, the focus of Dutch ethnologists is too limited, and they lack knowledge of literature concerning non-Dutch foreign territories, according to Van Gennep.

³⁹ A general manual of “comparative ethnology” of the Dutch East Indies was published immediately after his death: Wilken, *Handleiding voor de vergelijkende volkenkunde van Nederlandsch-Indië*, Leiden 1893 (pp. 495–649 on religion).

⁴⁰ Wilken, *Het animisme*; Frazer, *Totemism and Exogamy. A Treatise on Certain Early Forms of Superstition and Society*, 4 vols, London 1910, vol. IV, p. 45f.

⁴¹ William Robertson Smith, *Lectures on the Religion of the Semites. The Fundamental Institutions*, Edinburgh 1889.

Wilken, at most a secondary aspect in some cases). He claimed that the sacrifice was made to transmit the soul of the animal to the realms of spirits and that the eating of the offering afterwards had no special meaning (one just did not want to waste the meat that was left).⁴² It is the doctrine of the transmigration of souls that, Wilken argued, forms the connecting link between totemism on the one hand and the worship of the dead on the other.⁴³

Not all contemporary ethnologists were as deeply interested in religion as Wilken, but his successor J.J.M. de Groot (1854–1921) also devoted a lot of attention to the subject.⁴⁴ For good reasons, he was listed by contemporaries as one of the early Dutch scholars of religion.⁴⁵ His specialty was China, and in 1904 he was to obtain the chair of sinology at the University of Leiden.⁴⁶ In the years 1877–1878 and 1886–1890 he visited China to do field research. After this visit, and a short career as an interpreter at Ceribon (Java) he returned to Europe. De Groot published an extensive monograph on Amoy feasts and customs, which earned him a doctorate from the university of Leipzig.⁴⁷ At the Leiden Congress of Orientalists in 1883 he met Emile Guimet, who asked permission to bring out a French edition of the book, to appear in the series *Annales du Musée Guimet* in 1886.⁴⁸ Later he donated part of his collection to the Guimet Museum,⁴⁹

⁴² Wilken, “Eene nieuwe theorie over den oorsprong der offers”, in: *De Gids* 20/3 (1891) 535–572; reprinted in Wilken, *De verspreide geschriften*, vol. IV, pp. 157–195, esp. pp. 188–195.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 186.

⁴⁴ Cf. M.W. de Visser, “Levensbericht van prof. dr. J.J.M. de Groot”, in: *Handelingen van de Maatschappij der Nederlandsche Letterkunde te Leiden en Levensberichten van afgestorven medeleden* (1921–1922) 1–16, p. 15f.; cf. R.J. Zwi Werblowsky, *The Beaten Track of Science. The Life and Work of J.J.M. de Groot*, Wiesbaden 2002, pp. 115–123.

⁴⁵ Louis H. Jordan, *Comparative Religion. Its Genesis and Growth*, Edinburgh 1905, p. 435.

⁴⁶ For a short history of Sinology in the Netherlands, see L. Blussé, “Of Hewers of Wood and Drawers of Water. Leiden University’s Early Sinologists (1853–1911)”, in: Otterspeer, *Leiden Oriental Connections*, pp. 317–353, and J.J.L. van Duyvendak, “Early Chinese Studies in Holland”, in: *T’oung Pao* 32 (1936) 293–344.

⁴⁷ De Visser, “Levensbericht van prof. dr. J.J.M. de Groot”, p. 3f.

⁴⁸ J.J.M. de Groot, *Les fêtes annuellement célébrées à Emouï (Amoy). Etude concernant la religion populaire des Chinois*, 2 vols, Paris 1886. The French translation differs to some extent from the Dutch original: *Jaarlijksche Feesten en Gebruiken van de Emoy-Chineezzen. Een vergelijkende bijdrage tot de kennis van onze Chineesche medeburgers op Java. Met uitgebreide monographiën van godheden, die te Emoy vereerd worden*, Batavia 1882.

⁴⁹ Cf. De Groot, *The Religious System of China. Its Ancient Forms, Evolution, History and Present Aspect. Manners, Customs and Social Institutions Connected Therewith*, 6 vols, Leiden 1892–1910, vol. I, p. xv. Concerning the relationship with Guimet, see

where a room was named after him. He was a much honoured scholar and received an honorary doctorate from Princeton in 1911. After having turned down proposals to teach at Columbia University (New York) and the University of Berlin, De Groot accepted a most generous offer (an ample salary, membership of the Royal Academy of Sciences, and hardly any teaching obligations) to come to Berlin in 1911. Because of his merits for German sinology and his germanophile attitude during the Great War, he was awarded the *Verdienstkreuz für Kriegshilfe* by Emperor William II.

Having been a colonial officer, De Groot saw no conflict between practical-political and academic interests. In his inaugural lecture he discussed the importance of knowledge of China for the Dutch colonies, “from a political and a scientific point of view”.⁵⁰ The Chinese subjects in the Dutch colony were “the most industrious, peaceful and civilized part of our Oriental fellow citizens”. They made the colonial trade prosper and had an important share in the credit balance of the National Treasury.⁵¹ From a methodological point of view De Groot criticized the old approach, which relied too much on classical Chinese texts. He thought it necessary to study the actual customs and languages as well, in order to see their historical and geographical diversity.⁵² This, one could say, marked the

Werblowsky, *The Beaten Track of Science*, pp. 56ff., who makes use of unedited documents such as De Groot’s diary and correspondence. Guimet funded De Groot’s travels to China, where the latter collected enormous amounts of (religious) objects, which were shipped to the Guimet Museum (first in Lyon, later in Paris) and the Leiden Ethnographical Museum.

⁵⁰ De Groot, *Over het belang der kennis van China voor onze koloniën, uit een politiek en wetenschappelijk oogpunt*, Leiden 1891.

⁵¹ De Groot, *Jaarlyksche Feesten*, p. iii (not in the French edition).

⁵² De Groot, *Les fêtes*, pp. viii–ix: “La méthode dont nous parlons a encore l’inconvénient de ne pas tenir compte des modifications apportées par le temps dans les idées populaires, durant les siècles qui se sont écoulés depuis l’époque des premiers philosophes et des premiers écrivains; elle oublie que toutes ces tribus, tous ces peuples, si nombreux, qui habitent l’immense territoire de l’empire chinois, sont fort loin d’avoir tous les mêmes conceptions religieuses; en un mot, elle généralise trop. En outre, elle part de la supposition tacite, mais fausse, ou en tout cas dénuée de toute preuve, que ce que les philosophes et les auteurs ont écrit n’a pas été seulement l’expression de leurs idées personnelles, mais encore un écho digne de confiance de la pensée nationale. [. . .] Il faudra donc prendre pour point de départ les coutumes et les notions qui existent actuellement de fait, chercher à les comprendre à l’aide d’une connaissance suffisante des langues tant écrites que parlées, s’efforcer de saisir l’enchaînement logique qui relie le tout, et enfin consulter les données que l’on peut recueillir dans les livres chinois et qui sont de nature à jeter du jour sur l’origine et la raison d’être des coutumes et conceptions étudiées”.

introduction of the ethnological (or sociological) point of view in sinology. In this respect his work is valued until the present day,⁵³ although he was also criticised for his extensive use of texts to prove and illustrate a particular point.⁵⁴ According to Maurice Freedman, De Groot “invented a field method for himself” in his research on Amoy.

The book on Amoy is very much concerned with religion.⁵⁵ In the introduction De Groot mentioned, as the most important result in this regard, the proof that euhemerism is the essential basis of Chinese (folk) religion: most of its deities are human beings deified after their death. This finding is the result of the application of the theory of “the eminent English philosopher” Herbert Spencer to Chinese religion.⁵⁶ De Groot was at the time a comparativist and an evolutionist.⁵⁷ Chinese religion is especially important to understand the

⁵³ Maurice Freedman, “On the Sociological Study of Chinese Religion” (1974), in: *The Study of Chinese Religion. Essays by Maurice Freedman*, selected and introduced by G. William Skinner, Stanford 1979, pp. 351–369, 436–439, esp. pp. 355–361; cf. De Josselin de Jong & Vermeulen, “Cultural Anthropology”, p. 290f.

⁵⁴ O. Franke, “Gedächtnisrede des Hrn. Franke auf J.J.M. de Groot”, in: *Sitzungsberichte der Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften. Jahrgang 1923, philosophisch-historische Klasse*, Berlin 1923, pp. cxvii–cxxxvi, p. cxxi: “Für jede Behauptung eine endlose Zahl umfangreicher chinesischer Textstellen heranzubringen, mag für die Erledigung einer Einzelfrage angängig, sogar wünschenswert sein, bei einer Darstellung der gesamten religiösen Vorstellungswelt der Chinesen führt dieser Weg ins Uferlose”.

⁵⁵ On De Groot’s views on religion, see Werblowsky, *The Beaten Track of Science*, esp. chapter 4.

⁵⁶ De Groot, *Les fêtes*, pp. xi–xii: “Notre principale conclusion est que la base essentielle de la religion chinoise est ce que l’on a appelé l’évhémérisme, c’est-à-dire que les divinités sont pour la plupart des hommes divinisés après leur mort. Nous ne nions point qu’à cet évhémérisme [the word is spelled in different ways, ALM] ne s’unisse une certaine dose de naturisme, qui probablement date d’une période déjà relativement avancée de développement; mais les notions naturistes se sont amalgamées avec l’évhémérisme au point de s’y fondre presque complètement, et en tout cas d’être éclipsées par lui. Nous avons donc dû appliquer aux Chinois les théories de l’éminent philosophe anglais Herbert Spencer, qui croit applicable à toutes les religions connues l’explication évhémériste, laquelle, il est vrai, a souvent été contredite, mais que nous ne croyons pas avoir été victorieusement réfutée”.

⁵⁷ De Groot, *Les fêtes*, p. 618f. (cf. *Jaarlijksche Feesten*, p. 492): “Le système religieux des Chinois se recommande tout particulièrement à l’attention par le fait que, sous sa forme actuelle, il renferme encore un grand nombre d’éléments de la plus haute antiquité, qui ont subsisté à travers toutes les vicissitudes d’un nombre de siècles très grand. Toutes les religions sans doute ont un côté archaïque; quelques progrès qu’un peuple réalise dans sa marche vers la civilisation, développant nécessairement aussi ses conceptions religieuses, il restera toujours plus ou moins opiniâtrement attaché pendant longtemps à plusieurs des anciennes formes; mais il n’y a peut-être pas dans le monde une seule nation comparable à celle des Chinois pour le degré de persévérance qu’elle a déployé sous ce rapport. Ce trait de caractère a eu pour

evolution of religion, he wrote, because its oldest forms succeeded in resisting the “demolishing spirit of progress”.⁵⁸ Chinese religion is also a model for religious tolerance, because of its anti-clerical and anti-dogmatical character.⁵⁹ Maurice Freedman comments on this as follows: “The picture painted of China in *Les fêtes* is complimentary (more so in the original Dutch than in the French translation). China is an alternative civilization, having its roots in common with Europe. It is to be compared with Europe, in some respects very favorably. The book expresses anti-Christian, especially anti-Catholic, sentiments, and emphasizes the religious tolerance prevailing in China”.⁶⁰ The favourable view of Chinese tolerance was to change dramatically during De Groot’s later career. In *Sectarianism and Religious Persecution in China* (1903–1904), he argued, probably influenced by the reports about the persecutions of sectarian groups and the Christian missions during the Boxer uprising, that intolerance was part and parcel of the system of imperial control. “If I have been fortunate enough to produce something fit to cure politicians of the erroneous notion that China is a country of religious tolerance, I shall feel amply indemnified for my toil, patience, and loss of time in wading through that pile of Imperial decrees”.⁶¹

De Groot is best known for his monumental work *The Religious System of China*, of which six volumes appeared between 1892 and 1910. Only part of the original programme (some 12–14 volumes

résultat qu’actuellement à peu près toutes les phases de développement traversées par les systèmes religieux, à commencer par les plus infimes, sont représentées en Chine, et que les notions qui y correspondent y vivent côte à côte, dans la plus complète tolérance, non point usées par le temps, condamnées au dépérissement et n’ayant plus, comme chez nous, pour interprètes que des fables et des contes de nourrices; mais au contraire vivaces et vigoureuses, quoique ce soient surtout [619] les basses classes qui y sont attachées. Ainsi, pour citer un exemple parlant, le culte des dieux, venu longtemps après celui des ancêtres et sorti de celui-ci, ne l’a jamais ébranlé; bien plus, le bouddhisme, si envahissant de sa nature, né loin de la Chine, a pu s’y acclimater, mais non pas étouffer ou détruire ce qui y existait. Il s’y est greffé sur l’ancien tronc national, qui s’est trouvé assez vivace pour le nourrir sans que ce fût au détriment des branches plus vieilles”; cf. Werblowsky, *The Beaten Track of Science*, pp. 104–109.

⁵⁸ De Groot, *Jaarlijksche Feesten*, p. 492 (cf. *Les fêtes*, p. 618, which has a much milder formulation).

⁵⁹ Cf. De Groot, *Jaarlijksche Feesten*, pp. 585ff.; *Les fêtes*, pp. 738ff.

⁶⁰ Freedman, “On the Sociological Study of Chinese Religion”, p. 357.

⁶¹ De Groot, *Sectarianism and Religious Persecution in China. A Page in the History of Religions*, 2 vols, Amsterdam 1903–1904, vol. II, p. 565; cf. vol. I, p. 4: “[T]he history of religious persecution in China . . . is almost the history of her religions themselves”.

were scheduled) was carried out. The first part (volumes 1–3) treats the “Disposal of the Dead (Funeral Rites, the Ideas of Resurrection, the Grave)”, and the second, of which the concluding seventh volume never appeared, is titled “On the Soul and Ancestral Worship”. It contains a wealth of data concerning Chinese folk religion that is still useful. The first volume was subsidized by the Dutch East Indies administration and the Deli Company. The work is an attempt “at depicting the Chinese religion as it is really practised by the nation, and at sketching on a broad scale its influence on Domestic and Social Life”.⁶² Never before, De Groot claimed, have the religious practices (as they are actually performed) and ideas and doctrines (which enforce these practices) been researched to such an extent. The work is “the fruit of an intimate contact with the Chinese race for several years”. De Groot stressed the innovative character of his approach.⁶³ As the main sources of his study he mentioned native religious specialists on the one hand, and books and manuscripts he collected on the other, these two sources mutually elucidating each other.⁶⁴ He thought it unworkable to restrict his exposition to religion *stricto sensu*, because in China (“as with semi-civilized peoples in general”) religious practices and ideas directly pervade the social life, political institutions and, to some extent, even the legal system of the nation as such. “Whoever is acquainted with its religion, knows the people”.⁶⁵

⁶² De Groot, *The Religious System of China*, vol. I, p. viii.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, vol. I, p. viii: “The liberality of the Government of the Dutch Indies placed him [De Groot referred to himself in the third person singular] in a position to pursue for years this line of investigation on the Chinese soil, where he lived in close contact with the people, periodically joining their family circles and spending much time in their Convents and Temples”.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, vol. I, p. viii: “Priests of every sect, exorcists, necromancers, men of letters, professors of geomancy, in short, whoever might be presumed to stand in any relation with religion, have been constantly consulted; large numbers of books, tracts and manuscripts have been collected, copied and translated; thus light has been steadily derived from one side to elucidate the other, and *vice-versa*”.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, vol. I, p. x. It is doubtful whether De Groot succeeded in achieving his ambitious aim of showing the influence of religion upon social life in general; cf. the somewhat sour obituary by Franke, “Gedächtnisrede”, p. cxxi: “Vergeblich wird man sich zuweilen fragen, wo und wie in den umfangreichen Texten jener Einfluß [sc., den die Religion auf die sozialen Abstufungen gehabt hat,] sichtbar werden soll”. De Groot also wrote the section on Chinese religion for the third edition of Chantepie de la Saussaye’s manual, *Lehrbuch der Religionsgeschichte*, third edition, 2 vols, Tübingen 1905, vol. I, pp. 57–114; cf. Werblowsky, *The Beaten Track of Science*, p. 81.

De Groot was rather critical of earlier studies of Chinese religion, arguing that they are based on insufficient material and lump together information from different areas and times in an unscientific way.⁶⁶ One may have doubts as to whether the reproach of not doing justice to geographical difference cuts much ice, as De Groot justified his own limitations in this respect by saying: "Observations made in different parts of China having only proved that, throughout this empire, the Customs and Manners in the Social and Religious domains are remarkable for their great uniformity on the more important points, consequently any part of the nation may safely be taken as a type of the whole, and local deviations do not seriously diminish the value of a picture drawn from such a type".⁶⁷ The diachronic dimension, however, is taken into account. Present manners and religious practices and ideas are founded upon the past, and therefore, "a knowledge of Antiquity is necessary". De Groot tried to trace his actual findings back to earlier times, "as they are described in the literary remains of Ancient and Medieval China".⁶⁸ What is nowadays called the "law of the simultaneousness of the unsimultaneous" explains the fact that various stages of religious development can be found at the same time in history. China is a particularly good area for research in this respect, because of the "spirit of conservatism, now proverbial, which scarcely ever allows the nation to drop a custom bequeathed to it by former generations".⁶⁹

Because of this simultaneousness of the unsimultaneous, China is also of great importance to ethnology, sociology and science of religion. To his regret, as it seems, De Groot could not pursue his plans to compare Chinese social and religious customs "with those prevailing elsewhere on the globe". "For many years the author [De

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, vol. I, p. ix: "The method hitherto so generally pursued of wildly grasping about for facts in different sub-divisions of the empire and presenting a compendium thereof as a picture of the whole nation, has rendered no good service to Science. On the contrary, Science has been led astray by being thus entangled in a mass of confused information, much of which had to be cast aside as utterly unfit for use, no one knowing to what part of the country it referred. Suppose for one moment that Spanish, Greek and British customs were grouped together without any reference to the particular country in which a peculiar custom prevails, and presented to the world as a sketch of European life in general, would not every European immediately condemn the work as a ridiculous caricature?"

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, vol. I, p. ix.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, vol. I, p. x.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, vol. I, p. xi.

Groot] regularly noted down in his manuscript whatever parallels he came across in the course of his readings". But to include all this material in his *opus magnum* would have burdened the book too much, and therefore, "all references to other tribes and nations, with the exception of a few brief notes, have been eliminated".⁷⁰ One example of such an exception occurs in his discussion of the Chinese custom of having images of the dead in the funeral procession, where he referred to the practice of the ancient Romans to carry a portrait of the deceased in wax or stone in front of the bier.⁷¹

De Groot's successor to the chair of ethnology, Anton Willem Nieuwenhuis (1864–1953), is not given much credit in the historiography of the field. He may have been an adequate teacher, but "scientifically he was no great success. His numerous publications on animism, spiritism and fetishism . . . indicate his interest in a rather outdated kind of evolutionism".⁷² In this respect, Nieuwenhuis is completely overshadowed by his colleague and later successor, J.P.B. de Josselin de Jong (1886–1964), who came to the field of general anthropology from the study of Dutch language and literature and is regarded as one of the pioneers of anthropological structuralism.⁷³ My impression is that the picture generally drawn of Nieuwenhuis is a bit too negative.⁷⁴ His evolutionism may have been outdated, as theory was probably not his strong point, but he must have been a keen observer. During his field work he gathered a lot of material, as the volumes documenting his travels to Borneo in the years 1894, 1896–1897 and 1898–1900 abundantly show. As a medical doctor he succeeded in gaining the confidence of the indigenous population, the Kayans. In one of his major works, *Straight Across Borneo*, the physical development of the Kayans, their medicines, dress, religion, social organization, agriculture, fishing and hunting, trade and industry, and various tattoos are discussed systematically.⁷⁵

⁷⁰ Ibid., vol. I, p. xi.

⁷¹ Ibid., vol. I, p. 173, note 2; cf. p. 165, note 4; p. 179, note 3.

⁷² De Josselin de Jong & Vermeulen, "Cultural Anthropology", p. 292.

⁷³ Ibid., pp. 292–294, 298ff.; G.W. Locher, *Honderd jaar volkenkunde aan de Leidse universiteit. Herdenkingsrede uitgesproken in het academiegebouw op 31 mei 1978*, Leiden, Instituut voor Culturele Antropologie en Sociologie der Niet-Westerse Volken, s.a. [1978], pp. 19–21.

⁷⁴ Schefold, "Indonesian Studies and Cultural Anthropology in Leiden", pp. 82–85, gives Nieuwenhuis at least some credit.

⁷⁵ A.W. Nieuwenhuis, *In centraal Borneo. Reis van Pontianak naar Samarinda*, 2 vols, Leiden 1900; *Quer durch Borneo. Ergebnisse seiner Reisen in den Jahren 1894, 1896–97*

Because of his good relationship with the priestess Usun, whose grandson he managed to cure, Nieuwenhuis was able to collect information on religious ideas and practices within the Kayan community. Usun also provided him with a collection of ethnographic material. He even succeeded in taking photographs of the rituals performed during the sowing festival. He also noticed differences between various groups, and developments over time.⁷⁶ During his long career, Nieuwenhuis paid much attention to religion and dealt in some detail with topics such as animism, magic, and totemism.⁷⁷ In one of his more popular contributions, *Animism, Spiritism, and Fetishism, with the Peoples of the Dutch Indies Archipelago* (1911),⁷⁸ a scheme of evolutionary, religious development can hardly be overlooked. Very pervasive in this booklet is the contrast between modern, Western civilization (with its rational practices) and the old animistic “people’s religion and philosophy”, which sees the whole world inhabited by spirits. This outdated animistic view, Nieuwenhuis argues, leads to a lack of insight into reality and makes people powerless with regard to the milieu they are living in. The empowerment primitive man derives from the animistic view is based on nothing, according to Nieuwenhuis, but it is important for us (scholars, colonial officers, missionaries, etc.) to take note of their convictions, in order to be able to enforce social and religious improvement in a sensible and workable manner.

The above sketch of the work of Veth, Wilken, De Groot, and Nieuwenhuis shows the importance of the subject of religion in the emerging field of ethnology. These four scholars—all occupants of the Leiden chair of “linguistics, literature, geography and ethnology of the East-Indian archipelago”—devoted the main part of their work to this colony (with the exception of De Groot, who focused on China and its religion). Apparently, other Dutch colonies, such as Surinam (Dutch Guiana), aroused less interest. The predominance of the Dutch East Indies is also evident in the leading journal in

und 1898–1900, unter Mitarbeit von Dr. M. Nieuwenhuis-von Üxküll-Güldenbrandt, 2 vols, Leiden 1904–1907; cf. Jurrien van Goor, “A.W. Nieuwenhuis (1864–1953). Explorer of Central Borneo”, in: Victor T. King (ed.), *Explorers of South-East Asia. Six Lives*, Oxford etc. 1995, pp. 229–280, p. 253.

⁷⁶ This paragraph is based on Van Goor, “A.W. Nieuwenhuis”, pp. 252–254.

⁷⁷ Cf. the bibliography in J. Waardenburg, *Classical Approaches to the Study of Religion. Aims, Methods and Theories of Research*, 2 vols, Den Haag 1973–1974, vol. II, p. 190f.

⁷⁸ Nieuwenhuis, *Animisme, spiritisme en fetichisme onder de volken van den Nederlandsch-Indischen archipel* (Groote godsdiensten), Baarn 1911.

the field of ethnology, *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* (*Contributions to Linguistics, Geography and Ethnology*).⁷⁹ Another example is the work of the autodidact H.A. Hien on the Javanese spirit world. Hien collected his observations in four volumes, which went to as many as five reprints.⁸⁰

3. *Surveys of Colonial Texts*

The previous section illustrated not only that early Dutch ethnology was very much concerned with the Dutch East Indies,⁸¹ but also that ample attention was devoted to religion. It is difficult to weigh this finding, even from a purely quantitative point of view, but one way is to research how religion was present and represented in contemporary colonial literature as such. Therefore, we will take a brief look at two early repertories of colonial literature, the first initiated by J.C. Hooykaas and the second by A. Hartmann (covering the years 1866–1893).⁸² Whereas Hartmann dealt with the literature on the Dutch colonies, Hooykaas wanted to present a survey of literature on the European colonies in general “east of the Cape [Cape of Good Hope]” in miscellaneous works and journals published between 1595 and 1865 in the Netherlands and its overseas territories.⁸³ The scope was not restricted to the Dutch East Indies; Hooykaas’

⁷⁹ Platenkamp & Prager, “A Mirror of Paradigms”.

⁸⁰ H.A. van Hien, *De Javaansche geestenwereld en de betrekking, die tusschen de geesten en de zinnelijke wereld bestaat, verduidelijkt door petangan’s of tellingen, bij de Javanen in gebruik* = *Soerat petangannya orang Djawa menjatakan segala roepa itoengan boewat menjari keslametan*, 4 vols, Semarang (van Dorp & Co.) 1896. We have no precise biographical data for Hien; cf. De Josselin de Jong & Vermeulen, “Cultural Anthropology”, p. 295f.; see also the biographies collected in H.J.M. Maier & A. Teeuw (eds), *Honderd jaar studie van Indonesië 1850–1950. Levensbeschrijvingen van twaalf Nederlandse onderzoekers*, Den Haag 1976.

⁸¹ It should be kept in mind that the Dutch East Indies were an internationally recognized field of ethnographical research. Consequently, foreign scholars were interested in this research, even if it was written in Dutch; cf. the following report: H.H. Juynboll, “Religionen der Naturvölker: Indonesien”, in: *Archiv für Religionswissenschaft* 9 (1906) 262–275, 429–444.

⁸² A. Hartmann, *Repertorium op de literatuur betreffende de Nederlandsche Koloniën, voorzover zij verspreid is in tijdschriften en mengelwerken, I. Oost-Indië (1866–1893), II. West-Indië (1840–1893)*, ’s-Gravenhage 1895; cf. Dorotheë Buur, *Alfabetisch persoonsnamenregister, behorende bij A. Hartmann’s “Repertorium op de literatuur betreffende de Nederlandsche koloniën, voor zoover zij verspreid is in tijdschriften en mengelwerken”, I. Oost-Indië 1866–1893, II. West-Indië 1840–1893*, Leiden (KITLV) 1974.

⁸³ [Hooykaas], *Repertorium op de koloniale literatuur, of systematische inhoudsopgaaf van*

repertory aimed at coverage of oriental studies in general. The survey was divided into four parts: (1) country, (2) people, (3) government, and (4) science. The second category comprised, among other subjects, a section called “anthropology” (*anthropologie*) which was again subdivided into “races” and “skulls”. Contributions on physical characteristics were listed here. The fourth part contained a Science of Religion section (*godsdienswetenschap*), next to Education, Arts and Sciences, History, and Printing Press.

The Hooykaas inventory as such comprised more than 21,000 entries, numbered consecutively. The Science of Religion section listed 1,200 items (most stemmed from the nineteenth century), whereas the parallel sections on Education and Arts & Sciences contained 349 and 1,505 items, respectively. Neither the division nor the labels of the categories were explained.⁸⁴ This large number can at least be partly explained by the fact that entries dealing with “Mission and Christianity” (some 750) were also listed here. The Science of Religion section was subdivided as follows:

A. *Non-Christian Religion*

Pagans and Hindus	16064–16144
Buddhists, Zealotry, Ceremonies [Rites], Temples & Parsis	16145–16287
Jews	16288–16289
Muhammedans	16290–16322
[Muhammedan] Superstition, Ceremonies [Rites], Pilgrims, and Priests	16323–16365

hetgeen voorkomt over de koloniën (beoosten de Kaap), in mengelwerken en tijdschriften, van 1595 tot 1865 uitgegeven in Nederland en zijne overzeesche bezittingen, door J.C. Hooykaas, ter perse bezorgd door W.N. du Rieu, 2 vols, Amsterdam 1877–1880. Much of the actual work was done by Du Rieu.

⁸⁴ Du Rieu complained about the “traditional” division he had found in Hooykaas’ papers and the fact that items were noted under different headings. “How far he [Hooykaas] went in repeating titles [i.e. listing the same item under different headings], I could not research” (Du Rieu’s Preface, vol. II, p. ix). Because of shortage of time and money (the project was funded by Hooykaas’ widow) only a short index on the categories used to divide the items was added (vol. II, pp. 745–751); cf. now Dorothee Buur, *Alfabetisch persoonsnamenregister, behorende bij J.C. Hooykaas’ “Repertorium op de koloniale literatuur in mengelwerken en tijdschriften van 1595–1865 uitgegeven”*, met een index op schepen, Leiden (KITLV) 1981.

B. *Christian Religion*

1. Mission and Christianity	16366–17120
2. Bible Societies	17121–17150
Spread of the Bible, [small] Treatises	17151–17183

I will limit myself to just a few comments on this division. The subsection “Pagans and Hindus” is mainly devoted to Hindu religion in the British East Indies and, to a lesser degree, in the Dutch East Indies. In addition to items on Japanese and Chinese religions, this section also lists several contributions on “superstition” or tribal religion in the Dutch East Indies, Australia, and Africa, which were probably thought to represent the “pagan” heading. Besides several articles of a more general kind, the subsections on Islam mainly contain contributions on the Dutch East Indies. The majority of the items consists of translations, anonymous publications, and reports by missionaries and colonial officers.⁸⁵

In this respect there is a marked difference with Hartmann’s repertory of literature on the Dutch Colonies, in which we encounter academic scholars such as C.P. Tiele, J.S. Speijer, A.W.T. Juynboll, C. Snouck Hurgronje, L.W.C. van den Berg, M.J. de Goeje, P.J. Veth, and G.A. Wilken. To some extent this difference may be explained by other selection criteria (which are not transparent, to say the least), but apparently the field of colonial studies in these years (1866–1893) became more and more occupied by academics. The West Indies section of the Repertory is small. Some 25 pages are devoted to Surinam (against more than 400 pages to the Indonesian archipelago), which mention no contributions on religion. The Science of Religion category is completely missing. Items concerning religion are mainly to be found under the headings Anthropology/Ethnography and Oriental Religions (in the part on the Dutch East Indies). The introduction of Anthropology/Ethnography as a separate heading is doubtless indicative of the rise of this field of study within academia. However, the division was not very strict. Topics listed in juxtaposed subheadings (Social and Moral Condition, Slavery, and

⁸⁵ In the division “native law” (13923–134008), which was part of the category Government, a few contributions concerning religion can also be found.

Languages and Literature) could in principle have been accommodated equally well under Anthropology/Ethnography. Contributions on indigenous (religious) institutions, ceremonies, practices, etcetera, were listed indiscriminately under all these headings. The subsection on Oriental Religions dealt almost exclusively with Islam, predominantly in the Dutch East Indies.

What is to be learnt from the way in which religion is treated in these repertories? To begin with, it has to be borne in mind that these are repertories on the colonies and not surveys of whole areas of research, and that they were prepared by administrators of the Dutch Colonial Office. The various (sub)classifications were not primarily made from a scholarly point of view, which, however, does not mean that scholarly views did not play a role. The inclusion of science of religion in the Hooykaas Repertory should probably be explained by the fact that this subject had just been established within the Dutch universities. Yet, for the period treated by Hooykaas this label is an anachronism. In general, the two repertories confirm the impression that religion is seen as an integral part of the colonial cultures. The connection between the study of indigenous religion and mission in the Hooykaas repertory is not typical: they were mostly seen as two clearly separate (though related) areas. The comparison of the two surveys shows the tightening grip of academic scholars on the study of foreign religions (and cultures). The overseas possessions did stimulate research on the colonial cultures and religions, in particular on Islam in the Dutch East Indies. Of course, research on Islam in the Netherlands was more than the study of Indonesian Islam. In the field of Oriental or Arabic Studies, for instance, R.P.A. Dozy had written on religious subjects.⁸⁶ The Dutch have a long tradition of the study of Oriental languages and cultures (including religions).⁸⁷

⁸⁶ Dozy, *Histoire des Musulmans d'Espagne jusqu'à la conquête de l'Andalousie par les Almoravides (711–1110)*, 4 vols, Leiden 1861; translated as *Spanish Islam. A History of the Moslems in Spain*, with a biographical introduction and additional notes by Francis Griffin Stokes, London 1913; *Het Islamisme*, Haarlem 1863; *De Israëlieten te Mekka, van Davids tijd tot in de vijfde eeuw onzer tijdrekening*, Haarlem 1864; translated as *Die Israeliten zu Mekka von Davids Zeit bis in's fünfte Jahrhundert unsrer Zeitrechnung. Ein Beitrag zur alttestamentlichen Kritik und zur Erforschung des Ursprungs des Islams*, Leipzig-Haarlem 1864; *Oratio de causis cur Mohammedanorum cultura et humanitas prae ea quae Christianorum est immunita et corrupta sit*, Leiden 1869; on Dozy, see also chapter III.2 above.

⁸⁷ Cf. Drewes, "Oriental Studies in the Netherlands"; J. Brugman & F. Schröder,

The study of indigenous religion and Islam also played a role in the schooling of colonial civil servants, as given by training institutes in Batavia, Breda, Delft and Leiden. The history of these institutes is rather complex, as there was a permanent struggle about which institute had the highest rank and how the financial means were to be distributed.⁸⁸ From 1843 till 1900 the Royal Academy of Civil Engineers in Delft was the most important education centre of civil servants for the East Indies. Several teachers—some of them getting the same or an even higher salary as university professors—taught geography, languages and ethnography and the institutions of Islamic law. Manuals contained vast amounts of facts, and Salomon Keyzer (1823–1868), teaching at the Academy in Delft, had no scruples about re-issuing an updated and condensed version of an early eighteenth century handbook.⁸⁹ Such utterly dry overviews also provided information about religious subjects. As far as I can see, scholars attached to colonial institutes did not pay much attention to religion as such, although Keyzer supervised a translation of the Qu’ran and edited a monograph on the pilgrimage from the Dutch East Indies to Mecca.⁹⁰ Keyzer’s special teaching assignment was “Muhammadan

Arabic Studies in the Netherlands, Leiden 1979; Jan Nat, *De studie van de oostersche talen in Nederland in de 18e en de 19e eeuw*, Purmerend 1979; P.A.M. Boele van Hensbroek, *De beoefening der oostersche talen in Nederland en zijne overzeesche bezittingen 1800–1874. Bibliographisch overzicht*, Leiden 1875.

⁸⁸ Cf. De Josselin de Jong & Vermeulen, “Cultural Anthropology”, pp. 280–286; Fasseur, *De Indologen*.

⁸⁹ S. Keyzer, *François Valentijn’s Oud en Nieuw Oost-Indiën*. Met aanteekeningen, volledige inhoudsregisters, chronologische lijsten enz. uitgegeven door mr. S. Keyzer, 3 vols, Den Haag 1856–1858 (second edition: Amsterdam 1862); cf. F. Valentijn, *Oud en Nieuw Oost-Indiën, vervattende een naaukeurige en uitvoerige verhandeling van Nederlands mogentheid in die gewesten*, 5 vols, Dordrecht–Amsterdam 1724–1726. Other examples of encyclopaedic handbooks are: P.P. Roorda van Eysinga, *Handboek der land- en volkenkunde, geschied-, taal-, aardrijks- en staatskunde van Nederlandsch Indië*, 3 vols, Amsterdam 1841–1850; J.J. de Hollander, *Handleiding bij de beoefening der land- en volkenkunde van Nederlandsch Oost-Indië, voor de cadetten, bestemd voor den dienst in die gewesten*, Breda 1874 (890 pages; first edition 1861–1864).

⁹⁰ *De Koran, voorafgegaan door het leven van Mahomet, eene inleiding omtrent de godsdienstgebruiken der Mahomedanen, enz.* Met ophelderende aanmerkingen en historische aantekeningen van M. Kasimirski (tolk bij het Fransch Gezantschap aan het hof van Perzië), dr. L. Ullmann (te Crefeld), dr. G. Weil (bibliothecaris aan de Universiteit te Heidelberg, lid van het Genootschap voor Aziatische Letterkunde te Parijs) en R. Sale (professor aan de Universiteit te Oxford), bij het Nederlandsche publiek ingeleid door eene voorrede van dr. S. Keyzer (leraar in het Mahomedaansche recht aan de Koninklijke Academie te Delft), Haarlem 1860; Keyzer, *De bedevaart der inlanders naar Mekka. Volledige beschrijving van alles wat op de Bedevaart en de Bedevaart-gangers uit Nederlandsch-Indië betrekking heeft*, Leiden 1871. Another example is G.K. Niemann,

law". The subject was deemed relevant for colonial officers. From the very start in 1843 it was taught at the Academy in Delft, first by the theologian and oriental scholar A.A. Meursinge (1812–1850) and after Keyzer's death by A.W.T. Juynboll (1834–1887) and L.W.C. van den Berg (1834–1887).⁹¹ By the Higher Education Act of 1876 "Muhammadan law and the other folk institutions and practices in the Dutch East Indies" was established as an academic field within the Faculty of Law of the University of Leiden.⁹² It was very much seen as a subject within the study of law, which did not prevent some scholars from also paying attention to the religious aspects and backgrounds involved.

Keyzer concentrated on Islamic law as such, and claimed that the changes it underwent in the Dutch East Indies had to be treated separately. He was criticized for this approach, because in this way allegedly no justice was done to actual indigenous law.⁹³ At the end of the nineteenth century the term *adatrecht* (*adat* law) was introduced to distinguish indigenous, customary law from Islamic law. According to its inventor, the Arabist and Islamic scholar Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje (1857–1936), who was especially famous for his book on Mecca,⁹⁴ *adat* was the "mistress" and Islamic law the "obedient

Inleiding tot de kennis van de Islam ook met betrekking tot den Indischen Archipel, Rotterdam 1861. Niemann (1823–1905) became professor in Delft in 1873; before that time, he had been a lecturer at the Dutch Missionary Society in Rotterdam.

⁹¹ On early Dutch scholarship on Islamic law, see C. van Vollenhoven, *De ontdekking van het adatrecht*, Leiden 1928, pp. 67–72, 110f., and J. Brugman, "Snouck Hurgronje's Study of Islamic Law", in: Otterspeer, *Leiden Oriental Connections*, pp. 82–93. Brugman mentions A.F.E. Testa, *Specimen juris inaugurele de conjugii jure Moslemico*, Leiden 1843, and Meursinge, *Handboek van het Mohammedaansche regt in de Maleische taal, naar oorspronkelijke, Maleische en Arabische, werken van Mohammedaansche regtsgeleerden*, Amsterdam 1844, among the first scholarly attempts in this field. Brugman is critical of this type of work and of Keyzer in particular, "whose knowledge of Arabic must have been rather poor, as appears from the many mistakes in his writings. Keyzer's works, such as his *Handboek voor het Mohammedaansche Regt* (1853), and *Het Mohammedaansche Strafrecht naar Arabische, Javaansche en Maleische Bronnen* (Muhammedan Penal Law according to Arabic, Javanese and Malay Sources, in two volumes, 1857) were mainly translations or adaptations of Malay and Javanese translations of well-known Arabic texts" (83).

⁹² Its first occupant was P.A. van der Lith (1844–1901), who was succeeded by C. van Vollenhoven (1874–1933) in 1901.

⁹³ Fasseur, *De Indologen*, p. 151.

⁹⁴ C. Snouck Hurgronje, *Mekka*, 2 vols, 's-Gravenhage 1888–1889; *Bilder aus Mekka*. Mit kurzem erläuterndem Text von C. Snouck Hurgronje, Leiden 1889; English translation of the second volume: *Mekka in the Latter Part of the Nineteenth Century. Daily Life, Customs and Learning, the Moslems of the East-Indian Archipelago*, Leiden–London 1931; on Snouck, see Brugman, "Snouck Hurgronje's Study", and P.Sj. van Koningsveld,

slave".⁹⁵ In daily life the allegedly non-Islamic, unwritten rules of *adat* applied.⁹⁶ Eventually, a separate field called *adat studies* came into being, which was established by the Leiden law scholar Cornelis van Vollenhoven (1874–1933), who made it into a research field in its own right and described its history in a booklet *The Discovery of Adat Law*.⁹⁷ Although Van Vollenhoven praised the work of scholars such as Wilken and the jurist F.D.E. van Ossenbruggen (1869–1950),⁹⁸ in this view the study of *adat* law had to be clearly demarcated from ethnology. Van Vollenhoven focused strongly on "legal rules and institutions abstracted from their social and cultural context".⁹⁹ The developments indicated above led to a fragmentation of the study of ethnology, Islam and customary law, which is regretted by many present-day scholars.¹⁰⁰

Both this fragmentation and the fact that ethnology was in an embryonic phase make it difficult to outline the precise contribution of "ethnologists" to the study of religion. In the mid-nineteenth century it was not conceived as a distinct discipline, but seen as closely connected with geography. Ethnological collections were housed in zoological gardens.¹⁰¹ During the last three decades of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth, ethnologists had to struggle to demarcate their own discipline. We have seen that the interest in the colonies, and especially in the Dutch East Indies, was an

Snouck Hurgronje en de Islam. Acht artikelen over leven en werk van een orientalist uit het koloniale tijdperk, Leiden: Documentatiebureau Islam-Christendom, 1988.

⁹⁵ Snouck Hurgronje, *De Atjehers* (uitgegeven op last van de regering), 2 vols, Batavia–Leiden, 1893–1894, vol. I, p. 157.

⁹⁶ Cf. Albert Trouwborst, "Anthropology, the Study of Islam, and Adat Law in The Netherlands and the Netherlands Indies, 1920–1950", in: Vermeulen & Kommers, *Tales from Academia*, vol. II, pp. 673–694, p. 682.

⁹⁷ C. van Vollenhoven, *De ontdekking van het adatrecht*, Leiden 1928; on Van Vollenhoven, see G. van den Steenhoven, Art. "Vollenhoven, Cornelis van", in: *Biografisch Woordenboek van Nederland* (ed. by J. Charité), vol. I, 's-Gravenhage 1979, pp. 625–627; cf. J.F. Holleman (ed.), *Van Vollenhoven on Indonesian Adat Law*, The Hague 1981.

⁹⁸ Van Ossenbruggen's work would nowadays be characterized as a form of forensic anthropology; cf. P.E. de Josselin de Jong (ed.), *Structural Anthropology in the Netherlands. A Reader*, second edition, s.l. (KITLV), 1983, p. 29f.

⁹⁹ Trouwborst, "Anthropology, the Study of Islam, and Adat Law", p. 682.

¹⁰⁰ Léon Buskens & Jean Kommers, "The Delayed Reception of Colonial Studies about Adat Law and Islamic Law in Dutch Anthropology", in: Vermeulen & Kommers, *Tales from Academia*, vol. II, pp. 733–755.

¹⁰¹ C. van Dijk, "Tussen koloniale handel en wetenschap. De volkenkundige musea in Nederland in de negentiende eeuw", in: *Tijdschrift voor Geschiedenis* 105 (1992) 346–366, p. 349.

important impetus to the institutionalization of ethnology in the university system, but later the colonial focus was seen as a disadvantage and the “ethnologists” did their best to broaden their scope. The field work, which is nowadays seen as the distinctive trait of cultural anthropologists, was in the early days done by students from varying backgrounds. Civil servants (Wilken), government interpreters (De Groot), curators of museums, lawyers, and missionaries contributed to it.

4. *Missionaries and Museums*

This section is a further exercise in contextualization. Firstly, I will discuss the contribution of missionaries to ethnological research and, secondly, I will deal with the role of—ethnological—museums in preserving the materials that were collected by missionaries, among others. I will discuss these ethnological *loci* in a somewhat eclectic fashion.

Nicolaus Adriani (1865–1926) and Albertus Christiaan Kruyt (1869–1949) were doubtless two of the most influential Dutch missionaries in the East Indies, and were also known for their ethnological work. They collaborated closely in Central Celebes, and after Adriani’s death Kruyt completed the translation of the New Testament in the Bare’e language. Kruyt lived long enough to see the official institutionalization of the Christian Church of Central Celebes in 1947.¹⁰² In close cooperation, both men developed a new missionary method. Christianization had to be carried out on the basis of a sound knowledge of the indigenous peoples and their religions, and should not imply Europeanization. The way of life and social patterns of the natives had to be kept intact as much as possible. As Kruyt wrote:

From the very start the Mission adopted a policy of leaving the people to the old ways and customs as much as possible so that they felt at ease. All customs which did not actually come into conflict with the principles of Christianity, were not interfered with. Their national dances which form practically the only recreation of these people, were not forbidden in the conviction that as soon as the spirit of Christianity

¹⁰² I.H. Enklaar, “Kruyt, Albertus Christiaan”, in: BLGNP, vol. I, Kampen 1978, pp. 111–113, W.H. Rassers, “Herdenking van Albertus Christiaan Kruyt”, in: *Jaarboek der Koninklijke Nederlandsche Akademie van Wetenschappen* 1948–1949, pp. 161–170.

has penetrated more deeply into their minds, the sinful features which often accompany national amusements will also disappear. Marriage, which in the old community was a civil affair, was also left unaltered. The Mission exercises a certain amount of influence on the moral side of the marriage by consecrating it and this can be refused in cases of couples who, owing to immorality, do not come into consideration. However, this refusal has nothing to do with the actual legal marriage ceremony performed by the headman.¹⁰³

Respect for the natives and their customs and religious convictions was the underlying principle of Kruyt's and Adriani's missionary work. It is important to learn and speak the indigenous language (which has to be christianized in a later phase)¹⁰⁴ and not to attack basic convictions. Parts of the "animistic" religion can be incorporated into Christianity.¹⁰⁵ As to be expected, this kind of approach was not appreciated by everyone and was even severely attacked.¹⁰⁶ On the other hand, however, it is evident that the two men did not aim at only superficial conversions. The Gospel had to take root in the personal lives of the indigenous population. The only way to accomplish this is "to force the native to look at the motives" of the religious convictions of the missionary. There has to be an intimate contact between missionaries and natives.¹⁰⁷ This what I would call "psychological" approach not only shows a basic form of respect for the other person (which does not preclude, of course, feelings of religious and cultural superiority), but also betrays the missionaries' view of what Christian religion really is about. Apart from the outward moral aspects, it is essentially located in the inner life of the believers. Even the "sinful" features of practices and festivals will eventually disappear, if some sort of inner transformation has taken place. In this way, Christianity is perceived as a moral and civilizing force that operates in the inner sphere.¹⁰⁸ By this description I do not

¹⁰³ Kruyt, "The Influence of Western Civilisation on the Inhabitants of Poso (Central Celebes)", in: B. Schrieke (ed.), *The Effect of Western Influence on Native Civilisations in the Malay Archipelago*, Batavia 1913, pp. 1-9, p. 7f.

¹⁰⁴ Cf. Adriani, "Het christianiseren eener taal" (1916), in: Adriani, *Verzamelde Geschriften*, 3 vols, Haarlem 1932, vol. II, pp. 112-132.

¹⁰⁵ Cf. Adriani, *Het animistisch christendom als godsdienst* (1919), in: *Verzamelde Geschriften*, vol. II, pp. 283-353, here pp. 333ff.

¹⁰⁶ K.J. Brouwer, *Dr A.C. Kruyt. Dientaar der Toradja's*, Den Haag 1951, p. 91f.

¹⁰⁷ H. Kraemer, *Dr N. Adriani. Schets van leven en arbeid*, Amsterdam 1929, p. 61.

¹⁰⁸ Cf. Peter van Rooden, *Religieuze Regimes. Over godsdienst en maatschappij in Nederland, 1570-1990*, Amsterdam 1996, pp. 66ff., who gives an analysis of the reports and

intend to suggest that mission work as practised by Kruyt and Adriani was some sort of *herrschaftsfreie Kommunikation*. Disciplinary practices also formed part of it (remember the phrase about “forcing” the native to look at the missionary’s motives), but essentially mission was seen as aiming at an *inner* transformation of the natives, which can not be brought about by force *per se*.

Adriani began his booklet on animistic paganism as religion with a discussion of the “seriousness of paganism”, and concluded that if we study pagan peoples we can learn to love them.¹⁰⁹ Adriani and Kruyt were serious scholars (both were elected members of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences), and they left us with a substantial scholarly oeuvre. Adriani devoted most of his energy (he is described as a man with a weak health) to the study of the languages and literatures of the East Indian archipelago, but also wrote some articles and booklets on ethnological topics. Besides the more popular booklet on animistic paganism and articles about the relationship between natives and European missionaries and colonial officers, his output did not include many strictly scholarly articles about religion. The best-known exception is probably his treatise on the Toradja woman as priestess.¹¹⁰

Adriani and Kruyt became internationally famous for their joint multi-volume publication on the Toradjas of Central Celebes.¹¹¹ Adriani was largely responsible for the description of the language (Bare’e) of the Toradjas, and Kruyt for the more strictly ethnological parts, including observations on indigenous religion and Muhammedanism.¹¹² For the study of religion Kruyt was, no doubt, the most

the journal of the main Dutch Protestant missionary society, the *Nederlands Zendeling Genootschap* (founded in 1797), and argues that “Christianity is depicted [here] as a moral force that transforms the public, societal world by operating in the private sphere” (66); cf. Van Rooden, “Nineteenth-Century Representation of Missionary Conversion and the Transformation of Western Christianity”, in: Peter van der Veer (ed.), *Conversion to Modernities. The Globalization of Christianity*, New York–London 1996, pp. 65–87.

¹⁰⁹ Adriani, *Het animistisch christendom*.

¹¹⁰ Adriani, *De Toradjasche vrouw als priesteres* (1917), in: *Verzamelde Geschriften*, 3 vols, Haarlem, 1932, vol. II, pp. 190–215; on Adriani, see Ph. S. Ronkel, “Over den wetenschappelijken arbeid van N. Adriani”, in: *Jaarboek der Koninklijke Nederlandsche Akademie van Wetenschappen* 1926–1927, pp. 1–29.

¹¹¹ Adriani & Kruyt, *De Bare’e-sprekende Toradja’s van Midden-Celebes*, 3 vols, Batavia 1912–1914.

¹¹² Cf. Adriani & Kruyt, *De Bare’e-sprekende Toradja’s*, vol. I, pp. 245–393. C. Snouck Hurgronje gave advice on the section about Muhammedanism, and S.R. Steinmetz commented on the sixth and eighth chapters (“population” and “concepts of law”).

important of the two friends. It is especially his work on Indonesian animism that lives on in historiography, because of the emphasis he laid on two different concepts of the soul that had to be carefully distinguished from each other. The first concept concerns the belief in the continuation of spiritual man after death, the independent survival of the soul in afterlife. This veneration of the soul is, according to Kruyt, best called *spiritism*, as distinct from animism proper. The second concept concerns the belief in a "soul" which plays a role in everyday life and is supposed to animate the whole of nature (in this case the term *animism* should be used). To clarify this second phenomenon, Kruyt referred to the work of the British scholar W.W. Skeat on *Malay Magic*: "The root idea seems to be an all pervading Animism, involving a certain common vital principle (*Šemangat*) in Man and Nature, which, for want of a more suitable word, has been here called the Soul. The application of this general theory of the universe to the requirements of the individual man constitutes the Magic Art, which, as conceived by the Malays, may be said to consist of the methods by which this Soul, whether in gods, men, animals, vegetables, minerals, or what not, may be influenced, captured, subdued, or in some way made subject to the will of the magician".¹¹³ Because this soul is "a fine, ethereal substance, which animates the whole nature", Kruyt, taking up a suggestion made by P.D. Chantepie de la Saussaye, proposed to name it "soul-substance" (*zielestof*).¹¹⁴ This principle is individualized in only a weak sense, and Kruyt therefore rejected the view that the origin of this concept can be found in the human sense of being a unique, individual person. Furthermore, Kruyt pointed to the influence of Christianity and Muhammedanism on pagan conceptions, transforming the more or less impersonal soul-substance into a personal being.¹¹⁵

The anthropologists Van Baal and Van Beek have taken Kruyt to task for the—in their view unwarranted—introduction of this concept. In their *Symbols for Communication* they devote some space to Kruyt's views, not because of their "intrinsic value", "but because the misconceptions involved are symptomatic of a widely spread and

¹¹³ Kruyt, *Het Animisme in den Indischen Archipel*, 's-Gravenhage 1906, p. 1f.; cf. W.W. Skeat, *Malay Magic being an Introduction to the Folklore and Popular Religion of the Malay Peninsula*, London-New York 1900, p. 579.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

persistent leaning toward home-brewn rationalist interpretations”.¹¹⁶ Kruyt later replaced the concept of “soul-substance” by that of a generic magical power pervading the whole of primitive society, and gave an astonishing number of examples of the belief in such a power (*mana* or *measa* [“bringing calamity”], as the Toradja term goes).¹¹⁷ This shift again met with devastating criticism from Van Baal and Van Beek.¹¹⁸ Kruyt made this adjustment (replacing the animistic by the “dynamic” or “pre-animistic” explanation of Toradja religion) under the influence of the work of F.D.E. van Ossenbruggen (1869–1950), who worked as a barrister in the Dutch East Indies and was convinced that the studies of *adatrecht* could only be fruitfully pursued if the social, religious, and economic context was taken into account.¹¹⁹

The influence of the scholarly work of missionaries such as Adriani and Kruyt was not limited to the scientific community. They wrote numerous popular books and articles to inform the people at home, not only about the progress of Christianization, but also about the natives and their way of life. Even a strictly scholarly book such as Kruyt’s major study on animism in the East Indies was used—be it in a selective and abridged form—in missionary study groups.¹²⁰ This is all the more noticeable because Kruyt had tried to give an objective account and to leave his own evaluations aside. Some of the described practices and beliefs, however, may have amazed readers

¹¹⁶ J. van Baal & W.E.A. van Beek, *Symbols for Communication. An Introduction to the Anthropological Study of Religion*, second edition, Assen 1985, p. 72.

¹¹⁷ Kruyt, “Measa. Eene bijdrage tot het dynamisme der Bare’e-sprekende Toradja’s en enkele omwonende volken”, in: *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch-Indië* 74 (1918) 233–260, 75 (1919) 36–133, and 76 (1920) 1–116.

¹¹⁸ Van Baal & Van Beek, *Symbols for Communication*, p. 74: “Mana, presented by Marett as the product of a notion of awe, a term covering the manifestations of mysterious or supernatural power . . ., is here turned into an energy subject to rationally calculated manipulation. . . . In fact the doctrine [of dynamism, ALM] is hardly more than a simple, heuristic principle applied by rationalistic westerners to explain in their own terms what is unintelligible to them in the behaviour of primitive people”.

¹¹⁹ F.D.E. van Ossenbruggen, “Het primitieve denken, zoals dit zich uit voornamelijk in pukkengebruiken op Java en elders”, in: *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch-Indië* 71 (1916) 1–370; on Van Ossenbruggen, see P.E. de Josselin de Jong (ed.), *Structural Anthropology in the Netherlands. A Reader*, second edition, Dordrecht 1983, pp. 30–31.

¹²⁰ Kruyt also wrote a popular booklet on the subject, in which he again gave a balanced and non-evaluative account of animism, to be used for the instruction of future missionaries: *Het Animisme der Indonesiërs*, [not for sale], s.l. [Nederlandsche Zendingschool], s.a. [1906].

and, in this way, contributed to a sense of moral and religious superiority. But Kruyt did not ridicule the natives. His detached exposition is probably the reason why, in the preface, he saw himself “compelled” to deny that Christianity could be considered to be a later development from this “nature religion”. To avoid any misunderstanding concerning his own convictions, he firmly stated: “For me Christianity is the revelation of God”.¹²¹

Parts of Kruyt’s study were incorporated in a Dutch book on animism and Christianity, which was used to instruct lay people about mission and the indigenous religion in the Dutch East Indies. The editor and compiler of this volume explained that the original plan was to bring out a popular Dutch edition of Johannes Warneck’s “masterpiece” *Vital Powers of the Gospel*.¹²² However, the Council for Mission Studies came to the conclusion that in this way insufficient space would be devoted to the description of animistic ideas. Therefore, it was decided to include material from Kruyt’s study. Both men worked as missionaries in the East Indies and knew each other well. Warneck’s book was much more focused on the progress of Christian mission and emphasized the “darkness of a world alienated from God”. Only Jesus’ death on the cross—Warneck argued—can show the world God’s grace, which makes enemies into children of God. The editor’s preface (in both German and Dutch) was written in the same vein.¹²³ A leaflet with questions to be answered by the participants in the study groups and a short manual with instructions for the teachers were brought out separately. The participants were urged to ask themselves if they spent enough money on the missions, and were expected to discuss “the deliverance from the Satanic power of paganism and the restoration of the community with God”.¹²⁴

¹²¹ Kruyt, *Het Animisme in den Indischen Archipel*, p. ix.

¹²² Joh. Warneck, *Die Lebenskräfte des Evangeliums. Missionserfahrungen innerhalb des animistischen Heidentums*, second edition, Berlin 1908. Johannes Warneck (1867–1944) was the son of the famous “founder of German mission studies”, Gustave Warneck (1834–1910). After working as a missionary on Sumatra he became director of the *Rheinische Missionsgesellschaft*.

¹²³ A. Winckel, *Animisme en Christendom (Het heidendom der natuurvölker)*, bewerkt naar Dr. Joh. Warneck, *Die Lebenskräfte des Evangeliums, u.s.w.*—A.C. Kruyt, *Het animisme in den Indischen Archipel, en andere bronnen*, Den Haag, Boekhandel van den Zendingstudie Raad 1913, p. x: the study of animistic religions shows “die Ohnmacht, die Finsterniss der gottentfremdeten Welt und das grauenhafte seelische und soziale Elend, das sich konsequenterweise aus dem animistischen Weltbilde ergibt. Das muss man in seinen Zusammenhängen kennen, ehe man die rechte Hilfe bringen kann”.

¹²⁴ [Winckel], *Handleiding ten dienste van leiders van zendingstudie-kringen over “Animisme en Christendom”*, Den Haag, Boekhandel van den Zendingstudie Raad, 1913, p. 45.

This tone—which differs sharply from that of Kruyt’s study—can be found in similar editions published by the Council for Mission Studies as well.¹²⁵

To understand the formation of Dutch ethnological collections and museums, it is helpful to begin with a few general observations.¹²⁶ First of all it should be noted that the Dutch East Indies played only a minor role in the early collections. The pursuit of these materials really started with the actual political and administrative colonization at the end of the nineteenth century. The first attempt to establish an ethnological museum dates from an earlier time and was made by the surgeon-major Philipp Franz von Siebold (1796–1866). Von Siebold had served in the East Indian Army and had collected mainly Japanese objects. For him the purpose of a museum was to make “us” familiar with foreign peoples and their way of living (religion, customs, arts and sciences, agriculture, industry and trade). The intended museum had to be foremost and primarily concerned with living peoples (mostly non-European) and not with the physical conditions of these foreign countries.¹²⁷ In 1837 the Dutch government bought the Siebold Collection, and in 1937 the National Museum of Ethnography celebrated its centenary.

The struggle over the housing of the collection, however, had been going on over almost the same period. There was a fierce competition—especially between Amsterdam and Leiden—about where to accommodate the materials collected by Von Siebold and others.

¹²⁵ Cf. W.H.T. Gairdner, *Islam en Christendom*. Met toestemming van den schrijver bewerkt voor Nederland door Jacqueline C. Rutgers, Den Haag: Zendingstudie-raad, 1910 (adaptation of *The Reproach of Islam*, London 1909), which is recommended, because it not only displays the errors of Islam, but also refutes these from the Christian point of view (xii). On the relationships between anthropologists and missionaries in the twentieth century, see Ad Borsboom & Jean Kommers (eds), *Anthropologists and the Missionary Endeavour. Experiences and Reflections*, Saarbrücken 2000.

¹²⁶ Cf. C. van Dijk, “Tussen koloniale handel en wetenschap”; cf. Susan Legêne, *De bagage van Blomhoff en Van Breughel. Japan, Java, Tripoli in de negentiende-eeuwse Nederlandse cultuur van het imperialisme*, s.l. 1998; Raymond Corbey, “Object-in-Motion. Collectors, Dealers, Missionaries, and Artists”, in: Vermeulen & Kommers, *Tales from Academia*, vol. II, pp. 995–1014.

¹²⁷ P.F. von Siebold, “Kort begrip en ontwikkeling van de doelmatigheid en van het nut van een ethnographisch museum in Nederland” (1837), in: [W.H. Rassers], *Overzicht van de geschiedenis van het Rijksmuseum voor Volkenkunde. Gedenkschrift uitgegeven bij de heropening van het museum op den 30^{sten} november 1937*, Leiden 1937, pp. 63–67; cf. W. van Gullik “Von Siebold and his Japanese collection in Leiden”, in: Otterspeer, *Leiden Oriental Connections*, pp. 378–391.

One of the early directors of the Leiden museum, Lindor Serrurier (1846–1901), aroused a controversy by publicly denouncing the terrible circumstances under which the collections were held. He proposed to move the museum to Amsterdam or The Hague.¹²⁸ The Leiden orientalist M.J. de Goeje, however, saw an inseparable link between the university and the museum: its transfer to Amsterdam would maim the Leiden university. In that case it would be better to close down both the Leiden museum and the university.¹²⁹ (This is the sort of remark present-day university administrators are not likely to make, for fear that the Minister of Education and Science might take it literally.)

Besides the National Museum of Ethnography, located in Leiden until the present day, other ethnographical collections and museums were established in Amsterdam, Rotterdam and Delft, to mention the most important ones. Religion was not a major theme addressed in ethnological exhibitions. The items were divided according to the region they came from, and mostly exhibited in packed rooms. Of course, many exhibits could be classified as “religious” items, but, generally, they were not catalogued as such.¹³⁰ One notable exception was the 1901 Indian Exhibition in the Municipal Museum of Amsterdam, where religious objects held a prominent place. Many exhibits came from the 1900 World Exhibition in Paris, more in particular from the successful Dutch section on the East Indies. The exhibits were spread over seven main rooms. The first room, the “room of honour”, contained objects “related to Hinduism and Buddhism”, many casts of gods, and, most prominently, twenty-four bas-reliefs from the Borobudur temple complex on Java. The reproductions depicted various stages in the “Buddha legend”.¹³¹ The second room showed samples of the most important “cultures”, such as coffee, tea, cocoa, tobacco, rice, and mineral oil. The third room, named “governmental exploitation”, presented maps and photographs

¹²⁸ Van Dijk, “Tussen koloniale handel en wetenschap”, pp. 353–354; Otterspeer, *De wiekslag van hun geest. De Leidse universiteit in de negentiende eeuw*, Leiden 1992, pp. 162–165.

¹²⁹ M. de Goeje, *Waar blijft de waardigheid? Een woord over de museumquaestie*, Leiden s.a. [1903], p. 14.

¹³⁰ Cf. L. Serrurier, *Korte Gids voor den bezoeker van het Rijks Ethnographisch Museum te Leiden. Hoogewoerd 108—Rapenburg 69*, Leiden 1883.

¹³¹ *Gids voor den bezoeker van de Indische tentoonstelling in het Stedelijk Museum te Amsterdam*, Amsterdam 1901, p. 34.

of printing presses, railways, postal routes, irrigation projects, bridges and other public works in the East Indies. The fourth room was devoted to “remains from Hinduism in the present time”, which included a complete Hindu pantheon from the island of Bali. The following rooms exhibited maps of botanical gardens, models of ships, and various topographical and marine maps. The last room was devoted to “ethnographical collections” obtained during the first two expeditions of A.W. Nieuwenhuis in Borneo. The catalogue gave the visitors relatively much (elementary) information about Hindu and Buddhist religion, paying special attention to the Indonesian archipelago.

In a discussion of the relationship between ethnographical collections and the study of religion in the Netherlands, the name of the German J.D.E. Schmeltz (1839–1909), who was naturalized in 1893, should not be omitted. He started as an assistant at the Leiden Ethnological Museum and finally, after a long procedure (as an autodidact he missed the necessary academic qualifications), succeeded Serrurier in 1897. Schmeltz deserves to be remembered for another reason as well. He founded an international journal of ethnography, the multi-lingual *Internationales Archiv für Ethnographie*, which first appeared in 1888. His mentor, the ethnologist Adolf Bastian (1826–1905), had encouraged him to take this initiative. They thought a small country like the Netherlands a good base for such an enterprise, and for a long time Schmeltz was its managing editor. It would be an exaggeration to say that religion was a main issue here. Yet, as the general index on the first 25 years shows, Schmeltz contributed 20 articles on religious topics, which made him the most prolific writer on religion in this periodical. As the emphasis in early Dutch ethnography was generally so much on the East Indies, it must not go unrecorded that Schmeltz had the honour to offer, on behalf of the Dutch government, a small anthology of studies on the Dutch West Indies to the 14th International Congress of American Studies convening in Stuttgart (Germany) in 1904.¹³²

¹³² Schmeltz et al., *Bijdragen tot de anthropologie, ethnographie en archaeologie van Nederl. Westindië* [German title: *Beitraege zur Anthropologie, Ethnographie und Archaeologie Niederl. Westindiens*], by J.D.E. Schmeltz, C. Leemans and G.A. Koeze, Haarlem 1904 [from: *Mittheilungen aus dem Nederl. Reichsmuseum*, 2/9. On the title page: *Feestgave, namens de Nederlandsche Regeering aan het XIV Intern. Amerikanisten Congres te Stuttgart aangeboden door den directeur van 's Rijks Ethnographisch Museum te Leiden*]; on Schmeltz, see G.J. Dozy,

5. *Sociology and Psychology*

A recurrent theme in the above discussion of the contribution of early Dutch ethnology to the study of religion is the difficulty to distinguish between various (emerging) fields of research. This is also clear from bibliographical surveys. A significant example in this regard is the systematic bibliography of ethnology compiled in 1911 by the Dutch ethnologist S.R. Steinmetz (1862–1940). Although he tried to give a more or less strict definition of the field (“*comparative theoretical study of primitive peoples*”),¹³³ he had to admit that it was not always easy to draw the boundaries between fields such as “anthropology, linguistics, prehistoric archeology (*Urgeschichte*), psychology, geography and other closely related sciences”.¹³⁴ Steinmetz’s own career also points to the problem mentioned here. After finishing his law studies in Leiden, he went to Leipzig to take courses with Wilhelm Wundt (1832–1920) in psychology, with Paul Flechsig (1847–1929) in psychiatry, and with Friedrich Ratzel (1844–1904) in geography, as a biographer summarized Steinmetz’ student years.¹³⁵ With a treatise on the field of ethnology (supervised by Wilken)¹³⁶ he received a doctorate from the university of Leiden, and he was the first occupant of the chair of Ethnology of the East-Indian Archipelago at the Municipal University of Amsterdam (1907–1923). Moreover, he is seen as one of the founders of Dutch sociology. As early as 1895,

“In Memoriam Johannes Diedrich Eduard Schmeltz (1839–1909)”, in: *Internationales Archiv für Ethnographie* 19 (1910) [no page numbers, the contribution is printed at the beginning of the journal].

¹³³ S.R. Steinmetz, *Essai d’une Bibliographie systématique de l’Ethnologie jusqu’à l’année 1911*, Bruxelles–Leipzig 1911, English preface (italics original). A German and French preface were also added to the book. The parallel German text runs as follows: “Unter Ethnologie verstehe ich das *vergleichende theoretische Studium* der Naturvölker im Gegensatz zu der reinen Beschreibung der Ethnographie” (italics original).

¹³⁴ Steinmetz, *Essai d’une Bibliographie systématique*, Preface.

¹³⁵ W. Bongers, “De plaats van Steinmetz in de geschiedenis der maatschappelijke wetenschappen in Nederland”, in: *Mensch en Maatschappij* 9/1 (1933) 2–10, p. 6. Bongers’s contribution appeared in an issue devoted to Steinmetz (a kind of *Festschrift*), to which, among others, Ferdinand Tönnies (“Der Selbstmord von Männern in Preussen 1884–1914”), Alfred Vierkant (“Der Wertgehalt primitiver Kulturen”), Leopold von Wiese (“Soziographie und Beziehungslehre”), Pitirim A. Sorokin (“Life Span, Age Composition and Mortality of Social Organizations”), and B. Malinowski (“The Work and Magic of Prosperity in the Trobriand Islands”) contributed. Furthermore, articles dealing with Steinmetz’s contribution to ethnology, geography, and eugenetics were included in this special issue.

¹³⁶ Steinmetz, *Ethnologische Studien zur ersten Entwicklung der Strafe*, Leiden 1892.

he passionately defended the importance of sociology (and general ethnology, not confined to the East Indies).¹³⁷

In this context it is not possible to do justice to Steinmetz' efforts to clarify what sociology is about and how it is related to cognate disciplines. Only a few remarks can be made. As Steinmetz clearly saw, the main problem is what the *proprium* of sociology is supposed to be. If it is defined as the study of human social life as such, it seems to embrace nearly everything. To some extent this is the case, according to Steinmetz, but the emphasis in this definition should be on "as such". In his view, sociology has a strong theoretical orientation and has to look for more general connections and laws. It is the "general staff" of an army of related sciences such as economics and the science of religion.¹³⁸ Because religion is to such a great extent a social product, the science of religion is to be conceived as a part of social science as such.¹³⁹ How broad Steinmetz takes the field to be is already evident from an early essay on the "progress of folklore and ethnology", in which he states that there is no reason to separate the study of present-day folk stories and fairy tales, "as they are known with old women in the country" ("folklore") from that of the beliefs and customs of so-called "primitive ('wild') or semi-civilized peoples" ("ethnology").¹⁴⁰ In principle all these phenomena are to be studied by sociology or the comparative history of culture. In his *Introduction to Sociology* of 1931 the field is defined as the "science of the facts of human living together as such, its forms, life, development and decline".¹⁴¹ The first chair in

¹³⁷ Steinmetz, *Het goed recht van Sociologie en Ethnologie als universiteitsvakken*, 's-Gravenhage 1895; cf. *Wat is Sociologie?* Openbare les ter opening van den cursus in de sociologie, Leiden 1900.

¹³⁸ Steinmetz, *Het goed recht*, pp. 5–6.

¹³⁹ See also Steinmetz, *Wat is Sociologie?*, p. 22.

¹⁴⁰ Steinmetz, "Vooruitgang in Folklore en Ethnologie", in: *De Gids* 51/2 (1893) 257–288, pp. 265–268.

¹⁴¹ Steinmetz, *Inleiding tot de sociologie*, Haarlem 1931, p. 22; on Steinmetz, see Henk Heeren, *Van Sociografie tot Sociologie. De Amsterdamse sociografische school en haar betekenis voor de Nederlandse sociologie*, Utrecht 1993 and Willem F. Heinemeijer, "A History of Anthropology in Amsterdam. Steinmetz and his Students", in: Vermeulen & Kommers, *Tales from Academia*, vol. I, pp. 227–243. Steinmetz was not primarily interested in religion, whereas his successor to the Amsterdam chair of ethnology, J.J. Fahrenfort (1885–1975), wrote his dissertation about the so-called problem of *Urmonotheismus* and got involved in a polemic with W. Schmidt, who promoted this theory; cf. Fahrenfort, *Het hoogste wezen der primitieven. Studie over het "oermonotheïsme" bij enkele der laagste volken*, Groningen–Den Haag 1927; *Wie der Urmonotheismus am Leben erhalten wird*, Groningen–Den Haag 1930; on the controversy with Schmidt see A.J.F.

sociology was established in 1922 at the University of Amsterdam and was occupied by W.A. Bongers (1876–1940).¹⁴²

During the period we are dealing with here, sociology was, notwithstanding Steinmetz's programmatic statements, virtually non-existent. The only candidate sometimes mentioned as proof to the contrary is J. de Bosch Kemper. His *Science of Society*, which appeared in 1863, started from an organic view of history and society and attempted to present a synthesis of the contemporary knowledge of politics, religion, philosophy, history, arts, state and law, to mention just these areas. The book is doubtless a great achievement and is suffused with a spirit of liberalism and liberal Protestantism in particular: "the perfect religion is above existing church communities".¹⁴³ However, one does not find any precise ideas about the role of society (as distinct from the state, for instance) which would necessitate a new field of study. This encyclopaedic work looks more like an idealist philosophy of history than as a specimen of sociology, and had best be considered part of the prehistory of the field.¹⁴⁴

As far as the treatment of religion in De Bosch Kemper's book is concerned, the focus was very much, not to say exclusively, on ideas. Religion was discussed in a section "The History of Religion and Philosophy", in which the views of various philosophers and theologians were briefly touched upon. The book showed no awareness that religion could in one way or another be a problem in the modern era,¹⁴⁵ and the book is surely no specimen of early sociology of

Köbben, "J.J. Fahrenfort (1885–1975). Schoolmaster and Scholar", in: Vermeulen & Koppers, *Tales from Academia*, vol. I, pp. 245–265, and Jan Platvoet, "Pillars, Pluralism and Secularization. A Social History of Dutch Sciences of Religions", in: Gerard A. Wieggers & Platvoet (eds), *Modern Societies & the Science of Religions*, Leiden etc. 2002, pp. 82–148, pp. 104–107.

¹⁴² Cf. J.J.A. van Doorn, "Die niederländische Soziologie. Geschichte, Gestalt und Wirkung", in: Joachim Matthes (ed.), *Soziologie und Gesellschaft in den Niederlanden*, Neuwied am Rhein–Berlin 1965, pp. 29–82, p. 31.

¹⁴³ J. de Bosch Kemper, *Handleiding tot de kennis van de wetenschap der zamenleving*, Amsterdam 1863, p. 217. On De Bosch Kemper, see H.T. Ambagtsheer, *Jhr. Mr. Jeronimo de Bosch Kemper. Behoudend maatschappijhervormer*, Amsterdam 1959.

¹⁴⁴ A good survey of early Dutch sociology is still J.J.A. van Doorn, *Beeld en betekenis van de Nederlandse sociologie*, Utrecht 1964; cf. for the 1930s: F. Bovenkerk et al. (eds), *De sociale wetenschappen in de jaren dertig en nu*, Baarn 1978 (including articles on Steinmetz and Bongers).

¹⁴⁵ Early sociology is often supposed to take a critical stance towards religion, which according to for instance Auguste Comte is a transitory phase in human history, to be overcome by the sciences. The beginning of modern sociology of religion—with Max Weber and Georg Simmel—is then characterized by the awareness

religion. This field was instituted in the Netherlands at a later time. Even Steinmetz's contributions on religion still had better be considered part of ethnology. His *Introduction to Sociology*, for instance, did not contain a section on religion. W.A. Bongers's statistical studies on religion and crime,¹⁴⁶ and, especially, the still classical book of J.P. Kruijt on secularization in the Netherlands were important landmarks in this respect.¹⁴⁷ But here we find ourselves well into the twentieth century, a period beyond the scope of the present study.¹⁴⁸

The beginnings of Dutch sociology have not yet been very intensively researched. It was especially jurists, economists and ethnologists who contributed to the rise of the new field. Furthermore, there was a connection with reform movements such as socialism, radical liberalism, and the emancipation of Catholics and orthodox Protestants.¹⁴⁹

that there is still a future for religion in modernity; cf. Heinz-Jürgen Dahme & Otthein Rammstedt, "Die zeitlose Modernität der soziologischen Klassiker. Überlegungen zur Theoriekonstruktion von Emile Durkheim, Ferdinand Tönnies, Max Weber und besonders Georg Simmel", in: Dahme & Rammstedt (eds), *Georg Simmel und die Moderne. Neue Interpretationen und Materialien*, Frankfurt a.M., 1984, pp. 449–478; Arie L. Molendijk, *Zwischen Theologie und Soziologie. Ernst Troeltschs Typen der christlichen Gemeinschaftsbildung: Kirche, Sekte, Mystik*, Gütersloh 1996, chapter 1.

¹⁴⁶ W.A. Bongers, "Geloof en misdaad. Een criminologische studie" (1913), in: *Verspreide Geschriften*, 2 vols, Amsterdam 1950, vol. II, pp. 13–82, showed that crime rates among Protestants and, especially, Catholics are substantially higher than among Jews and non-churchgoers. This is explained by reference to the varying economic conditions in which these various groups lived. Cf. Bongers, "Geloof en ongelooft in Nederland. Een statistische studie" (1911), in: *Verspreide Geschriften*, vol. I, pp. 110–134; *Criminality and Economic Conditions*, Boston 1916 (translation and adaptation of Bongers's thesis: *Criminalité et conditions économiques*, Amsterdam 1905); *Geloof en ongelooft in Nederland (1909–1920). Een statistische studie*, Amsterdam 1924. Bongers was attacked on this point by the liberal Protestant theologian and early psychologist of religion, H.T. de Graaf; cf. Bart van Heerikhuizen, *W.A. Bongers. Socioloog en Socialist*, Groningen 1987, pp. 181–191, and the theses added to De Graaf, *Temperament en Karakter. Inleiding tot een onderzoek naar karakter en behandeling van veroordeelden wegens landlooperij en bedelarij*, Groningen 1914, in which De Graaf firmly contradicted the views of Bongers and Steinmetz and defended the moral character of (Christian) religion against propositions such as "Der Glaube macht selig, nicht sittlich" (Steinmetz).

¹⁴⁷ J.P. Kruijt, *De onkerkelijkheid in Nederland. Haar verbreiding en oorzaken. Proeve eener sociografische verklaring*, Groningen–Batavia 1933.

¹⁴⁸ In this context the work of W. Banning (1888–1971) should also be mentioned; cf. Banning, *Theologie en Sociologie. Een terreinverkenning en inleiding*, Assen 1936; *Over de ontmoeting van Theologie en Sociologie* (inaugural address), Amsterdam 1946. From 1946 onwards, Banning held an "extraordinary" professorship in Ecclesiastical Sociology in Leiden, the first chair in what would later be called "sociology of religion". On Banning, see M.B. ter Borg (ed.), *Banning als denker*, Utrecht 1988.

¹⁴⁹ Cf. Van Doorn, *Beeld en betekenis*, pp. 31–33; Van Doorn, "Die niederländische Soziologie".

The so-called “social question” and women’s liberation were on the agenda of sociology. The fact that sociology was in a position “between” various fields of knowledge and emancipatory ideals generated much debate and confusion about its contents. Some authors even speak of chaos.¹⁵⁰ In general books on “sociology”, also in those written by Christian authors and professional theologians, religion is not a real issue. In his *Sociology and Christianity*, the neo-calvinist theologian and politician J.R. Slotemaker de Bruine (1869–1941) defined sociology as the field of study concerned with the relationship between human beings, as far as they are not religious, political or economical.¹⁵¹ Slotemaker de Bruine was very much interested in social questions, and in what sociology and Christianity have to say about these issues. Interestingly enough, the two Dutch pioneers of sociology of religion, Bongers and Kruijt, both came from liberal Protestant families, were critical of (institutional) religion, and became ardent social democrats.¹⁵²

Although some scholars were interested in psychology (Steinmetz studied with Wundt), the psychology of religion emerged rather late in the Netherlands. The centennial of Dutch psychology was celebrated in 1992. A hundred years earlier, Gerard Heymans (1857–1930) had obtained a grant of 500 guilders from the University of Groningen to purchase instruments with which to grace his course in psychology.

¹⁵⁰ Cf. Steinmetz, “Een Calvinist over de sociologie”, in: *De Tijdspiegel* 1901/1: 72–83 (a withering critique of A. Anema, *De grondslagen der sociologie*, Amsterdam 1900); J.D.J. Aengenent, *Leerboek der sociologie*, Leiden 1909, p. 5; J.R. Slotemaker de Bruine, *Sociologie en Christendom*, Utrecht 1912, p. 8.

¹⁵¹ Slotemaker de Bruine, *Sociologie en Christendom*, p. 22. On Slotemaker de Bruine, see BLGPN II, pp. 404–406.

¹⁵² Until recently, the study of religion formed an important part of Dutch sociology; cf. for example the texts collected in Matthes, *Soziologie und Gesellschaft in den Niederlanden*. In the main text I spoke of Bongers and Kruijt as the pioneers of Dutch sociology of religion. Although this is a reasonable view, it is not without problems. The institutionalization of “sociology of religion” took place at a later time. Banning’s inaugural address (*Over de ontmoeting van Theologie en Sociologie*, 1946) is undoubtedly a milestone in this regard. One could also make a case to date the beginnings at an earlier point in history. In the first quarter of the twentieth century the writings of Max Weber (*The Spirit of Capitalism*) and Ernst Troeltsch (*The Social Teachings*) were the subject of intense discussions in the Netherlands. But this debate was dominated by theologians, jurists, and historians; cf. Van Doorn, “Die niederländische Soziologie”, p. 32; Arie L. Molendijk, “Praktische Theologie und Religionssoziologie in den Niederlanden”, in: Wilhelm Gräb & Birgit Weyel (eds), *Praktische Theologie und protestantische Kultur*, Gütersloh 2002, pp. 453–468.

This allotment marks the formal beginning of experimental psychology in the Netherlands.¹⁵³ As Heymans was appointed in 1890 to a chair in philosophy, the original teaching assignment was extended by “psychology”.¹⁵⁴ As far as I know Heymans did not publish much psychological work on religion, although his idealistic philosophy has religious overtones.¹⁵⁵ The first publication in psychology of religion is generally held to be an article by H.T. de Graaf (1875–1930), which presented a survey of recent developments.¹⁵⁶ As far as the development of the psychology of religion as a distinct field of study is concerned, much is to be said in favour of this dating. If one broadens the scope, however, it cannot be overlooked that within the emerging “science of religion”, the psychology of religion came to the fore earlier than that. The work of C.P. Tiele illustrates this development very aptly.

Various scholars from different backgrounds (philosophers, physicians,¹⁵⁷ and also theologians)¹⁵⁸ contributed to the emerging field of psychology. The most prominent theologian was probably the neo-calvinist dogmatician H. Bavinck (1854–1921), who published a booklet *Principles of Psychology* as early as 1897.¹⁵⁹ His theological inclinations did not prevent him from taking good notice of recent work by Wilhelm Wundt and others. Bavinck also inspired the first Dutch

¹⁵³ Cf. Douwe Draaisma (ed.), *Een laboratorium voor de ziel. Gerard Heymans en het begin van de experimentele psychologie*, Groningen 1992.

¹⁵⁴ The Dutch term is *zielkunde* (German: *Seelenkunde*), in which to Dutch ears the word “soul” resonates much more strongly than in the latinized form used in the major European languages, and which now has ousted the old term *zielkunde* in the Netherlands.

¹⁵⁵ Cf. P.J. van Strien, *Nederlandse psychologen en hun publiek. Een contextuele geschiedenis*, Assen 1993, p. 29 (according to Heymans, a “religionless church of the ideal” was the demand of the future).

¹⁵⁶ H.T. de Graaf, “Over godsdienstpsychologie”, in: *Teekenen des Tijds* 7 (1905) 28–38. My sketch of the rise of Dutch psychology of religion owes much to the work of J.A. [van] Belzen; cf. Belzen, “Between Feast and Famine. A Sketch of the Development of the Psychology of Religion in The Netherlands”, in: *The International Journal for the Psychology of Religion* 4 (1994) 181–197; “Tremendum et Fascinans. On the Early Reception and Nondevelopment of the Psychology of Religion Among Orthodox Dutch Calvinists”, in: Belzen (ed.), *Aspects in Contexts. Studies in the History of Psychology of Religion*, Amsterdam–Atlanta, GA 2000, pp. 91–127; Van Belzen (ed.), *Van gisteren tot heden. Godsdienstpsychologie in Nederland*, teksten I, Kampen 1999, in which De Graaf’s article is reprinted.

¹⁵⁷ Pieter Bierens de Haan, *Hoofdlijnen eener psychologie met metafysischen grondslag*, Amsterdam 1898.

¹⁵⁸ P.J. van Strien, *Nederlandse psychologen en hun publiek*, pp. 54f.

¹⁵⁹ H. Bavinck, *Beginselen der Psychologie*, Kampen 1897; cf. also J.H. Bavinck, *Inleiding in de Zielkunde*, Kampen 1926.

dissertation in the field of psychology of religion: the well-informed book by J.G. Geelkerken (1879–1906) on empirical psychology of religion”.¹⁶⁰ Geelkerken was to become the main protagonist in one of the most famous controversies in twentieth-century Dutch church history (about whether or not the snake in Genesis 3 had literally spoken).¹⁶¹ Both men were sceptical with regard to the evolving discipline, because in their view its subjectivistic principle undermined the immediate testimony of religion concerning itself.¹⁶²

More favourably disposed to psychology of religion was the above-mentioned liberal theologian H.T. de Graaf. He took two Ph.D. degrees, the first one in the field of the study of the Old Testament, the second under supervision of Heymans on “Character and Treatment of Those Convicted for Vagrancy and Mendicancy”.¹⁶³ De Graaf was a socially engaged minister who during the preparation of his second doctorate worked in a penitentiary in Veenhuizen, a poor village in the north of the Netherlands. His main contribution to the psychology of religion dates from 1928 and offers an analysis of “the psychological side of religious life”.¹⁶⁴ He made use of a questionnaire developed by Heymans and his colleague, the psychiatrist E.D. Wiersma (1858–1940), as well as of literary texts, such as novels by Charles Dickens and Charlotte Brontë. The institutionalization of the psychology of religion at the Dutch universities took place well after the Second World War.¹⁶⁵ Dutch psychology of religion developed rather late, especially compared to France, Germany and the United States.¹⁶⁶ The early practitioners were educated primarily as theologians, whereas the early sociologists of religion came from outside theology. Not much original work was done here, as the business of early Dutch psychology of religion consisted mainly in the reception of foreign studies.¹⁶⁷

¹⁶⁰ J.G. Geelkerken, *De empirische godsdienstpsychologie*, Amsterdam 1909.

¹⁶¹ Cf. B.A. Venemans, “Geelkerken, Johannes Gerardus”, in: *BLGNP II*, pp. 206–209.

¹⁶² Geelkerken, *De empirische godsdienstpsychologie*, p. 391.

¹⁶³ De Graaf, *Temperament en Karakter*.

¹⁶⁴ De Graaf, *De godsdienst in het licht der zielkunde*, Huis ter Heide 1928, Preface. On this book, see Johan Dijkema, “Een vrij zinnig alternatief. H.T. de Graaf en de godsdienstpsychologie”, in: *De Psycholoog* 30 (1995) 224–226. Cf. the list of De Graaf’s work in psychology (of religion) in H. Faber, *Het christelijk humanisme van dr. H.T. de Graaf*, Assen 1963, p. 180.

¹⁶⁵ Cf. Belzen, “Between Feast and Famine”.

¹⁶⁶ Cf. David Wulff, *Psychology of Religion. Classic and Contemporary*, second edition, New York etc. 1997.

¹⁶⁷ William James’ *Varieties* was translated into Dutch in 1907: *De verscheidenheden*

6. *Conclusion*

In this chapter I have given a rough sketch of the contribution of late-nineteenth century ethnology to the study of religion. At the time the field of ethnological studies was diffuse. Although the first academic chair was founded in 1877, it took some time to establish a *discipline* of ethnology with its own methods, theories and text books. In 1911 S.R. Steinmetz wrote that it was difficult to draw boundaries between fields such as “anthropology, linguistics, prehistoric archaeology [*Urgeschichte*], psychology, geography and other closely related sciences”.¹⁶⁸ His own career is a good example of the way in which these fields were—often loosely—connected to each other and how scholars from various backgrounds contributed to the “comparative theoretical study of primitive peoples”, as Steinmetz defined ethnology. The best way to describe this complex situation is as an ongoing process of negotiating disciplinary identities and drawing boundaries. That is also the reason why in the above I have emphasized institutional aspects, and paid special attention to the occupants of the chair of ethnology (at the University of Leiden). This was the only chair until 1907, when a similar chair was founded at the University of Amsterdam, to be occupied by Steinmetz. Actually, the definition given by Steinmetz has a strong stipulatory character and seeks to distinguish ethnology from related undertakings. In the nineteenth century, however, ethnology had a strong encyclopaedic character and was an integral part of the description of the geography, languages and customs of the native populations. The first occupant of the chair, P.J. Veth, was a good example of this approach; his successor G.A. Wilken had a much stronger theoretical inclination, as is for instance evident from his treatment of animism in the Dutch East Indies and his discussion of Robertson Smith’s theory of sacrifice and the totem meal.

The above overview has amply demonstrated the close relationship between Dutch ethnology and the Dutch East Indies. The teaching assignment for the Leiden chair actually read “linguistics, literature, geography and ethnology of the East-Indian archipelago”, and most

op het gebied van de godsdienstige ervaringen. Een studie over de menselijke natuur. Zijnde de “Gifford Lectures on Natural Religion” gehouden te Edinburgh 1901–1903, bewerkt door J.P. Wesselink-Van Rossum [preface by J.M.S. Baljon], Utrecht 1907.

¹⁶⁸ Steinmetz, *Essai d'une Bibliographie systématique*, Preface.

ethnologists devoted a great deal of attention to the most important Dutch colony. The main exception in this regard was J.J.M. de Groot, whose specialty was China and who moved to the Leiden chair of sinology in 1904. In the work of Veth, Wilken, De Groot and Nieuwenhuis I did not find any crass expressions of condescension, but, of course, the authors were convinced of the superiority of western culture and were very much in favour of civilizing and educating the indigenous population. The Dutch East Indies were to be brought under colonial rule, and the people had to be developed under Dutch guidance and according to western standards. Although this terminology is a bit anachronistic, one could speak of the “ethical policy”¹⁶⁹ of the Dutch. Many nineteenth-century scholars, colonial officers and missionaries adhered to a paternalistic programme of education. Snouck Hurgronje, a respected scholar as well as an extremely influential government advisor, was one of the main architects of this ethical policy, which also implied that one had to refrain from attempts to convert the Muslim population to Christianity (a view which had already been defended by Veth).

Early Dutch ethnology made a significant contribution to the study of religion, which earned Wilken and De Groot international recognition. The Dutch East Indies were generally seen as an excellent subject for ethnological research, and the work of Dutch scholars was deemed important. The focus of research was on “primitive” and not on “higher” religions (and cultures), whereas the study of non-primitive cultures was dominated at the time by scholars in the language and culture departments of the Dutch universities. Snouck Hurgronje’s contribution to the study of (Indonesian) Islam was generally not seen as part of ethnology proper.¹⁷⁰ With regard to the Dutch East Indies, it remains hard to distinguish between ethnology, the study of Islam (Islamic Law) and so-called *adat* (indigeneous) law, which developed into a field of its own right within the faculty of law. In sum, the study of foreign religions and cultures became a more and more academic field of study in the twentieth century. This did not mean that the work of “amateurs” such as colonial officers, interpreters and missionaries was no longer important. They

¹⁶⁹ Cf. Otterspeer, “The Ethical Imperative”, in: Otterspeer, *Leiden Oriental Connections*, pp. 204–229.

¹⁷⁰ Cf., however, Snouck Hurgronje, *De Atjehers*, which can be seen as an ethnological monograph.

still did field work, but it became more difficult for them to keep abreast of the theoretical aspects of ethnology.

In the above I have also made a first attempt to contextualize this emerging field by looking at a few cases, viz. the work of the missionaries Adriani and Kruyt and the rise of ethnological museums on the one hand, and the emergence of sociology and psychology (of religion), on the other. The survey I gave above was by no means exhaustive, and therefore we have to be careful not to jump to conclusions. Nevertheless, I do want to present some concluding remarks. Firstly, compared to ethnology, both sociology and psychology have developed rather late in Dutch academic history, and in particular for the psychology of religion it was difficult to establish itself through original research. Dutch sociology of religion earned international renown after World War II, but after severe cuts in research programmes its status has recently deteriorated rapidly.¹⁷¹ Secondly, we should note how widely “dispersed” ethnological research on religion was in the nineteenth century. Sometimes it was relatively hard to get recognition for “outsiders” (the director of the Leiden ethnological museum, Schmeltz, is an example), whereas the work of the theologians Adriani and Kruyt was appreciated, at least to some extent. Thirdly, the fact that ethnology succeeded in establishing itself as an academic discipline in the Netherlands in the twentieth century should not make us blind for the links with the “science of religion” *stricto sensu* in the nineteenth century. Wilken and De Groot referred several times to this field, and to its practitioners such as Tiele. Moreover, they did not shy away from transcultural comparisons. Fourthly, this did not result in a close collaboration between “ethnologists” and “scientists of religion”. The main reason for this is probably that the two groups were interested in different types of religion: to put it bluntly, primitive versus higher and world religions. Fifthly, in research on religion carried out outside faculties of theology I detect a growing tendency to focus on a particular religion in a particular context; a tendency which is not easily squared with the huge comparative ambitions of early science of religion. Sixthly, the most remarkable fact is the enormous amount of energy spent on religious subjects by early academic, ethnological scholars.

¹⁷¹ Molendijk, “Praktische Theologie und Religionssoziologie in den Niederlanden”.

CHAPTER EIGHT

REPRESENTATION: THE 1883 COLONIAL AND EXPORT TRADE EXHIBITION IN AMSTERDAM

1. *World Exhibitions*

To put the emerging field of ethnology and the study of religion in general further into perspective, I will focus on one particular example of religious representation in this chapter, viz. the Amsterdam Colonial and Export Trade Exhibition of 1883. I could have chosen other subjects (such as the popularization of history of religions, or its introduction within secondary education and confirmation classes), to study the dissemination and representation of the results of the study of religion. Yet the 1883 exhibition demonstrates rather nicely how religion was represented before a large public, and how scholars were involved in the process of translating their knowledge.¹ It is important to note that religion was not located in one specific place, but “pervaded” the exhibition as a whole. Without pretending to cover all dimensions involved, I will first outline the design of the exhibition, and then look at various “locations of religion”, by discussing, successively, the architecture of the Dutch Colonial Building, the religious exhibits on display there, the special ethnographical exhibition, and the related conferences.

Before turning to the Amsterdam exhibition, however, I would like to make some general remarks on world exhibitions and their religious dimensions. World exhibitions or world fairs were major

¹ Cf. John P. Burris, *Exhibiting Religion. Colonialism and Spectacle at International Expositions, 1851–1893*, Charlottesville–London s.a. [2001], p. xiv: “This study is concerned with utilizing international expositions as a means of identifying some of the key elements that allowed a field of religion to become a distinct, differentiated, and permanent feature of the Western intellectual landscape”. Burris intends to study “the material context that contributed to the formation of the discipline” (xviii). My contribution only aims at providing one further context for the rise of the scientific study of religion in the Netherlands. I am more sceptical than Burris about what the study of exhibitions can teach us about early science of religion, and whether we can really succeed in identifying the key elements in the rise of the science of religion this way.

business in the second half of the nineteenth century. Millions of people visited the fairs and admired the exposition buildings with their vast displays of the arts and crafts of various nations. The Great Exhibition of the Works and Industry of All Nations, which opened on May Day 1851 at the newly constructed Crystal Palace in Hyde Park, London, is generally considered to be the first in a long series of world fairs and industrial exhibitions. Improved forms of transportation—especially the establishment of railroads—made these exhibitions possible and allowed for a mass audience. The 1851 Great Exhibition, for instance, counted six million admission fees paid, whilst the 1900 World Exhibition in Paris could boast some forty-eight million visitors.

The fairs epitomized progress and made it very clear that not all nations were on the same level of industry and civilization. According to the exhibition curator G. Brown Goode, the World's Columbian Exhibition (held in Chicago in 1893) would illustrate "the steps of progress of civilization and its arts in successive centuries, and in all lands up to the present time".² The educational and civilizing intentions of the organizers were evident. The explicit international character of this exhibition, in which various nations and peoples participated with their own pavilions, did not, however, preclude a furthering of nationalistic feelings. Relics of American history, such as a lock of Thomas Jefferson's red hair, were shown at the Chicago Exhibition, and the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag of the United States was framed for this occasion. At the opening ceremonies school girls formed a living flag, whilst millions of children around the country pledged "allegiance to my flag and the Republic for which it stands, one Nation indivisible with Liberty and Justice for all".³ The fairs provided the visitors with nationalistic images reinforced by ritualistic practices.

² Quoted in Robert W. Rydell, *All the World's a Fair. Visions of Empire at American International Expositions, 1876–1916*, Chicago–London 1984, p. 45. For the famous Chicago World's Parliament of Religions see, foremost, the proceedings: John Henry Barrows (ed.), *The World's Parliament of Religions*, 2 vols, London 1983, and Richard Hughes Seager, *The World's Parliament of Religions. The East/West Encounter*, Chicago 1893, Bloomington–Indianapolis 1995, and Seager, *The Dawn of Religious Pluralism. Voices from the World's Parliament of Religion, 1893*, La Salle, Illinois 1993.

³ Quoted in Rydell, *All the World's a Fair*, p. 46. The clause "under God" was added in 1954 to distinguish the United States from the atheistic Soviet Union; cf. Joan Didion, "Fixed Opinions, or the Hinge of History", in: *The New York Review of Books* 50/1, January 16, 2003, p. 56.

If one looks at the photographs of the great fairs, it is easy to imagine how the magnificent architecture of the buildings and the design of the huge exhibition spaces and amusement parks must have made a deep impact on the minds of the visitors.⁴ At the Chicago exhibition, for instance, there were Javanese, Egyptian, Indian and Eskimo villages, German and Hungarian bands, camel drivers and donkey boys, dancing girls from Samoa to Brazil, and the Ferris Wheel, from which the visitors could enjoy a bird's eye view of the attractions and the crowds below. The international exhibitions brought architecture, museal display and popular entertainment together. This mixture of "lower" and "higher" culture must have impacted strongly on the visitors. The simulated native villages doubtless furthered prevailing racial stereotypes, which were largely underpinned by ethnological scholarship.⁵

Most buildings were constructed for the duration of the fairs and were later demolished. Only a few constructions, such as the Eiffel Tower in Paris, have survived to the present day. The tower, measuring around 276 metres in height, was built by Gustave Eiffel for the 1889 *Exhibition Universelle* in Paris, which celebrated the centennial of the French Revolution. Exposition buildings were primarily seen as engineering (rather than architectural) challenges and, consequently, engineers became the new architects. This development met with criticism, as is clear from an article by the French novelist and devout Catholic J.-K. Huysmans entitled "Le Fer" ("Iron"). According to Huysmans, the Eiffel Tower was "of a disconcerting ugliness" and revealed "an absolute lack of artistic sense". One may conjecture that it is "the tower of a new church in which are celebrated . . . the divine services of the High Bank". If this conjecture is right, "its material of a safe, its color of a stew, its structure of a factory stack, its form of an oil well, its skeleton of a great dredge capable of extracting the auriferous mud of stock exchanges, are explained. It will be the spire of our Lady of the Barter, a spire deprived of bells, but armed with a cannon that announces the beginning and end of services, that calls the faithful to the masses of

⁴ Norman Bolotin & Christine Laing, *The World's Columbian Exposition. A 100-year Retrospective*, Washington 1992.

⁵ Cf. Burton Benedict, "Rituals of Representation. Ethnic Stereotypes and Colonized Peoples at World's Fairs", in: Robert W. Rydell & Nancy Gwinn (eds), *Fair Representations. World's Fairs and the Modern World*, Amsterdam 1994, pp. 28–62.

finance, the vespers of speculation, a cannon that sounds with its showers of powder the liturgical feast days of Capital!"⁶ The severe critique of the architecture of the *Exposition Universelle*, and thereby of contemporary culture as such, was cast by Huysmans in religious terms.

Such religious comparisons were by no means exceptional. The most famous quotation in this regard is without doubt Walter Benjamin's characterization of the world exhibitions in terms of "places of pilgrimage to the fetish commodity" ("Wallfahrtsstätte zum Fetisch Ware").⁷ Both Huysmans and Benjamin were highly critical of the fairs and the glorification of the exchange value of commodities, but religious imagery was used in a positive way as well. For the opening of the Amsterdam Colonial and Export Trade Exhibition in 1883, the Dutch church minister and poet J.J.L. ten Kate had composed a hymn, welcoming those who had finally reached the end of their "pilgrimage", eager to enter the fairgrounds, as the "gates of the temple" swung open.⁸ The utopian flavour of many of the world exhibitions provoked this kind of religious language. The construction of the 1893 Chicago Exhibition—part of which was called the "White City"—was seen as the building of a New Jerusalem: "The city so holy and clean,/ No sorrow can breathe in the air;/ No gloom of affliction or sin,/ No shadow of evil is there".⁹ Without taking into account the religious dimension these great occasions cannot be fully understood.

In many respects, the fairs were at the cross-roads of important nineteenth-century developments. On the one hand, they played an important role in promoting fine arts as a saleable commodity on the international market, and on the other hand their purpose was to improve the quality of consumer goods and the living conditions of industrial workers. National identities were negotiated and represented in the *Rue des Nations*, where colonial villages could at the

⁶ Joris K. Huysmans, "Iron", in: Elizabeth Gilmore Holt (ed.), *The Expanding World of Art, 1874–1902*, vol. I: *Universal Expositions and State-Sponsored Fine Arts Exhibitions*, New Haven–London 1988, pp. 74–78; translated from Huysmans, "Le Fer", in: *Certains* (1889), third edition, Paris 1898, pp. 169–181, p. 179.

⁷ Walter Benjamin, "Paris, die Hauptstadt des XIX. Jahrhunderts", in: *Illuminationen*, Frankfurt a.M. (Suhrkamp) 1977, pp. 170–184, p. 175.

⁸ Ileen Montijn, *Kermis van Koophandel. De Amsterdamse wereldtentoonstelling van 1883*, Bussum 1983, p. 15.

⁹ Rydell, *All the World's a Fair*, p. 48.

same time strengthen the sense of the superiority of the West, and reflect the loss of artisan craftsmanship. Ultimately, these events were related to massive technological and industrial developments and to the ongoing colonization of the non-western world. Because they were such complex phenomena, the fairs can be approached from various angles, such as industrial, political, colonial, and social history. Research is complicated by the fact that the fairgrounds themselves and most of the exhibition buildings no longer exist. To reconstruct their history, therefore, we have to rely mainly on photographs and written documents, such as reports and catalogues. Peter Burke was quick to see the irony of the history of material culture in general being based less on the artefacts themselves than on literary evidence. As material objects rarely have an intrinsic meaning of their own, we need contemporary documents to decipher the meanings attached to them at the time.¹⁰

To speak of material artefacts, or objects, is too simple to really capture the complex structures of the world exhibitions. This is evident if we take into account the categorization of material culture as used by Colleen McDannell in her book on *Material Christianity*, in which she divides the body of evidence into four categories: artefacts, art, architecture, and landscapes.¹¹ Artefacts are made by human hand and are mostly used in an every-day context. Architecture relates first and foremost to the design of buildings, such as museums and churches, whereas art is perceived as having a distinctive—aesthetical—dimension, which determines its special place in homes, museums, and parks. The landscape is perhaps the least obvious category: McDannell points to cemeteries as shaped by human intent, but one could also think of war memorial sites and *lieux de mémoire* in general. The categories are not to be neatly separated from each other, but are just a pragmatic, analytical device. If we take a look at the exhibitions we can see that all four categories are represented. Many contemporary sources begin with a description of the overwhelming impression made by the architecture of the various buildings; the commodities displayed and sold are clearly to be ranged under the heading of “artefacts”, and there are also specimens of

¹⁰ Peter Burke, “Overture. The New History, its Past and its Future”, in: Burke (ed.), *New Perspectives on Historical Writing*, Cambridge 1991, pp. 1–23, p. 14.

¹¹ Colleen McDannell, *Material Christianity. Religion and Popular Culture in America*, New Haven–London 1995, p. 2.

industrial art as well as of the fine arts, the last being exhibited in special buildings. Finally, the grand design of the fairgrounds themselves, including the various indigenous villages, make up a landscape.

2. *The Design of the Amsterdam Exhibition*

The Amsterdam exhibition of 1883 was the first and also the last of its kind in the Netherlands.¹² It was not easy to get the exhibition off the ground, and remarkably the initiative was taken by a foreigner, the Frenchman Edouard Agostini. In the summer of 1880, Agostini published a brochure on the potential usefulness of an international exhibition in the Netherlands and sent it to King William III and his son Alexander, as well as to some influential Amsterdam citizens. Agostini referred to the great Dutch tradition of commerce, the magnificent public works such as the recently finished North Sea Canal, and the beautiful Crystal Palace on the Amsterdam Frederiksplein,¹³ which all cried out for an international exhibition.¹⁴ The estimated costs amounted to a total of 2,500,000 guilders. Amsterdam businessmen were highly interested, but the government turned down the request to fund 500,000 guilders. In the end, two Belgian entrepreneurs, Tasson and Washer, stood security for the entire exhibition. In return they were to receive all the admission fees (visitors were charged up to one guilder), as well as the fees charged to the participating countries and firms, based upon the amount of space they occupied (12.50 to 50 guilders per square meter). To charge the exhibitors was exceptional in the history of the world fairs. Although—as the preparations advanced—the Dutch government did make some financial means available, the whole undertaking was primarily a pri-

¹² John E. Findling & Kimberley D. Pelle (eds), *Historical Dictionary of World's Fairs and Expositions, 1851–1988*, London 1990. For a short history of earlier exhibitions in the Netherlands, see Saint-Foix, *Rapport sur l'exposition internationale industrielle d'Amsterdam en 1883*, adressé à M. le ministre du commerce . . ., suivi d'une étude sur les colonies des Indes néerlandaises, par Aubert, Paris 1885, pp. 1–7; cf. T.M. Eliëns, *Kunst-Nijverheid–Kunstnijverheid. De nationale nijverheidstentoonstellingen als spiegel van de Nederlandse kunstnijverheid in de negentiende eeuw*, Zutphen s.a. [1990].

¹³ Cf. Emile Wennekes, *Het Paleis voor Volkslijdt (1864–1929)*. “Edele uiting eener stoute gedachte!”, Den Haag 1999.

¹⁴ E. Agostini, *La Hollande artistique et commerciale et l'Europe industrielle. De l'utilité d'une exposition universelle dans les Pays-Bas*, Péronne 1880, esp. p. 13.

vate initiative, and in that sense more akin to the Anglo-Saxon than to the Francophone tradition of organizing world fairs.¹⁵

The exhibition was a great success, as demonstrated by the estimated one and half million visitors; most of them came by rail, with railroad companies subsidizing groups of working class people travelling to Amsterdam. The exhibition was also covered extensively by the press. One cartoon shows a woman returning home and being asked if she has brought a souvenir from the Amsterdam world exhibition. She answers: "I do believe so, my angel. Look here"—pointing to a little negro baby, whom she apparently had bought at one of the colonial villages. Another image depicts "delicious Surinamese girls", who charge one guilder for a photograph.¹⁶ These depictions aptly illustrate the racial stereotyping, and the commodification of the exotic. Here one is reminded of Walter Benjamin's observation that world exhibitions "glorify the exchange value of commodities. They create a framework in which commodities' intrinsic value is eclipsed. They open up a phantasmagoria that people enter in order to be amused. The entertainment industry facilitates this by elevating people to the level of commodities. They submit to being manipulated while enjoying their alienation from themselves and from others".¹⁷

The fairgrounds were located behind the *Rijksmuseum* (National Gallery) and covered some 220,000 square metres. The space was much larger than the present-day *Museumplein* (Museum Square) and allowed for a multitude of temporary buildings and pavilions to be erected. Prominent among them were the main building (the largest displays were those presented by the Netherlands, Belgium, France, and Germany, but there were also smaller ones from countries such as China, Italy, Persia, Japan, the United States, Brazil, Britain, Sweden, and Transvaal), the Dutch Colonial Building, the Gallery

¹⁵ For this distinction, see Pieter van Wesemael, *Architecture of Instruction and Delight. A Socio-historical Analysis of World Exhibitions as a Didactic Phenomenon (1798–1851–1970)*, Rotterdam 2001, p. 653.

¹⁶ Montijn, *Kermis*, p. 54f.

¹⁷ Walter Benjamin, *Reflections. Essays, Aphorisms, Autobiographical Writings*, ed. by Peter Jemetz, New York 1978, p. 152; quoted after Curtis M. Hinsley, "The World as Marketplace. Commodification at the World's Columbian Exposition, Chicago, 1893", in: Ivan Karp & Steven D. Lavine (eds), *Exhibiting Cultures. The Poetics and Politics of Museum Display*, Washington–London 1990, pp. 344–365, p. 344. For the German text see Benjamin, *Illuminationen*, p. 175.

of Fine Arts, the Machine Gallery, and the important park area. Here one could visit Dutch, German, and English restaurants, Japanese and Chinese bazaars, Dutch and Munich beer-halls, and even a “champagne bar”, as well as many places selling German and Spanish wines, Cologne water, “Roisdorfer mineral water”, and liqueurs from the firm of Lucas Bols. Machines—among them a “pulsometer”, a steam crane, and a centrifugal pump—were on show, in addition to colonial commodities and Bibles. The police, the fire fighters, the Red and the White Cross, the Society for the Education of Orphans, the Tourist Office, and even the Customs Clearance Service were present. In sum, it was a small town in itself.¹⁸

The fairgrounds were a mixture of education and amusement. The official exhibition preparation scheme did not provide for an “entertainment zone”, which became ever more important in the history of world fairs, but mentioned only the following five sections: 1) the colonial exhibition, 2) the export trade exhibition, 3) the retrospective exhibition of fine and industrial arts, 4) special exhibitions (focusing on arable products and market farming in particular), and 5) lectures and scientific conferences.¹⁹ The inclusion of this fifth section underlined the educational and civilizing mission of the exhibition. The general aims of the Amsterdam *exposition universelle* were to expand commercial enterprises, to encourage the various industries, to boost the moral strength of peoples, and to strengthen the ties between the nations—all for the good of the colonies as well as for the mother country.²⁰ The specific aim was to organize a competition between the colonial powers, and to this end various committees evaluated and ranked the displays of the countries involved in the *Exposition Universelle Coloniale et d'Exportation Générale*, as it was known officially. French was still the main international, diplomatic and commercial language in the Netherlands at the time, and it is

¹⁸ It is a pleasure to visit the attractive and informative internet site about this exhibition: <http://esf.niwi.knaw.nl/esf1996/project/entree.htm>.

¹⁹ J.A. Alberdingk Thijm, “De Waereld-Ten-Toon-Stelling van 1883”, in: *De Gids* 47/4 (1883) 292–310, quotes extensively from the circular of the organizing committee, which outlined the objectives of the exhibition (295–297).

²⁰ Alberdingk Thijm, “De Waereld-Ten-Toon-Stelling van 1883”, p. 297, quotes from the “mission statement” of the exhibition: “Uitbreiding der handelsoondernemingen, aanmoediging der verschillende industriën, opbeuring van de zedelijke kracht der volken, vermaauwing der banden, die de natiën vereenigen, ziedaar wat de heilrijke uitkomsten moeten zijn der vereeniging van zoo veel krachten, ingespannen zowel om den wille der Koloniën, als om dien van het Moederland”.

no coincidence that the catalogue of the Dutch colonial exhibition appeared in Dutch as well as in French. Even the admission tickets and the exhibition journal were bilingual.²¹

The emphasis of the Amsterdam exhibition was on trade and on the colonies in particular, the importance of which for the Netherlands was generally recognized. The secretary of the Royal Colonial Institute in London, Frederick Young, made this point very clear: "The possession of Colonies has been especially advantageous to Holland. It has certainly preserved her commercial existence, and enabled this ancient State to retain its place among the Great Powers of Europe, instead of being swallowed up by its neighbours, or reduced to a few fishing villages. No nation of Europe depends so much upon a Colonial policy as Holland. In no country colonial possessions are so valuable".²² The Dutch did not hesitate to call themselves the second colonial empire of the world (the first, of course, being Great-Britain).²³ It comes as no surprise, therefore, that the organizers set up the whole undertaking as a colonial exhibition.²⁴

²¹ Montijn, *Kermis*, pp. 37 & 63.

²² Frederick Young, "On the Political Relations of Mother Countries and Colonies. A Paper Read at the Congress of Amsterdam, September 19, 1883", in: D. Josephus Jitta (ed.), *Exposition internationale coloniale et d'exportation générale, Amsterdam 1883. V^e Section. Congrès Internationaux. Rapport sur les Congrès*, 2 vols., s.l., s.n., s.a. [1884], vol. II, pp. 97-114, p. 103 (quoting Lord Brougham).

²³ Th. Ch. L. Wijnmalen (ed.), *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch Indië*, uitgegeven vanwege het Koninklijk Instituut voor Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch-Indië, ter gelegenheid van het Zesde Internationale Congres der Oriëntalisten te Leiden, 2 vols, 's-Gravenhage 1885, vol. I, p. 1; F.W. van Eeden, *De koloniën op de internationale tentoonstelling te Amsterdam, in 1883*, Haarlem 1884, p. 45; P.J. Veth (ed.), *Catalogus der Afdeling Nederlandsche Koloniën van de Internationale Koloniale en Uitvoer-Handel Tentoonstelling (van 1 Mei tot ult^o. October 1883) te Amsterdam*, Leiden 1883; *Catalogue de la section des colonies néerlandaises à l'exposition internationale coloniale et d'exportation générale, tenue du 1 mai au 31 octobre 1883, à Amsterdam*, Leiden 1883. The catalogue was published in three volumes, which will here be cited as follows: Veth 1883 (Dutch or French), I, II, III, and page number. See Veth 1883 (both editions), I, pp. 2-3: "[L]es Pays-Bas sont la seconde puissance coloniale du monde, puisque ses possessions en dehors de l'Europe ne sont surpassées en étendue et en importance que par celles de la Grande-Bretagne. En chiffres ronds les possessions néerlandaises couvrent, dans l'archipel indien, en y comprenant la partie néerlandaise de la Nouvelle Guinée, une aire de 32800 milles géographiques carrés, et, dans les îles des Indes occidentales, une aire de 2200 milles carrés, en tout 35000. C'est à peu près le cinquième de la superficie de l'Europe, ou soixante fois celle du royaume des Pays-Bas en Europe".

²⁴ D. Josephus Jitta (ed.), *Exposition internationale coloniale et d'exportation générale*, 2 vols, s.l. s.a. [1884], vol. II, p. 1: "L'Exposition d'Amsterdam a surtout dû son succès à son caractère d'exposition *coloniale*. L'idée primitive qui lui donne naissance

In addition to the official colonial exhibition, there were special attractions from the Dutch West and East Indies (present-day Surinam [Dutch Guiana] and Indonesia). Close to one of the entrances of the fairgrounds there was a gamelan orchestra, which managed to play what was the Dutch national anthem at the time, “Wien Neêrlandsch Bloed” (“All who have Dutch blood in their veins”) on their instruments. The story goes that on the occasion of the visit of the Dutch King William III and his spouse, Queen Emma, on 26 August 1883, the orchestra mistakenly played “God save the Queen” instead.²⁵ Another attraction was an Indonesian *kampong* with native people practicing their crafts. The village was an hodgepodge of houses from different regions of the East Indian archipelago, and the engineer and explorer Daniel Veth (1850–1885) had taken great pains in shipping over 121 boxes and even securing the transportation of native livestock to Amsterdam.²⁶ For the visitors to the native village, a special guide book (in Dutch and English) was prepared by H.J. Eerlich van Gogh, who himself had contributed a “working-class house from private companies in West Java”.²⁷ By bringing together houses and artefacts from all over the Dutch East Indies, the colony was presented to the visitors as a unity. It was such a great success that at the Paris world exhibition of 1889 the Netherlands was again represented by a colonial village, this time a *village javanais*, where “rijsttafel”, a Javanese buffet, was served.²⁸

a été d'établir une comparaison entre les diverses colonies, leurs produits naturels et industriels, leur population indigène et leur colons. Ce n'est que plus tard que l'on en est venu à y ajouter une section d'exportation, et, là encore, l'exportation vers les colonies et les pays d'outre-mer a été le point de départ” (italics original); cf. Aubert, “Étude sur les colonies des Indes néerlandaises [Étude sur les colonies néerlandaises des Indes orientales]”, in: Saint-Foix, *Rapport sur l'exposition*, pp. 335–594.

²⁵ Harry Poeze, with contributions by Cees van Dijk and Inge van der Meulen, *In het land van de overheerser. I. Indonesiërs in Nederland 1600–1950*, Dordrecht etc. 1986, p. 19.

²⁶ Marieke Bloembergen, *De koloniale vertoning. Nederland en Indië op de wereldtentoonstellingen (1880–1931)*, Amsterdam s.a. [2002], pp. 11 & 71–74; cf. Martin Bossenbroek, *Holland op zijn breedst. Indië en Zuid-Afrika in de Nederlandse cultuur omstreeks 1900*, Amsterdam 1996, pp. 329–335; P.J. Veth & Joh. F. Snelleman (eds), *Daniël Veth's reizen in Angola, voorafgegaan door eene schets van zijn leven*, Haarlem 1887, esp. pp. 29–31.

²⁷ Poeze, *In het land van de overheerser*, p. 19; Montijn, *Kermis*, p. 20. The inhabitants of the colonial village are discussed in Veth (Dutch), I, 153–156, the buildings are listed in Veth (Dutch), II, 14ff.

²⁸ At various fairs the Dutch were represented by a colonial—preferably Javanese—village. A good example is also the 1898 National Exhibition of Women's Labour in The Hague; cf. Maria Grever & Berteke Waaldijk, *Feministische Openbaarheid. De Nationale Tentoonstelling van Vrouwenarbeid in 1898*, Amsterdam 1998, pp. 167–171. For

To secure more attention for the West Indies, a special committee organized an exhibition of Surinamese people from various tribes and races, who were even more of a curiosity than the people from the East Indies and doubtless subjected to even greater racial stereotyping. They were stared at, and considered to be at best semi-civilized. Apparently, they did not feel well, and one member of the group even died during his stay in Europe (reputedly of a disease he had contracted at home).²⁹ They were also subjected to (amateur) anthropological scholarship. Prince Roland Bonaparte (1858–1924), a great-nephew of Napoleon, devoted a luxuriously illustrated book to these 28 “inhabitants of Surinam”. He first presented the geography, statistics, and history of Surinam, followed by a description of local human culture according to the following classification: food, habitation, clothing, work and commerce, civil morality and religion, social institutions, and sciences and arts. The whole was supplemented by large photographs—*en face* as well as *en profil*—and physiological descriptions (race, nation or tribe, place of origin, age, sex, colour, hair, nose, lips, waist, head circumference) of the exhibited people, who were clearly seen as objects of anthropological scholarship and not as living subjects with their own stories and histories.³⁰

The display of people as mere curiosities had, of course, a longer history. The Fat Boy, the Bearded Woman, snake-women, dwarfs and giants, and other freaks had long been standard “attractions” at travelling circuses. Given the scope of the world exhibitions, it was only natural that colonial people would be present and represented in some way. They served as waiters in Egyptian and Algerian cafés as well as in Ceylonese and Indian tea-houses, or sold exotic products, and at the Paris World Exhibition in 1867 there was even a Tunisian barbershop open for business. The historian Paul Greenhalgh has divided these human exhibits into four types, which he labels the Imperial, the Educational, the Commercial and the Ambassadorial.³¹ As displays could have features representing various

the Dutch pavilions at later world exhibitions, see Maria Theresia Antoinette van Thoor, *Het gebouw van Nederland. Nederlandse paviljoens op de wereldtentoonstellingen 1910–1958*, Zutphen 1998.

²⁹ Montijn, *Kemis*, pp. 35–42.

³⁰ Roland Bonaparte, *Les habitants de Suriname. Notes recueillies à l'exposition coloniale d'Amsterdam en 1883*, Paris 1884.

³¹ Paul Greenhalgh, *Ephemeral Vistas. The Expositions Universelles, Great Exhibitions and World's Fairs, 1851–1939*, Manchester 1988, p. 82.

“types”, it is probably better to regard these as different aspects that may be involved in exhibiting colonial people. An important development, Greenhalgh argues, was the building of native villages, thereby situating people in what was thought to be their daily business and practice, at which they were to be viewed by the visitors. Greenhalgh selects the 1889 Exhibition in Paris as the great breakthrough in this respect, which may be true, but the *kampung* built at the Amsterdam exhibition is also a good—and earlier—example of this development. The imperial dimension is evident in such displays, but the foremost aim was to show the diversity of the human race, in its various evolutionary stages.³² As these human showcases and their artefacts were turned into things to be looked at (and looked down on), to be scientifically described and to be hierarchically categorized, and, sometimes, to be paid for, they answered to imperial, scientific, and commercial discourses all at once.

Hardly any critical voices were raised against such practices at the time, but they were not completely absent. A French critic sensed the alienation to which these human beings were exposed, as he wrote in 1883 about the displays in the Paris *Jardin d’Acclimatation*: “These individuals, in effect, are transported to an environment where they can no longer, so to speak, be themselves. Everything is changed in their way of life; and they must contend on one side with the administration of the Jardin, on another with those who brought them, on another with the crowds of the curious, and another side with a committee that comes out to examine and measure them by means of little trinkets”.³³ Yet, his main point of regret seemed to be that under these circumstances serious research was impossible. Another example was the critique of the Amsterdam exhibition voiced by the director of the Dutch Colonial Museum in Haarlem, F.W. van Eeden. He regretted the fact that in Europe the machine reigned, whereas in the colonies artisan skills still existed, adding that: “We Europeans are the real barbarians”.³⁴ But Van Eeden’s misgivings

³² On the stereotyping of various peoples involved in this kind of representation, see Burton Benedict, “Rituals of Representation”; cf. Raymond Corbey, “Ethnographic Showcases, 1870–1930”, in: *Cultural Anthropology* 8 (1993) 338–369; Nicolas Bancel et al. (eds), *Zoos humains. De la vénération hottentote aux reality shows*, Paris 2002.

³³ Leonce Manouvrier in: *Bulletin de la Société d’Anthropologie* 6 (1883) 724; quoted after William H. Schneider, *An Empire for the Masses. The French Popular Image of Africa, 1870–1900*, London 1982, p. 134.

³⁴ Van Eeden, *De Koloniën*, p. 78.

about industrial modernization and his sincere effort to counter racial prejudice did not preclude a sense of moral superiority over other colonial powers. The Dutch, he argued, had always taken good care of the well-being of the indigenous population, and they neither pushed aside the natives nor killed them, as did the English and the French.³⁵ Doubtless, in his view, the Netherlands had a special mission to civilize the colonized peoples.

3. *The Dutch Colonial Building: Discussing Cultural-Religious Identity*

The Dutch identity was ultimately represented and manifested in the Colonial Building. A huge, three-volume catalogue covering the department of the Dutch colonies was prepared by Pieter Johannes Veth, who—as the previous chapter already showed—was a towering figure in the anthropological study of the Dutch East Indies. These books are a rich source, not in the least for the information they provide on the ways in which religion was incorporated into the design both of the exhibition and of the Colonial Building as such. The religious exhibits will be discussed in the next section (4), but here I will deal with the building and, more specifically, with its architecture. The Dutch colonial department of the Amsterdam Exhibition was accommodated in a special building, which covered some 4,200 square meters. In front of the building stood the Atjeh Monument, erected as a tribute to the great efforts and sacrifices of the Dutch army and navy in the Atjeh wars (starting in 1873 and ending in 1924), and a plaster statue of Jan Pieterszoon Coen (1587–1629), the man who had “established our colonial power and founded Batavia”.³⁶ The statue of the conqueror of Jakarta symbolized the successful aspect of colonization, whereas the Atjeh Monument reminded the visitors of the fact that the subjection of the Dutch East Indies was not yet finished. Veth was aware of this fact, and wrote that large regions had no regular colonial administration, which unfortunately meant that the natives did not feel the hand of the master whose task was to exercise sovereignty over them.³⁷

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 110.

³⁶ Bloembergen, *De koloniale vertoning*, pp. 78–80, discusses the two monuments in more detail.

³⁷ Veth 1883 (French), I, 3: “En réalité cependant il existe encore dans cet immense territoire de vastes espaces où n’a point encore été établie d’administration

Catalogues, of course, were very important to the whole undertaking of putting on an exhibition; the categorizations and descriptions used there determined the way the visitor-readers would perceive the colonies. Michel Foucault has argued that the “idea of accumulating everything, of establishing a sort of general archive, the will to enclose in one place all times, all epochs, all forms, all tastes” is typical of nineteenth-century modernity.³⁸ Except for the museums of fine arts, people were not looking for unique specimens, but for objects that illustrated certain general laws or tendencies.³⁹ The exhibitions in those early days were so crammed with huge collections of materials, that it is hard to imagine that visitors really had the opportunity, or took the time, to look at all the objects on display. As with other museumgoers, visitors to the Amsterdam exhibition must have been overwhelmed by the sheer bulk of the exhibits, which were stacked closely together. Veth’s catalogue was one long sequence of descriptions of the nature and origin of the objects.

After a short preface lamenting the fact that the catalogue is incomplete (due partly to the fact that many contributions arrived in Amsterdam too late), the directory opens with four pages on the exhibition building itself. The architect—Ary Willem Stortenbeker—had given the structure an oriental design which, according to Veth, was a good decision. Because the “treasures of East and West” were so unevenly distributed, the American element had to be subordinated to the Asian.⁴⁰ More difficult to answer was the question which oriental style was to be applied. As the natives, according to Veth, had developed no independent architecture of their own, a choice had to be made between the art forms of the main civilizations that had dominated the East Indian archipelago, namely the Chinese, the Hindu, and the Arab civilizations. The Chinese style was not an option, however, because the Chinese had remained foreigners and had hardly transmitted any of “their particularities” to the native

régulière, et dont la population, clair-semée et nomade, connaît à peine ou du moins ne sent guère la main du maître qui prétend exercer sur elle la souveraineté [sic]”. The French version of the Exhibition Catalogue contains several language errors.

³⁸ Michel Foucault, “Of Other Spaces”, in: *Diacritics* 16 (Spring 1986) 22–27, p. 26; cf. “Des espaces autres” (1967/1984), in: *Dits et Ecrits 1954–1988*, vol. IV, Paris 1994, pp. 752–762, p. 759.

³⁹ Tony Bennett, *The Birth of the Museum. History, Theory, Politics*, London 1995, p. 42f.

⁴⁰ Veth 1883 (Dutch), I, pp. v–vi (French edition, p. xiii).

population. Sure enough, the Chinese, together with the Japanese and the Arabs, were included in the group of so-called “foreign orientals”, discriminated against by colonial rule.⁴¹

More could be said, according to Veth, for the Hindu style, to which British India owed so many delightful monuments. Notwithstanding its great contribution both to Java and to some other islands, however, Veth argued that the Hindu culture was languishing and represented mainly by ruins. The few monuments that still remained were of an outspokenly religious character and constructed (as, for instance, the Borobudur with its open galleries) in such a manner that they could not be used as models for the Amsterdam colonial building. That left them with the Arab culture—tacitly equated by Veth with the Islam—, which was much more influential than “Shivaism” and Buddhism, and was still gaining ground among the “heathen population”. The Islam had developed a Moorish style, which was not confined to mosques, but applied also to palaces and other secular buildings. Moreover, this was the style for which the “more civilized” inhabitant of the East Indies looked “in those rare cases that he feels the need to raise himself above the styleless insignificance of the native buildings”.⁴² Veth suggested further that the architect had been inspired by the Spanish Alhambra. The front of the building was decorated with the Dutch royal coat of arms, as well as the arms of Batavia, Sumatra, Surabaya and Surinam. The paving stones at the entrance bade the visitor welcome in three languages: Arab, “low Malay”, and Dutch.

Veth went into some detail in describing the Dutch Colonial Building and justifying its Arab style. The ways in which the relationship between the colonizing powers and the colonies were to be represented was a big issue at all the fairs. The Amsterdam Exhibition was, of course, a very important occasion, at which the Dutch had to (re)negotiate their identity as a colonial power—and at a symbolic level, too. The Dutch Colonial Building was the focal point of this identity, and because such places were “highly charged sites for the contested negotiations over the ownership of the symbolic capital”,⁴³

⁴¹ Different legal rules applied to the three main population groups: the “foreign orientals”, the natives, and the Europeans.

⁴² Veth 1883 (Dutch), I, p. vii.

⁴³ David Chidester & Edward T. Linenthal, “Introduction”, in: Chidester & Linenthal (eds), *American Sacred Space*, Bloomington 1995, pp. 1–42, p. 16.

it comes as no surprise that the building was much discussed in the press. The critic John F. Groll, who was an architect himself and who—contrary to Veth—had actually visited Asia, pointed to its inconsistencies, such as the minarets at the top of this secular building and the classical lion-heads in front of it. Groll would have preferred an old Dutch brick façade, which would have reminded the visitors of the glorious days of Jan Pieterszoon Coen.⁴⁴ Another critic regarded the *pastiches* of the Arab architecture then prevalent in “our East” as unacceptable, and asked why the Hindu monuments in the East Indies had not been taken as sources of inspiration. As ancient architecture all over the world had borrowed from religious buildings, the religious purpose of such constructions was—according to this author—no problem.⁴⁵ The outstanding monument in this respect was the Borobudur, which was much studied at the time. Various books about the Borobudur—scholarly as well as the more popular—began to appear in the last decades of the nineteenth century,⁴⁶ and a series of photographs of this “gigantic temple” was shown at the colonial building.⁴⁷

The debate on the architecture of the Dutch Colonial Building shows—in passing—the extent to which the cultures of the colonies could also be defined in terms of religion. From “Arab” to “Islam” and vice-versa was apparently a very small step. Foreign cultures were intimately associated with religion. Against the background of the fundamental tension between the European empires and their colonies, efforts were made to forge a symbolic religio-cultural unity out of the religious and cultural diversity of the Dutch East Indies. This explains the choice of an “oriental” style for the building. But—as we will see in the discussion of the religious exhibits themselves—the struggle for symbolic and administrative unification did not resolve the actual religious diversity of the colony.

⁴⁴ Bloembergen, *De koloniale vertoning*, p. 86.

⁴⁵ Alberdingk Thijm, “De Waereld-Ten-Toon-Stelling van 1883”, p. 307.

⁴⁶ C. Leemans (ed.), *Bôro-Boedoer op het eiland Java*, afgebeeld door en onder toezigt van F.C. Wilsen, Leiden 1873; N.J. Krom, *Korte gids voor den Boro-Budur*, Batavia 1914. For an example of the role of the Borobudur in more recent Indonesian history see Benedict R. O’G. Anderson, *Language and Power. Exploring Political Cultures in Indonesia*, Ithaca–London 1990, pp. 179–180.

⁴⁷ Van Eeden, *De Koloniën*, p. 6.

4. *The Exhibition of Religious Artefacts*

To get an idea of the colonial Dutch exhibition itself, we have to turn to Veth's catalogue, which sets out the displays in sequence. The exhibition was subdivided into three main groups: (1) the nature of the colonies, (2) the native population of the colonies, and (3) the Europeans in the colonies and their relationship to the natives. The catalogue of the Dutch colonies followed the same pattern as the general catalogue.⁴⁸ The first group included not only such categories as geography, meteorology, geology, mineralogy, and the world of plants and animals, but also (physical) "anthropology" (among other things, "skulls and stuffed heads"). The second group was subdivided into areas, such as domestic and societal life, means of existence, arts and sciences, religion and religious customs, forms of government and public institutions. The third group dealt with voyages of discovery, the colonial systems, the navy and land forces, the postal system, (shipping) trade, agriculture and industry, education (including mission), and scientific research. This arrangement legitimized the whole colonial undertaking: (1) the rich resources and (2) the primitiveness of the indigenous populations call for (3) the modernizing and civilizing intervention of Dutch government and entrepreneurship.⁴⁹

Important for our purpose is the twelfth class within group 2: "religion and religious customs", which was prefaced by Veth himself.⁵⁰ His introduction began as follows: "It is completely justified to consider Islam as the dominant religion of the Indian Archipelago". All those who have reached a certain level of civilization "follow the prophet of Mecca" and acknowledge the prescriptions of the Qu'ran. Islam was making much more progress than Christianity. Islam, Veth contended, had its priests, schools, houses of worship in many places, and even if a powerful and profound religious life was rare, many were prepared to die for their confession.⁵¹ Christianity was excluded

⁴⁸ *Officiële Catalogus der Internationale, Koloniale en Uitvoerhandel. Tentoonstelling van Amsterdam 1883*, Brussel 1883, pp. xvii–xxi; cf. *Catalogue officiel de l'exposition internationale coloniale et d'exportation générale d'Amsterdam 1883*, Bruxelles 1883. The three volumes of the catalogue corresponded to the three groups mentioned above.

⁴⁹ This idea has been borrowed from Bloembergen, *De koloniale vertoning*, p. 68f.

⁵⁰ Veth was the main author and compiler of the catalogue, to which various scholars contributed, each responsible for one or more (sub)divisions.

⁵¹ Veth 1883 (French), II, p. 306 (Dutch edition, p. 319): "L'Islam a partout ses prêtres, ses écoles, ses maisons de prière, et si une vie religieuse forte et intime est

here. The third group (the Europeans in the colonies and their relationship to the natives), however, had a subdivision on education, including missions, which listed the various Dutch missionary associations. Out of a population of almost 20 million people in the East Indies, the estimated number of Christians was approximately 175,000.⁵² Linguistic works, bible translations, and models of mission churches were exhibited. The Christian religion was clearly a minority affair in the Dutch colonies. The indigenous religions of the colonies and Christianity were categorized in different groups, corresponding to the separate display of the nature and culture of the colonies, on the one hand, and the European contributions to the colonized societies, on the other.

To illustrate the large influence of Islam, Veth pointed to the fact that Islam was rather successful among those tribes remaining largely faithful to the “ancestral worship of nature”. These people, he claimed, converted much more easily to Islam than to Christianity.⁵³ Some pages were devoted to a historical narrative about the way Islam was conquering the world in general and the East Indian archipelago in particular. Religious and worldly authority were unified in one person; the spread of the doctrine took place by holy war, and the conquered areas were ruled by Islamic law.⁵⁴ In this way, Islam was seen by Veth as an extremely powerful force, which encountered few difficulties in pushing aside old religions, including the “speculative” and “mystical” “religious consciousness” of the Hindu. The contrast between power, externality, and legalism on the one hand, and inwardness and religious purity on the other, pervades Veth’s description, thereby emphasizing the impurity of Islam: not

rare, les grands préceptes de l’Islam sont plus ou moins observés, jamais ils ne sont tout à fait méconnus, et nombre de ceux qui se montrent peu disposés à vivre conformément à leurs croyances, sont prêts à mourir pour elles quand ils les croient menacées”.

⁵² Veth 1883 (French), III, p. 242 (Dutch edition, p. 242).

⁵³ Veth 1883 (French), II, p. 306 (Dutch edition, p. 319).

⁵⁴ Veth 1883 (French), II, pp. 309–310 (Dutch edition, pp. 322–323): “Dans l’état fondé par Mahomet, le pouvoir suprême, tant ecclésiastique que séculier était entre les mains d’un seul homme. Toute l’organisation de l’Etat était censée reposer sur les institutions de Dieu, telles qu’elles sont contenues dans le Coran et complétées par la tradition concernant les actions et les sentences de Mahomet. La propagation de la doctrine se fit par la guerre sainte; les pays gagnés à l’Islam furent ajoutés comme conquêtes à l’empire des Califes et étaient en général gouvernés d’après les règles de droit public et de droit administratif qui avaient cours du temps du prophète. L’unité de l’Eglise et de l’Etat était complète”.

only in the sense that politics and religion were mixed, but also in the sense that Islam had taken over many elements of the old animistic religions.⁵⁵

Veth's introduction to class 12, "religion", in the catalogue sketches the actual religious history of the Dutch East Indies. I will not discuss his account in detail, but will point only to the teleology in his narrative. Veth's most pressing concern was to argue that the Hindu period was definitively over and done with, and that the more civilized sections of the population were now Muslim. Veth even argued that actually the Dutch East Indies no longer had the right to call themselves "Indian", if this term was to be taken in a strict sense.⁵⁶ Correspondingly, the most appropriate artistic style for the colony was the Moorish style, which of course justified the architecture of the Dutch Colonial Building.

The introduction is followed by descriptions of the various religious exhibits. The (in comparison to other classes rather small)⁵⁷ twelfth class "religion and religious customs" contained 49 entries, each more often than not comprising several items (entry 25, for instance, consisted of seventeen stone figures from Java).⁵⁸ The whole collection was divided into three sections: "Polynesian religions" (15 entries),⁵⁹ "Hinduism" (23 entries), and "Islam" (11 entries). Nearly all the items were from the East Indies.⁶⁰ The first section contained

⁵⁵ Veth 1883 (French), II, pp. 306–307 (Dutch edition, II, pp. 319–320): "Les croyances des sectateurs de l'islam sont loins d'être pures de tout mélange; le coeur et le sentiment de la très grande partie de la population sont remplis de la crainte des esprits, dont le culte de la nature peuple les bois et les montagnes, les fleuves et les campagnes; ils cherchent à gagner leur faveur par une foule de cérémonies superstitieuses, se laissent conduire par des songes et des divinations pour fixer l'époque favorable à toute action de quelque importance. Le culte d'Allah n'a pas refoulé l'animisme originaire des peuples de la nature, mais se trouve à côté, sans que l'indigène sente ce qu'il y a là de contradictoire, ou réfléchisse assez pour sentir le besoin de résoudre cette contradiction".

⁵⁶ Veth 1883 (Dutch), II, p. 324.

⁵⁷ Veth 1883 (Dutch), II, pp. 319–335 (French edition, pp. 306–320).

⁵⁸ Cf. also the list of objects sent to the Amsterdam exhibition by the Dutch Missionary Society (*Nederlandsch Zendelinggenootschap*, founded in 1797), which was added as a kind of appendix to the third volume of the catalogue and contained 38 religious items (Veth [Dutch], III, pp. 219–256).

⁵⁹ The indigenous religions of the Dutch East Indies were classified by Veth under the heading of "Polynesian religions".

⁶⁰ In the twelfth class I noted only one object from Surinam: item 15: "Cassette de Surinam avec objets servant aux pratiques idolâtres, dans l'état où ils ont été saisis par la police"; cf. Veth 1883 (French), II, p. 314 (Dutch edition, II, p. 327). There were also a few items from New Guinea.

religious material objects, classified as “idols”, “amulets”, and “means for sorcery and dowsing books”. The second section (Hinduism) included sculptures, photographs and even “37 oil sketches of some of the most important Hindu monuments of Java, made by H.N. Sieburgh”.⁶¹ Whereas the Polynesian indigenous religions were classified as “idolatry”; Hinduism, clearly, represented a much higher level of religion. The first two exhibits in the Hindu section were, characteristically, books: Wilhelm von Humboldt’s *Über die Kawi-Sprache auf der Insel Java, nebst einer Einleitung über die Verschiedenheit des menschlichen Sprachbaues und ihren Einfluß auf die geistige Entwicklung des Menschengeschlechts* (Berlin 1836–1839), and Sir Thomas St. Raffles’ *Antiquarian, Architectural and Landscape Illustrations of the History of Java* (London 1884), the latter volume being submitted by Veth personally. This section also contained various books with photographs of “Hindu ruins”, and Leemans’ prestigious volume “The Borobudur at Java” was represented twice at the exhibition, because it was submitted both by the Department of the Colonies and the Royal Military Academy in Breda.⁶² The third section, concerning Islam, included mainly models and photographs of mosques in the Dutch East Indies.

Given the fact that the Polynesian religions were categorized in terms of idolatry, and the Hindu religion was mainly represented by sculptures from bygone times and photographs of ruins, this meant that the visitor-reader was left with only one viable alternative, i.e. Islam, being the dominant and the most civilized form of religion in the Dutch East Indies. The first exhibit in this third section was a model of the “Masdjid or Mesigit Raja” (translated as “big mosque”) in the city of Kota Radja, which was under the authority of the government of Atjeh. Interestingly, the catalogue described the history of the represented mosque rather extensively. As the original mosque was destroyed during the second expedition against Atjeh in 1874, the governor-general decided to have it rebuilt, and on 27 December 1881 the newly-restored mosque was handed over to the “heads and priests of Atjeh” in an official ceremony. About the design the following was said: after consulting the most knowledgeable “Muhammedan priests”, it was decided that the building should

⁶¹ Jean Victor de Bruijn, *H.N. Sieburgh en zijn beteekenis voor de Javaansche oudheidkunde*, Leiden 1937, stresses the archaeological importance of Sieburgh’s paintings of monuments and sanctuaries (which have since disappeared).

⁶² Leemans, *Bôrô Boedoer op het eiland Java*.

have a “Byzantine-Moorish” architecture. However, the design could still accommodate the stepped gable of the façade, reminding Veth somewhat of the Old Dutch building style. European bricks as well as teakwood from the British Indies were used as materials, and the whole process of construction was supervised by Dutchmen. This last point was fully recognized by Veth, and to such a degree that he felt the need to add the comment that this building could only be listed in this part of the catalogue because, in essence, it complied with the “traditional style requirements of a Muhammedan temple”.⁶³ The whole story well illustrates how the style of the rebuilt mosque was not only, or primarily, an adaptation to actual existing practices, but was also the invention of the colonial power, asserting its dominance by adapting local religious architecture to its own principles.

5. *The Ethnographical Department*

The organization of such a huge exhibition was a hazardous undertaking at the time. The vicissitudes in bringing the ethnographical department of the Amsterdam exhibition to fruition show this very clearly. A short discussion is appropriate here, because it sheds some light on the perception and study of religion in those days. The special catalogue of this department, edited by Lindor Serrurier, the then director of the National Ethnographical Museum in Leiden, provides us with the necessary information. First, an additional site had to be sought, and it was eventually found in the overarched inner courtyard of the National Gallery in Amsterdam. Judging from Serrurier’s introduction to the catalogue, there were no preconceived notions about what the ethnographical department should be.⁶⁴ It was expected that there would be a wide variety of exhibits that would not fit in the other exhibition buildings, so that a new department was set up.⁶⁵ It was divided as follows: (1) British East Indies

⁶³ Veth 1883 (Dutch), II, 333.

⁶⁴ On his ideas on museums and how to catalogue, see Bloembergen, *De koloniale vertoning*, pp. 90–92.

⁶⁵ L. Serrurier, *Catalogus der ethnographische afdeling van de internationale koloniale en uitvoerhandel tentoonstelling (van 1 Mei tot ult^o October 1883) te Amsterdam*, Leiden 1883; Serrurier, *Catalogue de la section ethnographique de l'exposition internationale coloniale et d'exportation générale, tenue à Amsterdam du 1 mai au 31 octobre 1883*, Leyde 1883, p. 3: “Lorsque l’année passée on pût prévoir que l’exposition recevrait un grand nombre d’objets que l’on ne pourrait placer ni dans le bâtiment du commerce général, ni dans la

and Persia, (2) Oriental religions (Hinduism and Buddhism), (3) China and Japan, (4) historical-ethnographical collections, and (5) the private “comparative ethnology” collection of Augustus Henry Lane Fox Pitt Rivers (1827–1900), the “father of British archaeology” and founder of the archaeological and ethnological Pitt Rivers Museum in Oxford.

The success of the exhibition depended to a great extent on the cooperation of individuals and institutions. By far the largest division, on India and Persia, could only be established with the help of, among others, the Prince of Wales, Earl Lytton (former Viceroy of the British East Indies), the South Kensington Museum in London, and Raja Sourindro Mohun Tagore (1840–1914), a connoisseur of Hindu music, who had obtained an honorary doctorate from the University of Utrecht a couple of years before.⁶⁶ Tagore had donated 125 Sanskrit books to the University of Utrecht,⁶⁷ and on the occasion of the Amsterdam exhibition gave a collection of Hindu musical instruments to the Dutch government.⁶⁸ These were later put on display in the National Ethnographical Museum in Leiden.

The second, and probably also the fifth, divisions could not be realised, because in the end the organizers failed to purchase the collections. At the time when the catalogue was being prepared, the General Pitt Rivers collection had not yet arrived, and the materials that were supposed to be shown in the second division could not be obtained either. This was a severe blow to the whole undertaking, and to the religious element of the exhibition in particular. Some miscellaneous religious items were now primarily to be found in the first and third divisions.⁶⁹ The main contributor to the second division should have been the French industrialist Emile Guimet (1836–1918),

section coloniale, le comité d'exécution décida de demander au gouvernement l'autorisation de disposer de la grande cour intérieure du Musée national, afin d'y placer une section spéciale, à laquelle on destina le nom de section ethnographique à cause de la grande variété de provenance des collections que l'on attendait”.

⁶⁶ His name is spelled in various ways. James W. Furrell, *The Tagore Family. A Memoir* (printed for private circulation), London (Kegan Paul/Trench, & Co) 1882, pp. 168–182, transcribed: Sourendra Mohun Tagore. I use Serrurier's transcription.

⁶⁷ *Jaarboek der Rijks-Universiteit Utrecht 1880–1881*, Utrecht 1881, p. 102.

⁶⁸ Serrurier, *Catalogue de la section ethnographique*, pp. 113–136 (Dutch edition, pp. 111–132).

⁶⁹ Serrurier, *Catalogue de la section ethnographique*, p. 5 (Dutch edition, p. 5): “On n'a plus pu constituer le groupe. Les quelques objets relatifs au bouddhisme, au sintoïsme et au taoïsme qui sont exposés ont été réunis au groupe III, Chine et Japon; ceux qui se rapportent au culte indou ont été renvoyés parmi les collections provenant de l'Inde anglaise”.

founder of the *Musée Emile Guimet*, the first museum of religious history in the world, initially established in Lyon in 1879. On further consideration, however, Guimet did not feel Lyon was the right place, and tried to transfer the Museum to Paris. He finally succeeded in convincing the French government to raise the funds for a suitable building in the capital, and for the preservation of the collection. To this day, (part of) Guimet's collection is still on show in the museum on the *Place de Iéna* in Paris.

Guimet's importance to the history of French comparative religion and ethnography can hardly be overestimated. With the American Smithsonian Institute in mind, Guimet inaugurated a series of books and popular lectures, plus two extremely influential scholarly journals, the *Annales du Musée Guimet* and the *Revue de l'Histoire des Religions*.⁷⁰ Several Dutch scholars, such as A. Kuenen, C.P. Tiele, H. Kern, A.G. van Hamel, J. Hooykaas, H. Oort, and J.J.M. de Groot, also contributed to these series and periodicals. Early Dutch science of religion certainly influenced scholarship in France; indeed, Albert Réville and Jean Réville of the famous Fifth Section of the *École Pratique des Hautes Études* received part of their training in the Netherlands.⁷¹

Serrurier suggests that Guimet had suddenly changed his mind concerning his contribution to the Amsterdam exhibition,⁷² although there is no further explanation of why the plan failed. Perhaps it had to do with Guimet's sustained negotiations with the French government about the transfer of his museum to Paris, but we do not know this for sure. There were other difficulties in obtaining collections for the exhibition. From abroad, only Great Britain had a large share in the ethnological exhibition. The plan was for the Pitt Rivers collection to be displayed separately, mainly because the items

⁷⁰ [Guimet], *Le jubilé du Musée Guimet. Vingt-cinquième anniversaire de sa fondation 1879–1904*, Paris 1904, is an extremely helpful little book, which reproduces some of the foundational documents, a list of collaborators, a list of donations (of books and items), a list of the public speeches held at the Museum, and a short table of contents of the two periodicals connected with the Museum; cf. Keiko Omoto & Francis Macouin, *Quand le Japon s'ouvrit au monde. Émile Guimet et les arts d'Asie* (1990), Paris 2001.

⁷¹ Cf. Patrick Cabanel, "L'institutionnalisation des 'sciences religieuses' en France (1879–1908). Une entreprise protestante?", in: *Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire du Protestantisme français* 140 (1994) 33–80.

⁷² Serrurier, *Catalogue de la section ethnographique*, p. 5 (Dutch edition, p. 5): "Malheureusement M. Guimet s'est ravisé et a jugé devoir s'abstenir d'exposer à Amsterdam".

were not grouped according to provenance, but rather according to their nature and form. This kind of categorizing presupposed that all over the globe (primitive) people think and work similarly.⁷³ Such an arrangement, however, was rather exceptional. The items at the Amsterdam exhibition of 1883 were generally grouped around the region from which they came. It can thus be concluded that the colonial section, which included the ethnological exhibits, showed a marked interest in indigenous religion. It was not a prime subject, but was an integral part of the display of colonial and ethnological items.

6. *Conferences*

The fifth section of the Amsterdam exhibition comprised the international conferences. As the report on this section had it, exhibitions and conferences had the same goal of bringing people from different nations together and of promoting a fruitful exchange of ideas.⁷⁴ Colonial, commercial, and artistic topics were discussed in

⁷³ Serrurier, *Catalogue de la section ethnographique*, p. 4 (Dutch edition, p. 4): “La collection Pitt Rivers a, comme l’on sait, ceci de particulier que les objets qui la composent n’ont pas été classés d’après leur provenance, mais d’après leur nature et leur forme. On a voulu rendre sensible par ce classement le fait que dans les contrées les plus distantes du globe l’homme est conduit par un enchaînement d’idées qui suit partout essentiellement la même marche, et que tant les formes des objets que les ornements dont on les charge se déduisent régulièrement d’une forme à l’autre”. Col. A. Lane-Fox, “On the Principles of Classification Adopted in the Arrangement of His Anthropological Collections, Now Exhibited in the Bethnal Green Museum”, in: *Journal of the Anthropological Institute* 4 (1875) 193–194 (quoted in Bennett, *The Birth of the Museum*, p. 43): “The collection does not contain any considerable number of unique specimens, and has been collected during upwards of twenty years, not for the purpose of surprising any one, either by the beauty or value of the objects exhibited, but solely with a view to instruction. For this purpose ordinary and typical specimens, rather than rare objects, have been selected and arranged in sequence, so as to trace, as far as practicable, the succession of ideas by which the minds of men in a primitive condition of culture have progressed from the simple to the complex, and from homogeneous to heterogeneous”; cf. William Ryan Chapman, “Arranging Ethnology. A.H.L.F. Pitt Rivers and the typological tradition”, in: George W. Stocking (ed.), *Objects and Others. Essays on Museums and Material Culture*, Wisconsin 1985, pp. 15–48; M.W. Thompson, *General Pitt-Rivers. Evolution and Archaeology in the Nineteenth Century*, Bradford-on-Avon 1977.

⁷⁴ D. Josephus Jitta (ed.), *Exposition internationale coloniale et d’exportation générale*, vol. I, p. 3: “Les congrès sont l’accessoire, pour ainsi dire obligé, des expositions internationales . . . Expositions et congrès ont un but commun: rapprocher les hommes les uns des autres; c’est pourquoi on a toujours profité de la présence, dans une ville d’exposition, d’hommes appartenant à des nations diverses pour leur donner

several meetings in September 1883. The International Congress of Trade and Industry, the Congress of Colonial Medicine,⁷⁵ and the International Literary Association⁷⁶ all convened in Amsterdam in 1883.

The international exhibition not only had its own congresses (which were formally part of it), but also provided excellent opportunities for other meetings and conferences. A fine example of this last category was the International Congress of Freethinkers, which gathered under a large portrait of the Dutch writer Multatuli garlanded with flowers.⁷⁷ Another example was the Sixth International Congress of Orientalists in Leiden, which aptly represented the link between the—economic and colonial—exhibition project and scholarship. It had originally been scheduled for 1884, but “with the approval of the Dutch government and after consultation with the previous congress bureau” the decision was made to convene it a year earlier.⁷⁸ Congress participants visited the Colonial Exhibition and were received by the Amsterdam municipal authorities.⁷⁹ The Congress was chaired by the Old Testament scholar Abraham Kuenen, who had the sad task of replacing the famous oriental scholar R.P.A. Dozy, who had

le moyen d'échanger leurs idées sur des questions d'un intérêt général. L'abus que l'on a fait des congrès ne prouve pas contre leur usage, sans doute le travail collectif d'une assemblée d'hommes est loin de représenter le produit de leur capacités réunies, mais le travail individuel a besoin d'être soumis de temps en temps au choc courtois des opinions, il ne peut qu'en profiter, et les liens que les congrès des temps modernes ont formés entre un grand nombre de penseurs, ont certes été pour beaucoup dans les progrès qu'a faits dans ces mêmes temps l'idée de la solidarité humaine”.

⁷⁵ B.J. Stokvis, *Discours d'Ouverture. Exposition internationale coloniale et d'exportation générale. Congrès internationale de médecins des colonies*, Amsterdam 1883, Amsterdam 1883; cf. *Exposition Internationale Coloniale Amsterdam. Mai-1883-October. Catalogue Provisoire de l'Exposition Coloniale Médicale*, s.l., s.n., s.a. [Amsterdam 1883]. This last item is available in the university libraries of Leiden and Amsterdam (Municipal University).

⁷⁶ The original French name was *Association Littéraire Internationale*; cf. T.M.C. Asser, *Il y a trente ans! Souvenir de la session d'Amsterdam de l'Association Littéraire Internationale 1883. Paroles de bienvenue*, La Haye 1913.

⁷⁷ Cf. Bloembergen, *De koloniale vertoning*, pp. 44–47; Montijn, *Kermis*, p. 61.

⁷⁸ M.J. de Goeje (ed.), *Actes du Sixième Congrès International des Orientalistes, tenu en 1883 à Leide*, Part I: *Compte-Rendu des Séances*, Leide 1884–1885, vol. I, pp. 1–3.

⁷⁹ De Goeje, *Actes du Sixième Congrès International des Orientalistes*, vol. I, pp. 44, & 212–218. The Mayor of Amsterdam stressed the intimate ties between economics and the sciences: “C'est dans une ville commerçante comme Amsterdam, que vous Messieurs . . . pouviez être assurés de trouver un accueil cordial et sympathique, parce que, mieux peut-être qu'ailleurs, on y comprend et apprécie les rapports intimes et les liens indissolubles qui rattachent entre elles la vie matérielle, objet du commerce, et la vie idéale, objet de la science” (215).

died during the preparatory phase of the meeting and was commemorated by Kuenen with the words: “Un chef, un grand capitaine est tombé en Israël”.⁸⁰

The opening ceremony took place on September 10, 1883, in the *Stadsgehoorzaal* (Great Auditorium) of the city of Leiden. The opening speech was delivered by J. Heemskerk Azn., the Dutch Home Secretary and Honorary President of the Congress. He singled out two main factors that had contributed to the flourishing of the study of oriental languages in the Netherlands. The first was the revolt against the Spanish rule of Philip II, which was understood as a religious revolt, i.e. a popular uprising in the defence of the freedom to read the bible. The Dutch people wanted reliable translations. It was no coincidence, therefore, that the University of Leiden (which was founded in 1575 by William of Orange, after the town had successfully endured a Spanish siege) had from the very beginning appointed a professor of Hebrew. Secondly, Heemskerk referred to the trade with the Levant, which also stimulated oriental studies.

This second point was stressed by Kuenen as well. The reason for convening the Congress of Orientalists in a small country such as the Netherlands was, without doubt, the fact that it possessed colonies. Kuenen considered the connection to be obvious, and tried to explain it from an ethical point of view. The *mission civilatrice* of the mother country regarding its colonies also concerns the “conquest of the colonies in favour of science”.⁸¹ Sure enough, many institutions con-

⁸⁰ De Goeje, *Actes du Sixième Congrès International des Orientalistes*, vol. I, p. 41. The reference is to II Sam. 3,38; cf. Otterspeer, *Oriental Connections*, pp. 1–2.

⁸¹ De Goeje, *Actes du Sixième Congrès International des Orientalistes*, vol. I, pp. 44–45 (from Kuenen’s opening speech): “Ainsi, entre le fait que les états européens possèdent des colonies et l’existence de notre Congrès, il y a un rapport que l’on reconnaît de toutes parts. Mais en quoi consiste ce rapport? Question dangereuse, qui ouvre un si vaste champ à la pensée qu’il semble impossible de ne pas s’y égarer. Mais nous pouvons nous placer à un point de vue supérieur à tous les autres, au point de vue du devoir. Chacun de vous, Messieurs, serait libre de choisir tout autre côté qu’il lui plairait pour aborder cette question en ce qui regarde les Pays-Bas; mais les Néerlandais n’ont pas cette liberté, puisqu’il s’agit d’un dépôt qui leur a été confié, et de la tâche qui leur incombe de ce fait. Dans cette tâche est compris, cela va sans dire, ce que l’on pourrait appeler la partie morale du devoir d’une métropole à l’égard de ses colonies, celui de travailler à la culture et à l’éducation des populations qu’elle se voit confiées. J’ai cependant en vue en premier lieu une autre obligation, qui se trouve étroitement liée à cette tâche civilatrice, c’est le devoir de conquérir les colonies *au profit de la science*. Vous savez comme Schleiermacher envisageait la tâche que l’humanité est appelée à remplir; c’est celle de faire assimiler la nature par la raison. Ce développement se produit par un progrès double,

tributed to this objective. Kuenen mentioned the missionary societies, the Dutch Bible Society, the Batavian Society of Arts and Letters, the Royal Dutch Institute of Philology, Geography and Ethnography of the Dutch East Indies (*Koninklijk Instituut voor de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch-Indië*), the Indies' Society and the Geographical Society, as well as the training colleges for civil servants leaving for the Indies.⁸² In addition to these private initiatives, Kuenen also referred to the introduction of several new courses (and professorships)—for instance on “Muhammedan law and other institutions and customs of the Dutch Indies” and on the geography and ethnography of the East Indian archipelago—into the university curriculum, thanks to the new Higher Education Act of 1876. Kuenen said he was still waiting for a rise of national consciousness in the Netherlands,⁸³ but expressed the hope that the various events held in 1883 would lead to an improvement in this regard.

In addition to the sessions (1) Semitic, (2) Aryan, (3) African (Egyptian), and (4) Central Asia and the Far East, the congress also included a new session (in contrast to previous conferences) on Malaysia and Polynesia.⁸⁴ This was thought to be a major improvement. The emphasis was on linguistic studies, although the congress papers also included contributions on religious and historical topics.⁸⁵

qui avance par deux voies parallèles. Il y a la conquête de la nature, ‘die Bildung’, l’acte par lequel l’homme la moule pour ainsi dire; mais il y a aussi, également indispensable, également précieuse, la conquête intellectuelle de cette même nature, ‘die Erkennung’, l’acte par lequel [l’]homme la fait passer au dedans lui” (italics original).

⁸² Cf. C. Fasseur, *De Indologen. Ambtenaren voor de Oost, 1825–1950*, Amsterdam 1993; P. van der Velde, “Van koloniale lobby naar koloniale hobby. Het Koninklijk Nederlands Aardrijkskundig Genootschap en Nederlands-Indië, 1873–1914”, in: *Geografisch Tijdschrift* (Koninklijk Nederlands Aardrijkskundig Genootschap), new series 22/1 (1988) 211–221.

⁸³ De Goeje, *Actes du Sixième Congrès International des Orientalistes*, vol. I, 49: “[C]es griefs disparaîtraient d’eux-mêmes, emportés par la force de l’opinion publique, si la conscience nationale se réveillait pour ne plus s’assoupir. . . . [L]a nécessité de l’étude de l’Orient, et surtout sur notre Orient à nous, ne s’est pas imposée encore au sentiment nationale” (italics original). On Dutch nationalism, see Henk te Velde, “Nederlands nationaal besef vanaf 1800”, in: Ton Zwaan et al. (eds), *Het Europees Labyrint. Nationalisme en Natievorming in Europa*, Amsterdam 1991, pp. 173–188.

⁸⁴ Cf. De Goeje, *Actes du Sixième Congrès International des Orientalistes*, vol. I, p. 23.

⁸⁵ Cf. M.J. de Goeje, “Mémoire posthume de M. Dozy contenant de nouveaux documents pour l’étude de la religion des Harriens” (section 1, 281ff.); C.P. Tiele, “La déesse Ištar surtout dans le Mythe Babylonien” (section 1, 493ff.); J.S. Speijer, “Le mythe de Nahusha” (section 2, 81ff.); E.S.W. Senâthi Râja, “A few remarks on the Saiva sect of Hindus in South India” (section 2, 289ff.); J. Lieblein, “Über

The focus was always on texts and inscriptions; there was no place for ethnological and geographical articles. Such contributions were to be found in the two volumes edited by the Royal Institute of Philology, Geography and Ethnology of the Dutch East Indies, on the occasion of the Leiden Congress of Orientalists.⁸⁶ None of these articles, however, dealt with religious history.

7. *Heterotopias*

The heterogeneous character of world fairs means that they are rather difficult to analyze. Ideally, scholars aim at an integral approach to such mega-events, but they can never be sure of covering all the relevant aspects involved. As is clear from the above, the fairs were concerned with processes of commodification and commercialization, but also with the shaping and representation of the identities of empires and colonies. The rhetorics of progress and the duty to civilize had imperialistic as well as scholarly dimensions. Michel Foucault's concept of "heterotopia" can be used to shed more light on the complexities involved in world fairs. Besides utopias, which are sites with no real place, there are—according to Foucault—also "places that do exist and that are formed in the very founding of society—which are something like counter-sites, a kind of effectively enacted utopia in which the real sites, all the other real sites that can be found within the culture, are simultaneously represented, contested, and, inverted. Places of this kind are outside of all places, even though it may be possible to indicate their location in reality. Because these places are absolutely different from all the sites that they reflect and speak about, I shall call them, by way of contrast to utopias, heterotopias".⁸⁷ Foucault gave a vast—not to say heterogeneous—array of examples of heterotopias, including psychiatric hospitals, prisons, cemeteries, gardens, festivals, brothels, colonies, museums and libraries. World fairs clearly constitute the ultimate attempt to represent the whole globe, to give "an illustrated encyclopedia of civilization".⁸⁸ In

altägyptische Religion" (section 3, 45ff.); J.J.M. de Groot, "Buddhist masses for the dead at Amoy" (section 4, 1ff.).

⁸⁶ Th. Ch. L. Wijnmalen (ed.), *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch-Indië*.

⁸⁷ Foucault, "Of Other Spaces", p. 24.

⁸⁸ Cf. Robert W. Rydell, *All the World's a Fair*, p. 45 (quoting G. Brown Goode, curator of the Chicago exhibition of 1893).

some way, such fairs are indeed outside the real sites within the culture they represent by means of exhibits, commercial sites, and conferences.

In this context Foucault points to the mirror as the connection between utopia and heterotopia. On the one hand, it is, after all, a utopia: “In the mirror, I see myself there where I am not, in an unreal, virtual space that opens up behind the surface; I am over there, where I am not, in an unreal, virtual space that opens up behind the surface; I am over there, there where I am not, a sort of shadow that gives my own visibility to myself, that enables me to see myself there where I am absent”. But at the same time the mirror is a heterotopia, since it exists in reality and exerts influence on the viewer: “Starting from this gaze that is, as it were, directed toward me, from the ground of this virtual space that is on the other side of the glass, I come back to myself; I begin again to direct my eyes toward myself and to reconstitute myself there where I am”.⁸⁹ The comparison with the mirror also sheds light on the world exhibitions, which on the one hand exist outside ordinary reality, but on the other hand mirror that reality and thus confront the spectators with themselves, by presenting images of themselves and others. In the “mirror” of the Indonesian and Surinamese showcases “we” can clearly see the superiority of “our” culture and religion. Of course, this way of representation legitimizes the colonial exploitation and *mission civilatrice* of the metropolis.

World exhibitions, therefore, do not simply “mirror” the arts and industry of all nations, but also “represent” national cultures and identities. As religion at the time was a basic part of the identity of the metropolis as well as of the colonies, it comes as no surprise that these exhibitions were also about religion. Being part and parcel of the negotiation of national and cultural identities, it is not to be expected that religion occupied a single location at such events. The present chapter has tried to explore various spaces in which religion was represented or somehow implicated. The exhibition of “religious” artefacts is a relatively simple case to study, whereas it is much more difficult to give an appropriate analysis of the discourse on the Colonial Building and the native villages that highlighted the “religious” dimensions involved. The religious element—being an integral part

⁸⁹ Foucault, “Of Other Spaces”, p. 24.

of the discourse—needs to be studied carefully, but at the same time it must not (and cannot) be disentangled from the larger discourse as a whole.

Here we touch upon the point of how the relationship between cultural and religious studies is to be conceived. If religion is located in a separate sphere—examples are rituals performed in demarcated sacred spaces such as churches, and the doctrines of religious communities—religious studies analyzing these subjects make sense. But in the case of the religious aspect being embodied in a broader cultural practice, the analysis of it has to be an integral part of cultural studies.⁹⁰ To illustrate this point, we may look at the way the exhibits were catalogued for these world fairs. The section “religion and religious customs”, for instance, was part of the second group within the colonial exhibition (the native population), whereas the Christian religion was represented under the heading of “missions”, belonging to the third group (the Europeans in the colonies and their relationship with the natives). This opposition is not specific to the subject of religion, but pervades the whole design of the colonial exhibition. The logic of the description applies to all artefacts, religious or otherwise. It tells us (1) what the object was supposed to be, (2) where it was to be located and (3) who had submitted it to the exhibition. In this way, the exhibits from the colonies were given (a new) meaning by the authoritative scholarly endeavour of identifying and classifying, which related the “origin” of the objects to the (colonizing) persons or institutions (who made these items available). Scholarship is used in much the same vein to classify cultural as well as specific religious objects.

This is not to say that there is nothing specific in the treatment of religion at such fairs. A clear example of the Amsterdam exhibition is the teleology involved in the display of the religious artefacts and models: from native religion to Buddhism, and, finally, to Islam. But even this fits loosely into the general rhetoric surrounding progress and the civilizing of colonized peoples. This did not extend, however, to Veth’s seeing the religion of the colonial power reigning triumphant in the Dutch East Indies. In his view, Islam was by far

⁹⁰ This distinction between religion as a distinct phenomenon and as an integral part of a broader cultural practice is, of course, not clear-cut, but is made here for reasons of convenience.

the most dominant religion, and it was an important reason for his defense of the Moorish architecture of the Dutch Colonial Building. This last case is particularly appropriate in that it illustrates that it is sometimes not possible—and even undesirable—to disentangle some sort of “religious analysis” from a more general cultural analysis. Of course, we have to be aware of the interplay between “religious”, “ethnic” (“national”), and “cultural” notions, but it makes no sense to distinguish these here in terms of alleged independent “domains”.

Describing the world fairs as “heterotopias” (which allegedly represent, reflect and invert society as such) explains the difficulty inherent in providing a comprehensive description and forging an adequate theoretical framework for analysis. It is evident that an either/or approach will not do, because the fairs were designed for both education and amusement, they were national, but also international events, commercial and edifying, civilizing and repressive, secular and religious, and so on. “Religion” was not always located in well-defined spots, but “pervaded”—so to speak—the exhibition as such. Students of religion, first of all P.J. Veth, were involved, but it is difficult to describe the various ways of “knowledge transfer” adequately. Especially the colonial character of the Amsterdam exhibition implied a comparative perspective, including the binary opposition between “their” and “our” culture and religion, etc. Often the “religious” element is an integral part of larger (“cultural”) representations. By discussing the Amsterdam exhibition of 1883, this chapter has explored various ways in which religions and religious dimensions were represented in a comparative perspective. Thus, it is clear that religion was important in this respect and that “knowledge” of specialists of foreign cultures (including religion) was used to construe this mega-event. Perhaps a more painstaking analysis of the available sources (such as Veth’s correspondence) would show the precise interactions between religious representation in the public sphere and (religious) scholarship. That, however, would be another book.

The comparative aspect is also fruitful to highlight the complex tensions and connections with other phenomena. In this respect the parallel with museums is interesting, the latter also having an educative purpose. Working-class men, in particular, had to be attracted away from the pleasures of taverns and taprooms. “In the earlier phase, the rules and proscriptions governing attendance at museums had served to distinguish the bourgeois public from the rough and

raucous manners of the general populace by excluding the latter. By contrast, the museum's new conception as an instrument of public instruction envisaged it as, in its new openness, an exemplary space in which the rough and raucous might learn to civilize themselves by modelling their conduct on the middle-class codes of behaviour to which museum attendance would expose them".⁹¹ Moreover, museums as well as world fairs were accessible to both men and women.⁹² Respectable women could now enter the public sphere; they could even visit these sites without male companions.

The factual interdependence of the Amsterdam exhibition and several museums can hardly be overlooked. The director of the Leiden Ethnological Museum was involved in the preparations of the 1883 exhibition in many ways. The director of the Colonial Museum in Haarlem, the already mentioned F.W. van Eeden, welcomed the new stream of supplies for his museum after the exhibition closed at the end of October 1883.⁹³ This transfer of exhibits indicates a noticeable difference as well. Fairs had a temporary character, whereas museums were meant to last. Museums are the archives of material culture, in which an allegedly "timeless" new order of things is instituted. But in museums as well as at world exhibitions, objects were—often forcefully—appropriated and removed from their (historical) contexts and put into a new environment.⁹⁴ According to the influential cultural anthropologist Franz Boas (1858–1942), the task of ethnological museums was to preserve the valuable material that had been collected; and such collections constituted, at the same time, the foundation of science.⁹⁵

It is important to stress once more that (the representation of) religion at the Amsterdam Colonial and Export Trade Exhibition

⁹¹ Cf. Bennett, *The Birth of the Museum*, p. 28.

⁹² Cf. Maria Grever, "Reconstructing the Fatherland. Comparative Perspectives on Women and 19th Century Exhibitions", in: Maria Grever & Fia Dieteren (eds), *A Fatherland for Women. The 1898 "Nationale Tentoonstelling van Vrouwenarbeid" in retrospect*, Amsterdam 2000, pp. 13–29.

⁹³ F.W. van Eeden, *Gedenkschrift bij het twaalf en een half-jarig bestaan van het Koloniaal Museum op het Paviljoen te Haarlem, 13 Januari 1884*, Haarlem 1884, p. 21.

⁹⁴ Cf. George W. Stocking (ed.), *Objects and Others. Essays on Museums and Material Culture*, Wisconsin 1985, esp. pp. 4–6; Eva Sturm, *Konservierte Welt. Museum und Musealisierung*, Berlin 1991; Tim Barringer & Tom Flynn (eds), *Colonialism and the Object. Empire, Material Culture and the Museum*, London–New York 1998.

⁹⁵ F. Boas, "Some Principles of Museum Administration", in: *Science* 25 (1907) 921–933, p. 929f. (quoted after Stocking, *Objects and Others*, p. 193).

involved much more than the religious exhibits themselves. They alone—insofar as they are still in the collection of the Leiden Ethnological Museum—are the actual and tangible remains of that event. For the architecture of the Dutch Colonial Building, for the native villages, and many other things, we have to rely on pictures and texts. Ultimately, however, the scholar of religious material history is interested in the meanings attached to material culture, in the ways religion was represented, and how material culture shaped the individual and collective identities of believers as well as non-believers. My purpose in this chapter has not been to argue that the Amsterdam exhibition was fundamentally about religion, but that exhibiting the Netherlands and its colonies involved religious representation, not always (or hardly ever) as a separate subject, but as an inherent element of colonial culture as such. Moreover, the exhibition itself was described in religious terms. It was not the American dream of a New Jerusalem (“The city so holy and clean,/ No sorrow can breathe in the air”), but doubtless also in Amsterdam the visitors trod sacred ground and saw their own national, cultural and religious identity mirrored in the multi-faceted heterotopia that was presented there.

CHAPTER NINE

CONCLUSION

1. *Internationalization*

By way of conclusion I will focus on the position of Dutch science of religion in the international context and offer some explanations for its success. The steady progress of the science of religion at the end of the nineteenth century is demonstrated by the number of large conferences that were organized. At first, a strong ecumenical, religious interest was noticeable. The meeting of people from various religious backgrounds was supposed to contribute to mutual understanding, and sometimes even a universal religion of mankind was envisioned. The World's Parliament of Religions, held in Chicago in 1893, forms a suitable illustration of these hopes. Representatives of the great world religions were invited to express their views on various religious topics.¹ Both Max Müller and C.P. Tiele, who could not attend this event, sent papers to the organizing committee. Their papers were read, but (probably due to their scholarly tone) were not received very enthusiastically by the audience, which was more interested in genuinely religious themes. Tiele and Müller both addressed topics from the field of the science of religion proper.² The scientific character of the study of religion was very important to these early scholars.

¹ For the proceedings, see John Henry Barrows (ed.), *The World's Parliament of Religions*, 2 vols, London 1893; cf. Dorothea Lüddeckens, *Das Weltparlament der Religionen von 1893. Strukturen interreligiöser Begegnung im 19. Jahrhundert*, Berlin–New York 2002; Richard Hughes Seager (ed.), *The Dawn of Religious Pluralism. Voices from the World's Parliament of Religion, 1893*, La Salle, Illinois 1993; Seager, *The World's Parliament of Religions. The East/West Encounter, Chicago 1893*, Bloomington–Indianapolis 1995; Eric J. Ziolkowski (ed.), *A Museum of Faiths. Histories and Legacies of the 1893 World's Parliament of Religion*, Atlanta, Georgia 1993.

² C.P. Tiele, “On the Study of Comparative Theology”, in: Barrows, *The World's Parliament of Religions*, vol. I, pp. 583–590; Max Müller, “Greek Philosophy and the Christian Religion”, in: Barrows, *The World's Parliament of Religions*, vol. II, pp. 935–936; cf. Müller, “The Real Significance of the Parliament of Religions” (*Arena* 11: 1–14 [no. 61, December 1894]), reprinted in: Ziolkowski, *A Museum of Faiths*, pp. 149–162. On the reception of Tiele's paper, see F.W.N. Hugenholtz, *Het Parlement der Godsdiensten*, second edition, Rotterdam 1893, p. 110.

Even the much more scholarly Stockholm congress on the science of religion in 1897 was criticized by some for not being scholarly enough.³ The Paris conference in 1900 is generally considered to be the first truly scientific congress in the field. To mark a new start, the French organizers took the liberty of naming their gathering the *First International Congress on the History of Religions*. The regulations of the congress stressed the historical (scientific) character of the contributions and discussions, and explicitly forbade confessional or dogmatic polemics.⁴ This point was stressed on later occasions, too.⁵ These early congresses were characterized by a strongly historical outlook. The Paris congress had a session on the history of “non-civilized” religions, many sessions on Oriental religions, one on German and Celtic religions, and one on the history of Christianity.⁶ The proceedings contain no obviously “philosophical” contributions.

What is rather striking from our present-day perspective is the strong institutional support for this new endeavour. The first congress on history of religions in the Netherlands, held in Leiden in 1912 and presided over by Chantepie de la Saussaye, is a good example. The congress was made financially possible by a grant from the Dutch government and was held under the patronage of His Royal Highness Prince Henry of the Netherlands, who however because of a “légère indisposition” was unable to attend. The Committee of Honour included, among others, the Home Secretary, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Minister of Colonial Affairs, and the Mayor of Leiden. The Home Secretary delivered a welcoming speech; the Mayor received the members of the congress at the Town Hall and placed the municipal Great Auditorium at their disposal; the city of Rotterdam offered them a boat trip; the Dutch Railroad Company arranged a special train to Rotterdam; the Dutch Tramways Company offered free rides in Leiden and to the sea resorts of

³ *Religionsvetenskapliga Kongressen in Stockholm 1897*, ed. by S.A. Fries, Stockholm 1898; cf. A. Aall, “Le Congrès des sciences religieuses de Stockholm”, in: *Revue de l’Histoire des Religions* 18 (1897) 265–270.

⁴ *Actes de Premier Congrès International d’Histoire des Religions. Paris 1900*, vol. I: Séances Générales, Paris 1901, p. vii (article 7).

⁵ Cf. *Actes du IV^e Congrès International d’Histoire des Religions, tenu à Leide du 9^e–13^e septembre 1912*, Leide 1913, p. 14: “Le Congrès sera exclusivement scientifique et sera consacré à des recherches purement historiques sur les religions. Toute discussion concernant des question [sic] de foi sera interdite”.

⁶ For a list of the sessions, see *Actes de Premier Congrès International d’Histoire des Religions. Paris 1900*, vol. I, p. v.

Katwijk and Noordwijk, and many Leiden families offered lodgings to the guests.

In his welcoming address, the President of the Honorary Committee, W.H. de Beaufort, a former Minister of Foreign Affairs, referred to the great liberal Dutch tradition, which made free scholarship possible; to the study of theology, philosophy, and orientalism, which had always enjoyed such a prominent place in the University of Leiden; and to the fact that the establishment of a Dutch colonial empire in the Indies and the economic relations with the colonies did not fail to promote scholarly studies. In particular, De Beaufort pointed to the cosmopolitan character of “your science”; its field consisted not only of the whole of history, but of all countries in the universe as well. Its most attractive aspect seemed to him the fact that it brought students into contact with the highest aspirations of mankind, especially with the “sentiment of the mystery of the infinite, in all times and with all peoples”.⁷

This speech by a layman touched upon several points that are important for the understanding of early (Dutch) science of religion. Having established the ubiquity of the object of research of this conference, De Beaufort made special mention of the importance of the Orient for the study of religion. The focus of many of these early scholars was indeed on the ancient religions of the Orient. This was certainly true of the Dutch contribution to the field. With the notable exception of Chantepie de la Saussaye, who wrote on *The Religion of the Teutons*,⁸ Dutch scholars were mostly interested in ancient, oriental religions, especially those of Ancient Egypt. Leiden University had long been a centre for the study of oriental (including Semitic) languages and cultures, which were relevant to the study of religion. The Sixth International Congress of Orientalists, which had convened in Leiden in 1883, had already provided ample testimony of the contribution of Dutch orientalist studies. A special session on Malaysia and the Polynesian archipelago was added on this occasion. Many contributions to this session were in Dutch, which was one of the official languages of the congress.⁹

⁷ *Actes du IV^e Congrès International d'Histoire des Religions, tenu à Leide du 9^e-13^e septembre 1912*, pp. 21-29.

⁸ P.D. Chantepie de la Saussaye, *The Religion of the Teutons*, Boston 1902.

⁹ M. de Goeje (ed.), *Actes du Sixième Congrès International des Orientalistes, tenu en 1883 à Leide*, vol. I: *Compte-Rendu des Séances*, Leide 1884, p. 23 (“Dispositions

The development of the scholarly study of religion, and especially its internationalization, was part of the broader development of the expansion of the western world. The international conferences were often organized in tandem with costly international exhibitions, and themselves were also often generously sponsored by the government of the organizing country. Some sort of vision of civilizing progress and the unity of mankind governed these meetings, till the outbreak of the Great War disturbed these ideals.¹⁰ The idea of a global world, in which the western nations had to take the lead, was fostered by the intensification in the process of colonization in the second half of the nineteenth century. The age of imperialism had begun. The colonies were not only economically exploited, but more and more colonized in a political sense as well. Governmental and administrative control was intensified and extended. This included a missionary offensive, which aimed at the education and, if possible, conversion of the “natives”.¹¹ Most scholars supported this mission and, in the Netherlands, helped to formulate an “ethical colonial policy”.¹²

The precise connection between the Dutch study of religion as described in this book and colonialism, however, is hard to determine. In my view, the relationship between oriental studies (including the study of religion) and colonialism is much clearer than that between colonialism and the rise of a separate science of religion.¹³ For instance, as we saw in chapter VIII above, the 1883 International Congress of Orientalists was originally scheduled for 1884. It was brought forward a year so that it could coincide with the International

generales”): “Les langues officielles du Congrès sont le Hollandais, le Français et le Latin. Toutefois on pourra se servir aussi pour les communications de l’Allemand, de l’Anglais et de l’Italien”.

¹⁰ On the difficulties of renewing scientific cooperation after World War I, see B. Schröder-Gudehus, *Deutsche Wissenschaft und Internationale Zusammenarbeit 1914–1928*, Genève 1966. Interesting is also the compilation by the Dutch physician P.H. Eijkman: *L’Internationalisme Scientifique (Sciences pures et lettres)*, La Haye (Bureau préliminaire de la fondation pour l’internationalisme) 1911.

¹¹ Cf. M. Kuitenbrouwer, *Nederland en de opkomst van het moderne imperialisme. Koloniën en buitenlandse politiek 1870–1902*, Amsterdam–Dieren 1985.

¹² C. Snouck Hurgronje (1857–1936), influential government adviser and from 1906 professor of Arabic at the Leiden University, is a good example.

¹³ The most discussed book, of course, is that by Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (reprinted with a new afterword; original edition 1978), London etc. 1995; cf. C.A. Breckenridge & P. van der Veer (eds), *Orientalism and the Postcolonial Predicament. Perspectives on South Asia*, Philadelphia 1993; G. Prakash, *After Colonialism. Imperial Histories and Postcolonial Displacements*, Princeton 1995.

Colonial Exhibition in Amsterdam in 1883. The participants in the Orientalist Congress visited the exhibition, after which they were received by the Amsterdam municipal authorities. Scientific congresses and major international exhibitions were joint ventures at the time. The Chicago World's Parliament of Religions (1893) and the Paris First International Congress on the History of Religions (1900) were both convened in the context of World Exhibitions. These were great occasions, in which the western nations could display their influence and power. The catalogue on the Dutch East Indies for the Paris exhibition of 1900 contained more than 450 pages. In its introduction, a parallel was drawn with the Amsterdam exhibition in 1883, and it was explained that the current emphasis was less on indigenous products and more on what the colonial empire had established in the colonies. Not only the indigenous religions, but also the missions, educational practices, and scientific collections were highlighted.¹⁴

The Dutch ethnographers (anthropologists) concentrated on the Dutch East Indies and devoted relatively much attention to the religions in the colonies.¹⁵ The Dutch study of religions in general (including science of religion *stricto sensu*), however, concentrated more on the great "universal religions".¹⁶ With the exception of the study of Chinese religion, which was relevant to colonial practice because of the large number of Chinese living in the Dutch East Indies,¹⁷ this knowledge was not directly instrumental to the "colonial project". I have never encountered any argument in support of the establishment

¹⁴ *Guide à travers la section des Indes Néerlandaises Groupe XVII (Colonisation)*, Exposition Universelle Internationale de 1900 à Paris, La Haye 1900, p. xi: "On a accordé plus de place aux cultures destinées au marché européen, mais moins aux moyens d'existence purement indigènes, comme la chasse, la pêche, les petites industries, etc. Les établissements d'instruction pour les indigènes comme pour les Européens, différentes branches de service de l'administration européenne sont traitées plus en détail. L'attention a été fixée sur plus d'un sujet important de la vie matérielle, et en outre sur les résultats salutaires des missions, sur l'institution des caisses d'épargne et sur de nouveaux courants dans la vie intellectuelle et scientifique".

¹⁵ Cf. chapter VII above.

¹⁶ A term made famous by A. Kuenen, *National Religions and Universal Religions*, London 1882.

¹⁷ The study of Chinese religion in the Netherlands goes back to an active policy on behalf of the Dutch government; cf. Leon Blussé, "Of Hewers of Wood and Drawers of Water. Leiden University's Early Sinologists (1853–1911)", in: Willem Otterspeer (ed.), *Leiden Oriental Connections 1850–1940*, Leiden etc. 1989, pp. 317–353, esp. pp. 326ff. The study of Islam in the Dutch East Indies should also be mentioned in this context, but Islam scholarship did not limit itself to the colonies.

of the science of religion within the Dutch academic system that referred to the colonies. The scholars and politicians of those days would certainly have used this link, because it would have strengthened their case. In a broad sense, of course, it is true that the study of foreign culture and religion was deemed important because of economic and colonial interests.

The international context of these studies is also illustrated by the making of encyclopedias, such as the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Hasting's *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, and the German *Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, to which foreign scholars contributed. The Netherlands did not have a similar high-profile project, but the involvement of Dutch scholars in the launch of the *Encyclopaedia of Islam* is remarkable. William Robertson Smith had called for such an undertaking at the International Congress of Orientalists in London in 1892. It was very difficult to get such a huge project, involving large sums of money, off the ground. Yet, the organizing committee succeeded in obtaining the (financial) support of several governments, associations, and academies of sciences. One of the reasons why this undertaking was located in the Netherlands was the fact that the Leiden publishing house of Brill had an excellent reputation for printing Arabic script. M. de Goeje asked his pupil M. Th. Houtsma to coordinate the whole undertaking, which would prove a mixed blessing to him personally. It turned out that some of the financial support was promised on the condition that the encyclopaedia was published in the language of the donor. Therefore, the *Encyclopaedia of Islam* had to appear in three languages: English, German, and French.¹⁸ Instead of editing only one encyclopaedia, Houtsma had to coordinate the publication of three—a truly international affair,

¹⁸ M. Th. Houtsma et al. (eds), *The Encyclopaedia of Islam. A Dictionary of Geography, Ethnography and Biography of the Muhammadan Peoples*, prep. by a number of leading orientalists, 5 vols, Leyden etc. 1913–1938; *Encyclopedie de l'Islam. Dictionnaire géographique, ethnographique et biographique des peuples musulmans*, publ. avec le concours des principaux orientalistes par M.Th. Houtsma et al., 5 vols, Leiden etc. 1913–1938; *Enzyklopädie des Islam. Geographisches, ethnographisches und biographisches Wörterbuch der muhammedanischen Völker*, mit Unterstützung der internationalen Vereinigung der Akademien der Wissenschaften und im Verein mit hervorragenden Orientalisten hrsg. von M.Th. Houtsma et al., 5 vols, Leiden etc. 1913–1938. On the genesis of the encyclopedia, see M.Th. Houtsma & J.H. Kramers, "De wordingsgeschiedenis van de Encyclopaedie van den Islam", in: *Jaarboek 1941. Oostersch Instituut—Leiden*, Leiden 1942, pp. 9–20; cf. Daniël van der Zande, *Martinus Th. Houtsma 1851–1943. Een bijdrage aan de geschiedenis van de orientalistiek in Nederland en Europa* (Ph.D. thesis Utrecht), s.l. 1999.

which surely qualifies the naive view of the first major historiographer of “comparative religion”, Louis Henry Jordan, who wrote in 1905: “A Science is never fenced in by artificial national barriers. It is essentially international; nay, in essence it is universal. A particle of knowledge, be it ever so small, is like a particle of gold: it passes current everywhere”.¹⁹

2. *Afterthoughts*

The science of religion was a truly international venture at the time. Influence was reciprocal. Many prominent handbooks, for instance, were written by Dutch academics; on the other hand, the Norwegian W. Brede Kristensen and the German Heinrich Hackmann long occupied the chairs in history of religions at the universities of Leiden and Amsterdam. It would be a rewarding task to research the influence of foreign scholars on science of religion in the Netherlands.²⁰ Books by foreign scholars, especially from Britain, were translated into Dutch.²¹ The perceived international character of the study of religion heightened the sensitivity to one’s own national contribution. In his preface to the French translation of Tiele’s *Comparative History of Ancient Religions*, Albert Réville deplored the fact that, France lagged somewhat behind Germany, Britain, and the Netherlands.²² And in his Gifford Lectures, Tiele took the opportunity to point out that

¹⁹ Louis Jordan, *Comparative Religion. Its Genesis and Growth*, Edinburgh 1905 (reprinted 1986, Scholars Press), p. 168.

²⁰ On the influence of German scholarship in the Netherlands, see Andreas Gressmann, *Die niederländischen Universitäten im Zeichen der Ernennung. Der Einfluß des deutschen Universitätsmodells und die Berufung deutscher Gelehrter von 1865 bis 1931* (unpublished thesis Munich 1993).

²¹ Cf. Max Müller, *Voorlezingen over de wetenschap van den godsdienst*, ’s-Hertogenbosch, G.H. van der Schuyt 1871 (probably a pirated edition; the circulation of such unauthorized editions was the reason for Müller to publish his *Introduction to the Science of Religion*, London 1873, Preface); Müller, *De oorsprong en ontwikkeling van den godsdienst, nagegaan in de godsdiensten van Indië*. Een cursus van zeven lezingen, gehouden, April, Mei en Juni 1878, in de Kapittelzaal der Westminster Abdij, translated by A.H. Raabe, Utrecht 1879; Andrew Lang, *Onderzoek naar de ontwikkeling van Godsdienst, Cultus en Mythologie*, translated by L. Knappert, preface by P.D. Chantepie de la Saussaye, Haarlem 1889 (not a pirated edition). The reason why English books in particular were translated is probably because most Dutch people at the time were better acquainted with French and German than with English.

²² Tiele, *Histoire Comparée des Anciennes Religions de l’Égypte et des Peuples Sémitiques*, traduite du Hollandais par G. Collins, Paris 1882, p. ix.

“little Holland” was ahead, institutionally, of many of the greater European nations.²³

While as a Dutchman I may be a bit prejudiced, the extent of the influence of Dutch scholarship on religion is amazing. I have already touched upon the German-language textbooks, but the Dutch influence on the Fifth Section (*sciences religieuses*) of the *École Pratique des Hautes Études* in Paris was also unmistakable. Even a superficial look at this Fifth Section shows that French pioneers in the study of religion, such as Maurice Vernes and Jean and Albert Réville, were influenced by Dutch scholars.²⁴ They translated books by Tiele, Abraham Kuenen, and Hendrik Kern. The early volumes of the *Revue de l'Histoire des Religions* (1880) contain many articles by Dutch scholars, as well as numerous references to the state of the art in the Netherlands, which functioned more or less as a model for these Frenchmen.²⁵ Tiele was the only non-Frenchman on the editorial

²³ Tiele, *Elements of the Science of Religion*, vol. I: Morphological, vol. II: Ontological, Edinburgh–London 1897–1899, vol. I: p. 2f.: “My own little Holland, generally accustomed to wait with patient deliberation until her bigger sisters have set the example, has in this case taken the lead and founded special chairs for the history and philosophy of religion”. Compare also Maurice Vernes’ preface to the French translation of Tiele’s “Manual on the History of Religions”, *Manuel de l'histoire des religions. Esquisse d'une histoire de la religion jusqu'au triomphe des religions universalistes*, Paris, 1880, pp. xii–xiii: “M. Tiele exprime avec une grande réserve, à la fin de sa préface, l'étonnement que cause chez beaucoup de savants étrangers la singulière inégalité dont témoignent nos productions sur l'histoire des religions. Il touche avec délicatesse, mais d'une main sûre, le mal dont souffre chez nous la nouvelle branche de la science dont il est, à l'heure présente, un des maîtres les plus écoutés. ‘Aux travaux, tantôt estimables, tantôt éminents, que l'érudition française a publiés sur ce domaine depuis quelques années, il nous a semblé, dit-il, qu'il manquait une connaissance précise de l'ensemble des questions et de leur importance respective’. Nous reprenons cette observation pour notre compte”.

²⁴ The Révilles and Tiele became acquainted in the late 1850s, when Albert Réville was a minister in the Walloon Church and Tiele in the Remonstrant Brotherhood in Rotterdam. The Tiele collection of the Leiden University Library contains 31 letters (1859–1900) written by A. Réville, 17 letters (1881–1900) by Jean Réville, and 5 letters (1876–1881) by Vernes.

²⁵ Of course the study of religion also included the “sociologist” school—Émile Durkheim, Marcel Mauss, Henri Hubert—, which was in many ways opposed to the Fifth Section; cf. Ivan Strenski, “The Ironies of *Fin-de-Siècle* Rebellions against Historicism and Empiricism in the *École Pratique des Hautes Études*, Fifth Section”, in: Arie L. Molendijk & Peter Pels (eds), *Religion in the Making. The Emergence of the Sciences of Religion*, Leiden 1998, pp. 159–179. But even the Durkheimians established contacts with the Dutch, and Henri Hubert contributed to the French translation of Chantepie de la Saussaye’s *Manual* (1904), to which he added a lengthy introduction in which he expounded his own views on the study of religion and deplored the fact that Chantepie de la Saussaye had omitted the phenomenological part from

board of the *Revue*. Although this French connection²⁶ was by no means a one-way street, as if Dutch science distributed its superior knowledge to underdeveloped regions, it does illustrate the wide influence of early Dutch science of religion.

In this book I have investigated several aspects of early Dutch science of religion that have a bearing on its international prestige and influence. The Dutch role in the spread of the new field—by way of journals, handbooks, encyclopaedias, and congresses—has been put into perspective. I am well aware of the rough character of the picture I have presented. The international ramifications of the field will have to be researched in much more detail. For instance, what was the actual contribution of Dutch scholars to the various journals, series, encyclopaedias, and international conferences? What role was played by the scholarly competitions organized by internationally respected Dutch associations such as *Teyler's Genootschap* and the *Haagsch Genootschap*?²⁷ The dissemination of ideas would be an especially promising field of study. Hans G. Kippenberg has given interesting specimens of such research, and traced the spread of influential Dutch-produced distinctions between natural and ethical, race (national) and world religions. He has even succeeded in showing the influence of Tiele's contrast between "theanthropic" and "theocratic" religion in the work of Max Weber and Jürgen Habermas.²⁸ This kind of

the second edition of his manual. Marcel Mauss, who made a trip to Holland in 1897/1898 to meet, among others, Tiele, Hendrik Kern, and Willem Caland, was rather critical about the Dutch intellectual climate, and wrote to Henri Hubert in an undated letter, probably from 1897: "[En Hollande], on [ne] pense pas, on [n']invente pas. Nulle excitation philosophique. Ils [mettent] en un style clair de bonnes dissertations allemandes; ils adaptent lentement leur pays à l'utilitarisme anglais, au progressisme européen [. . .]. Si tu savais comme on est loin du bouillonnement d'idées de Paris; le grand souci est d'être 'accurate', et d'être fin, d'être clair et d'être complet. C'est tout. Nulle préoccupation de l'idée réellement neuve et originale. Intellectuellement, le voyage n'est pas à faire [. . .]."; quoted in Marcel Mauss, Paris 1994, p. 127.

²⁶ On the French-Dutch connection, see Patrick Cabanel, "L'institutionnalisation des 'sciences religieuses' en France (1879–1908). Une entreprise protestante?", in: *Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire du Protestantisme français* 140 (1994) 33–80, at p. 58f.

²⁷ "Teyler" 1778–1778. *Studies en bijdragen over Teylers Stichting naar aanleiding van het tweede eeuwfeest*, Haarlem–Antwerpen 1978; A. Kuenen, *Het Haagsche Genootschap tot verdediging van de Christelijke godsdienst 1785–1885*, Leiden 1885; *Op de bres. 200 jaar Haagsch Genootschap tot verdediging van de christelijke godsdienst (1785–1985)*, 's-Gravenhage 1985.

²⁸ Hans G. Kippenberg, "Max Weber im Kreise von Religionswissenschaftlern", in: *Zeitschrift für Religions- und Geistesgeschichte* 45 (1993) 348–366, at pp. 356–360; "Max Weber und die vergleichende Religionswissenschaft", in: *Revue internationale de*

research could be conducted even more fruitfully if we had a more precise map of the exchanges between the early students of religion.

A careful prosopography would also show to what extent early science of religion was a Protestant affair. The Dutch connections with the Fifth Section, which in the beginning was dominated by Protestant scholars such as the Révilles and Vernes, and with Scandinavian scholars such as Lehmann, Söderblom, and Kristensen, point in this direction. The Dutch-Scandinavian connection could partly be explained by a common theological interest in the study of religion. The scholars in these countries were trained as theologians. Tiele, for instance, wrote a thesis on the Gospel of John and advocated the transformation of theology into science of religion. Other scholars wanted at least a close cooperation between theology and the science of religion. Söderblom almost failed to notice a difference between the two.²⁹ The assumed connection between theology and the science of religion was to some extent canonized in the phenomenology of religion, which aimed at the understanding of believers' intentions and the essence of religious phenomena as such. It is difficult to generalize on this point because of the variety of standpoints all designated by the term "phenomenology of religion". But one can safely state that many kinds of early phenomenology favoured cooperation with theology.

A discussion of early Dutch science of religion in an international perspective will finally lead to the question of what explained its success. First of all, we have to look at the general preconditions for the rise of the field, such as the reconceptualization of religion as a separate sphere of human activity; the availability of relevant materials; the application of historical and empirical methods; the awareness of the importance of religious diversity; and the rising conviction that it was meaningful to compare religions (from an evolutionary point of view).³⁰ Yet, such an enumeration does not suffice to explain the particularly fruitful start of the science of religion in the Nether-

philosophie 49 (1995) 127–153, at pp. 138–144; *Die Entdeckung der Religionsgeschichte. Religionswissenschaft und Moderne*, München 1997, p. 79; *Discovering Religious History in the Modern Age*, Princeton–Oxford 2002, p. 49f.

²⁹ Cf. Sigurd Hjelde, "The Science of Religion and Theology. The Question of Their Interrelationship", in: Molendijk & Pels, *Religion in the Making*, pp. 99–127, at p. 111f.

³⁰ Cf. chapter I above.

lands. Is it possible to be slightly more specific about the factors that determined the rise of science of religion in the Netherlands? I am proposing a few general hypotheses which refer partly to the study of religion in a wide sense, and partly to the establishment of the science of religion *stricto sensu* within the university.³¹

(1) The fact that Holland was a colonial power, and that it tried to strengthen its hold on the colonies in the second half of the nineteenth century, is a factor to be reckoned with. Oriental studies could flourish because of the economic interests overseas. The Dutch colonial government and the Dutch Trade Company in Amsterdam financially supported the edition of the *Encyclopaedia of Islam*. A rise in popular interest in foreign (oriental) religions can be noticed, too. To some extent this “religious orientalism” functioned as an alternative to ecclesiastical forms of Christianity, which were considered restrictive, fossilized, or harmful to the free religious development of the individual. In this sense, oriental religions, especially Buddhism (often mixed with some blend of Spinozism), could function as a religious “counter-culture” *avant la lettre*. The close connection between *Religionswissenschaft* and missiology in some Dutch theological faculties (which lasts till the present day) may also be mentioned in this context.

(2) A second explanation may be found in the alternative view of religion that the science of religion, and the phenomenology of religion in particular, offered besides the dominant church praxis and theory. The individual and psychological aspects of religion were emphasized by many authors at the cost of the social and institutional dimensions. In this way the science of religion contributed to the ideals of a free, individual religiosity, opposed to “authoritative” or even “authoritarian” forms of church religion. The phenomenological method itself emphasized the scholar’s personal experience. This new way of looking at religion appealed to many at the time, although it remained a minority affair.

³¹ Waardenburg, “The Problem of Representing Religions and Religion. Phenomenology of Religion in the Netherlands 1918–1939”, in: Hans G. Kippenberg & Brigitte Luchesi (eds), *Religionswissenschaft und Kulturkritik. Beiträge zur Konferenz “The History of Religions and the Critique of Culture in the Days of Gerardus van der Leeuw (1890–1950)”*, Marburg 1991, pp. 31–56, at pp. 52–54, offers some stimulating views on the question why phenomenology of religion was so popular in the Netherlands.

(3) It is perhaps possible to express the previous points in a still more general way. My suggestion, then, would be that the popularity of the science of religion in the Netherlands can be explained by the fact that it presented an alternative to the dominant intellectual and religious mood at the time. Some sort of nostalgia for past and primitive religion(s), which appeal to direct emotions and intuitions and are not “rationalized”, was certainly influential in this regard. Van der Leeuw enjoyed citing the following words by G.K. Chesterton: “When the professor is told by the barbarian that once there was nothing except a great feathered serpent, unless the learned man feels a thrill and a half temptation to wish it were true, he is no judge of such things at all”.³² C.P. Tiele, P.D. Chantepie de la Saussaye, W.B. Kristensen, and Gerardus van der Leeuw were fascinated by the arts, wrote poetry, and were not unwilling to see their “science” as an art. This fits in with the view of the science of religion as deeply influenced by Romantic thinking and critical of dominant western rationalism.

(4) A fourth explanation is the relatively marginal position of Dutch culture. The same goes for the Scandinavian scholars, who also had to publish in (or have their works translated into) the major European languages. This meant that they were ready to step in wherever there was some lacuna. Germany is a good example. Because the science of religion had a hard time establishing itself as a distinct discipline within the German university system, Dutch scholars were able to penetrate the German book market, and the Scandinavians Lehmann and Söderblom could occupy the first chairs in the history of religions in Germany.³³

(5) Fifthly, the intricate connection between the science of religion and theology in the Netherlands contributed much to the success of the former. This may seem to be a paradox to many present-day scientists of religion who strive for an emancipation of their disci-

³² Gerardus van der Leeuw, *Phänomenologie der Religion*, Tübingen 1933, p. 639; G.K. Chesterton, *The Everlasting Man*, London 1925, p. 116.

³³ Lehmann in Berlin (1910–1913) and Söderblom in Leipzig (1912–1914); cf. Kurt Rudolph, *Die Religionswissenschaft an der Leipziger Universität und die Entwicklung der Religionswissenschaft. Ein Beitrag zur Wissenschaftsgeschichte und zum Problem der Religionswissenschaft*, Berlin 1962; Eric Sharpe, *Nathan Söderblom and the Study of Religion*, Chapel Hill–London 1990. Their Lutheran background probably was an added advantage in Germany.

pline from theology. But as long as the science of religion was viewed as theologically important, it did obtain rather broad support. Its institutional location within the theological faculties was by no means an impediment to its development. Whereas only one chair in ethnology had been established by 1877, the science (history) of religion was taught at all four Dutch universities. The connection between the science of religion and theology is especially clear in the debates surrounding the Higher Education Act of 1876, which led to the introduction of the history of religions and the philosophy of religion (at the time considered by many to be the main components of science of religion) into the theological curriculum. The rise of Dutch science of religion can, to some extent, be explained by the dominant position of liberal Protestants (and liberals in general) at the time, who thought that some sort of supra-denominational religion (their own religion) could be an integrating force in the Dutch nation.³⁴ Accordingly, theology had to be of a non-confessional, supra-denominational kind; in short, it had to be transformed into science of religion.

However, the study of religion was not limited to the “science of religion” within the theological faculties. Depending on whether one takes science of religion in the narrow sense (the debates referred to above were about the establishment of a distinct discipline) or views it in a wider perspective (also including the study of religions within the faculties of arts), one has to stress different aspects to explain its emergence and development. Yet, trying to explain the rise of Dutch science of religion is not the same as accounting for its international success, although the first is a prerequisite for the second. Ultimately, only a more detailed historical narrative (about the actual international relations and exchanges) can provide the answer to such a question. But let me point to yet another general factor that played a role in this respect. In many ways, early Dutch science of religion was at a cross-roads, situated between nations, between various (emerging) fields of study, and between different approaches. As the sociology of science has shown, scientific success does not depend solely on academic qualities, but also on the ability to transfer ideas and raise

³⁴ The liberal Protestants were influential, but not the only group favouring the introduction of the science of religion into the academic system, and they did not succeed in getting their objectives fully realized; on the debates which led to the Act of 1876, see chapter III.4 above.

money. The international success of Dutch scholars could also be related to their capabilities as “wheeler-dealers”—the well-known Dutch spirit of commerce.

Still, a full explanation of the spread of Dutch science of religion requires a detailed analysis of the international ramifications of science of religion at the time, which would fill another book. My intention in the above, however, was to fill a lacuna in the historiography of the science of religion. According to Tiele, comparative religion “was called into being by a generally felt want in different countries at the same time and as a matter of course”.³⁵ The factors that contributed to its rise, however, may have varied from country to country. In the Netherlands the institutional reform of theology departments was decisive in this respect. It may sound odd to many present-day practitioners, but the fact that the science of religion in the Netherlands emerged out of theology gave it a flying start.

³⁵ Tiele, “On the Study of Comparative Theology”, p. 586.

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