

A History of Christianity in Indonesia

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A History of Christianity in Indonesia

Edited by

Jan Sihar Aritonang and Karel Steenbrink



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On the cover: Nyoman Darsane, Sermon at the Seaside. See pp. 942–945.

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CONTENTS

Introduction	vii
List of Contributors	xi
List of Abbreviations	xiii

PART ONE THE FIRST CHRISTIANS: UNTIL 1800

Chapter One Christianity in Pre-Colonial Indonesia	3
Chapter Two 1530–1670: A Race between Islam and Christianity?	9
Chapter Three Catholic Converts in the Moluccas, Minahasa and Sangihe-Talaud, 1512–1680	23
Chapter Four The Solor-Timor Mission of the Dominicans 1562–1800	73
Chapter Five The Arrival of Protestantism and the Consolidation of Christianity in the Moluccas 1605–1800	99

PART TWO 1800–2005: CHRONOLOGICAL AND REGIONAL SURVEYS

Chapter Six 1800–2005: a National Overview	137
Chapter Seven Old and New Christianity in the Southeastern Islands	229
Chapter Eight Christianity in Papua	345
Chapter Nine Moluccan Christianity in the 19th and 20th century between <i>Agama Ambon</i> and Islam	383
Chapter Ten How Christianity obtained a central position in Minahasa culture and society	419
Chapter Eleven Christianity in Central and Southern Sulawesi	455
Chapter Twelve Kalimantan or Indonesian Borneo	493
Chapter Thirteen The sharp contrasts of Sumatra	527
Chapter Fourteen Christianity in Javanese culture and society	639
Chapter Fifteen A small Christian flock in Bali	731

PART THREE
ISSUES OF NATIONAL CONCERN

Chapter Sixteen	Theological thinking by Indonesian Christians, 1850–2000	749
Chapter Seventeen	The Ecumenical Movement in Indonesia with special attention to the National Council of Churches	823
Chapter Eighteen	The spectacular growth of the third stream: The Evangelicals and Pentecostals	867
Chapter Nineteen	Chinese Christian communities in Indonesia	903
Chapter Twenty	Christian Art in Indonesia	925
Chapter Twenty-One	Christian Media	951
General Bibliography		977
Index		983

INTRODUCTION

Indonesian religions are poorly represented in the international or more specifically the English-language surveys of religious developments. Although the country is the home of the largest single Muslim community of the world, Indonesian Muslims usually remain marginal in general handbooks about Islam. Its Christian community, about 9% of the population, has received no overall description in English. It was mostly Dutch and German, besides Indonesian, surveys that pictured the solid and sometimes exceptional development of global Christianity in this country, fourth in the world as to population (with 245 million in 2008, ranking after China, India, and the USA).

This book aims to give an encyclopaedic view of the varied history of Christians in Indonesia. It sketches the few Christians of the pre-colonial period, the growth of some Christian communities during the Portuguese period (1511–1605), and it endeavours to present a fair account of developments under the Dutch colonial administration (1605–1942) and the Indonesian Republic. It emphasises the regional differences, because to a large extent Christianity was established in the so-called Outer Islands, outside the main island of Java. These regions are sometimes large archipelagos in their own right and differ immensely from each other, in geography, in social and economic history, and also as to their participation in world Christianity. This history relates in many pages the race between the global religions of Islam and Christianity, but also their continuing ties with local traditions. In balanced reports we aim to give attention to the three major streams of Christianity: the classical Reformed and Lutheran traditions, the newer Evangelical and Pentecostal Churches, besides the enduring presence of the Catholic Church. Although much attention had to be given to institutional developments, the more spiritual, moral and theological characteristics of Christianity in the various parts of Indonesia have also been pictured in as much detail as possible in such a broad overview.

This book is not a history of foreign missionary organizations and their personnel, although an honest tribute has been given to many overseas pioneering workers. In most places it was the local factor that has been described first of all. The local people were not the passive receiving side of the process of religious change, but are seen here as the acting and deciding party that took up the opportunity of the presence of a new religious system of meaning. In general, more emphasis has been given to the origins and the first deciding decades in the founding of Christian communities than to the later

institutional development. As in most historical writings, the moments of change, their causes and consequences dominate this history.

This is not the first attempt to publish a more comprehensive history of Indonesian Christianity. In 1900 the former Protestant missionary Sierk Coolsma published a record in Dutch of what was dramatically called 'the mission century of the Dutch East Indies,' *De Zendingseeuw*, in his case the nineteenth century. He was somewhat premature. The real 'mission age' has to be located between the 1870s and 1940, as will be discussed later. In 1908 and 1934 the Jesuit priests Arnold van der Velden, followed by Antonius van Aernsbergen published histories of the Catholic mission in Dutch. Major publications in Indonesian date from the 1970s: in five volumes Martinus Muskens edited his *Sejarah Gereja Katolik Indonesia*, while the same work was done for Protestants by Frank Cooley and Fridolin Ukur in the fourteen volumes of the series *Benih yang Tumbuh*, self-descriptions of the larger Protestant churches, followed by the national survey of all the churches in 1979: *Jerih dan Juang, Laporan nasional: survai menyeluruh gereja di Indonesia*. The work by Muskens and Cooley-Ukur also became available in English language abstracts in the early 1980s. In 1959 Theodor Müller-Krüger published a history of Protestantism in the archipelago in Indonesian and later also in German. Since the 1980s the two-volume Indonesian handbook by Thomas van den End, *Ragi Carita*, has become the standard history for Protestant theological schools. In 2001 Hasto Rosariyanto published with his *Bercermin pada wajah-wajah Keuskupan Gereja Katolik Indonesia* a new overview of the Catholic Church in Indonesia. In 2003–2007 the two volumes of Steenbrink's *Catholics in Indonesia 1808–1942, a Documented History*, were published, a work that was started as a Catholic initiative to balance the eight volumes of historical documents published at the initiative of the tireless Thomas van den End. Besides these initiatives on the national level, there have been many monographs and articles on local histories of Christianity in Indonesia. So, this work did not start from zero, but its character as the first English language summary of the topic has made it from the beginning a specific work. Because of the intended audience it should become a work for people who are not familiar with the geography, culture and history of Indonesia. Therefore the context has been given much more attention than was the case in any of its predecessors. We expect that this not only will generate a better understanding of the actual history, but also will add some specific features to the description and analysis of the long process itself.

The initiative for this work was taken in mid-1998 with contacts between Jan Aritonang of the Sekolah Tinggi Teologi, the Theological College of Jakarta, and Karel Steenbrink of IIMO, the Centre for Intercultural Theology (then still under the name of Interuniversitair Instituut voor Missiologie en

Oecumenica), at Utrecht University. It was the need for an international successor to the Muskens and Cooley-Ukur projects of the 1970s that brought them together. From the beginning it was clear that it should become an ecumenical endeavour not only through the two editors (Aritonang for the Protestant side, Steenbrink for the Catholic developments) but also through other contributors. Through the participation of Azyumardi Azra the very strong Islamic presence in Indonesia was taken into consideration. Another consideration was that there should be a balance between national and local developments. Therefore the book is divided into three parts: the first part presents the period up to 1800; the second part has the chapters on the most important 'Christian regions' besides a national overview of political, economic and social developments. The third part discusses the most important aspects of Christian life.

In September 1998 Steenbrink started a *Newsletter of the HCI, History of the Christianity in Indonesia Project* and after many enthusiastic responses a conference with 24 participants was convoked on the Uithof Campus of Utrecht University, from 19–23 June 2000. It was to become a dramatic event: in the midst of this conference one of the participants, Dr. Mesakh Tapilatu from Ambon, saw on Dutch television how the campus of his Christian University of the Moluccas was attacked by members of the Muslim militia *Laskar Jihad*. The house and private library of Tapilatu were lost during this action. Dr. Azyumardi Azra, rector of the Islamic University of Jakarta and a close friend to Steenbrink and Aritonang, was present at the Utrecht conference, guaranteeing attention for the Muslim majority of the country, the most decisive context for the development of Christianity in Indonesia. He was also troubled by the new developments, but from faraway Holland not much could be done immediately.

The Utrecht conference of 2000 resulted in the formulation of the general outline of the work, the focus of its readership and the general methodology. During the next years several hopes and promises could not be fulfilled, and for several sections other authors had to be sought, but chapter after chapter, drafts and final texts were completed and this finally has resulted in a work that now can be used by the general public, much later than initially was expected, but it was better to postpone the final redaction than to skip important developments or be content with imbalanced contributions.

On 27 June 2003 the grand old man of Indonesian church history Dr. Fridolin Ukur passed away after a long period of weak health. He could not fully cooperate in the successor to his earlier project on the 'growing seed'.

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First of all we have to thank the various institutions where the authors had their main responsibilities. The Theological College STT of Jakarta, where Jan Aritonang has his base, provided him with the time and means to contribute to this project and it also became the home for a much broader initiative, a Centre for the Documentation of Church History in Indonesia. The University of Utrecht was the host for the conference of 2000 that was made possible by generous contributions from the NWO, the Dutch government agency for academic research, from CMC, the central mission committee of the religious orders in the Netherlands, and from the mission board of the Protestant Church in the Netherlands. John Prior and the Candraditya Research Centre of Maumere, Flores, were a unique help for the connections with Eastern Indonesia. In many instances they found also the right English expressions for religious terminology.

Some authors had to wait long before their valuable contributions were published: Father Adolf Heuken of Jakarta even published a much more extensive version of his text with many maps and illustrations in a special book (Heuken 2002), commemorating the 450th anniversary of the death of Francis Xavier. Others saw their contributions reduced in length or modified in order to suit the general structure of the book. Simon Rae in New Zealand not only contributed to the Sumatran history, but also was again and again willing to revise the English language of so many different contributors. His aim was to make it as readable and clear as possible, without changing the personal style of the different authors. Through his broad knowledge of the general and missionary history of Indonesia he prevented several authors from making factual mistakes. Paule Maas, wife of Karel Steenbrink, took care of the bibliography, footnotes and the more scholarly and administrative inventory, besides functioning in many instances more or less as the secretary for the whole project, gently warning of technical mistakes, lacunae and imbalances in presentation. Most of all, we have to thank all the authors, who mostly could only communicate through e-mail, for their continuing trust in the final result of this long process. Prof. Marc Spindler, in a different position as tutor and supervisor to both editors, has remained for all these years a committed observer and we thank him for including this book in his highly esteemed and well-edited series of historical *Studies in Christian Mission*.

Jakarta-Utrecht 4 October 2007, on the feast of St. Francis of Assisi
Jan Aritonang & Karel Steenbrink

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

We include here only the more common contractions that occur in several chapters. For a full and detailed list the reader must consult the index. Nearly all abbreviations that start with G(ereja) or Church have been omitted here.

ADS	Agama Djawa Sunda, the Javanese-Sundanese Religion
ARA	Algemeen Rijksarchief
ATESEA	Association for Theological Education in Southeast Asia
BMS	Baptist Missionary Society
BPUPKI	Badan Penyelidik Usaha Persiapan Kemerdekaan [Investigating Body for Preparatory Work for (Indonesian) Independence]
CAMA	Christian and Missionary Alliance
CCA	Christian Conference of Asia
CM	Congregatio Missionis, commonly called Vincentians or Lazarists, Catholic Order
CSIS	Centre for Strategic and International Studies
CSP	Christelijk Staatkundige Partij
CSV	Christen Studenten Vereeniging
DGI	Dewan Gereja-gereja di Indonesia (Council of Churches in Indonesia)
DI/TII	Darul Islam/Tentara Islam Indonesia (World of Islam/Indonesian Islamic Army)
<i>Doc. Maluc.</i>	<i>Documenta Malucensia, I-III</i> , ed. and annot. by H.J. Jacobs, Rome: Institutum Historicum Societatis Jesu 1974-1984
DPR	Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat (People's Representatives Council; Parliament)
EACC	East Asia Christian Conference
ELS	Europese Lagere School (the most prestigious Dutch language Elementary School)
ENI	<i>Encyclopaedie van Nederlandsch-Indië</i>
G-30-S/PKI	Gerakan 30 September/Partai Komunis Indonesia (30 September Movement/Indonesian Communist Party)
GIUZ	Genootschap voor In- en Uitwendige Zending (Society for Home and Foreign Mission)
GKI	Gereja Kristen Indonesia (Indonesian Christian Church; the continuation of the former Chinese Churches)
GKN	Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland (Dutch Reformed Churches, a 19th century schism from the Netherlands Reformed Church or <i>Hervormde Kerk</i>)

Golkar	Golongan Karya (Functional Groups)
GPdI	Gereja Pantekosta di Indonesia (Pentecostal Church in Indonesia)
GPI	Gereja Protestan di Indonesia (Protestant Church in Indonesia, successor to the great colonial <i>Indische Kerk</i>)
HCS	Hollandsch-Chineesche School (Dutch-language school for Chinese)
HIS	Hollands-Inlandsche School (Dutch-language indigenous school)
HKBP	Huria Kristen Batak Protestan (Christian Protestant Batak Church)
HTS	Hoogere Theologische School
IAIN	Institut Agama Islam Negeri (State Institute of Islamic Studies)
ICMI	Ikatan Cendekiawan Muslim se-Indonesia (All-Indonesian League of Muslim Intellectuals)
IK	Indische Kerk
IMC	International Missionary Conference/Council
KINGMI	Kemah Injil Gereja Masehi di Indonesia (the Tabernacle Gospel Christian Church)
KNIP	Komite Nasional Indonesia Pusat (Central Indonesian National Committee)
KWI	Konferensi Waligereja Indonesia (Indonesian Bishops' Conference), after 1986: MAWI
LAI	Lembaga Alkitab Indonesia (Indonesian Bible Society)
LBI	Lembaga Biblika Indonesia (Indonesian Biblical Society)
LMS	London Missionary Society
LWF	Lutheran World Federation
Masyumi	Majelis Syuro Muslimin Indonesia (Consultative Council of Indonesian Muslims)
MAWI	Majelis Agung Waligereja Indonesia/Konferensi Waligereja Indonesia (Supreme Council of the [Catholic] Bishops in Indonesia)
MNZG	Mededeelingen vanwege het Nederlandsche Zendelinggenootschap
MPR	Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat (People's Consultative Assembly)
MSC	Missionarii Sacri Cordis (Sacred Heart Missionaries)
MSF	Missionaries of the Holy Family
MUI	Majelis Ulama Indonesia (Indonesian Council of the [Islamic] scholars)
NASAKOM	Nasionalisme, Agama dan Komunisme (Nationalism, Religion and Communism)

NBG	Nederlandsch Bijbel Genootschap (Netherlands Bible Society; NBS)
NGZV	Nederlandsche Gereformeerde Zendingsvereniging (Dutch Reformed Mission Union)
NHK	Nederlandse Hervormde Kerk (Netherlands Reformed Church)
NICA	Netherlands Indies Civil Administration
NII	Negara Islam Indonesia (Indonesian Islamic State)
NIT	Negara Indonesia Timur (State of Eastern Indonesia, 1947–1950)
NIZB	Nederlandsch-Indische Zendingbond
NKRI	Negara Kesatuan Republik Indonesia (Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia)
NTT	Nusa Tenggara Timur (Southeastern Islands, Lesser Sunda Islands)
NU	Nahdlatul Ulama (literally: the Rise of the Religious Scholars)
NZG	Nederlandsch Zending Genootschap (Dutch Missionary Society)
NZV	Nederlandsche Zending Vereeniging (Dutch Mission Society)
OCarm	Order of Carmelites
OFM	Ordo Fratrum Minorum, Franciscans, a Catholic Mendicant Order
OFMCap	Capuchins
OMF	Overseas Missionary Fellowship
OMI	Oblates of Mary Immaculate, a Catholic Missionary Order
OSC	Ordo Sanctae Crucis (Order of the Holy Cross)
Parkindo	Partai Kristen Indonesia (Indonesian Christian Party)
Parmusi	Partai Muslimin Indonesia (Indonesian Muslim Party)
PBI	Persekutuan Baptis Indonesia (Indonesian Baptist Fellowship)
PDI	Partai Demokrasi Indonesia (the Indonesian Democratic Party)
PDI-P	Partai Demokrasi Indonesia Perjuangan (Indonesian Democratic Party in Struggle, since 1997)
Permesta	Perjuangan Semesta (Universal Struggle)
PERSETIA	Persatuan Sekolah-sekolah Teologi di Indonesia (Association of Theological Schools in Indonesia)
PGI	Persekutuan Gereja-gereja di Indonesia (Communion of Churches in Indonesia; successor to DGI since 1984)
PKI	Partai Komunis Indonesia (Indonesian Communist Party)
PNI	Partai Nasional Indonesia (Indonesian National Party)
PII	Persekutuan Injili Indonesia (Indonesian Evangelical Fellowship)
PPKI	Panitia Persiapan Kemerdekaan Indonesia (the Preparatory Committee for Indonesian Independence)

PPP	Partai Persatuan Pembangunan (United Development Party)
PRRI	Pemerintahan Revolusioner Republik Indonesia (Revolutionary Government of the Republic of Indonesia)
REC	Reformed Ecumenical Council
RIS	Republik Indonesia Serikat (Federal State/Republic of Indonesia)
RMG	Rheinische Missionsgesellschaft (Rhenish Missionary Society)
RMS	Republik Maluku Selatan (South Maluku Republic)
SCJ	Priests of the Sacred Heart of Jesus
SEAGST	Southeast Asia Graduate School of Theology
SI	Sarekat Islam
SJ	Society of Jesus, the Jesuits
STT	Sekolah Tinggi Teologi (Theological School/College)
SVD	Societas Verbi Divini (Society of the Divine Word)
THHK	Tiong Hoa Hwee Koan (or <i>Zhonghua Huiguan</i> : Chinese Cultural Organisation)
THKTKH KH WD	Tiong Hoa Khie Tok Kauw Hwee Khoe Hwee West Djawa (the West Java Chinese Christian Church)
UUD	Undang-Undang Dasar (Constitution)
UZV	Utrechtsche Zendingvereening (Utrecht Missionary Society)
VOC	Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie (United [Dutch] East-India Company)
WACC	World Association for Christian Communication
WARC	World Alliance of Reformed Churches
WCC	World Council of Churches
ZGKN	Zending der Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland (Mission of the Dutch Reformed Churches)
ZNHK	Zending der Nederlandse Hervormde Kerk (Mission Board of the Netherlands Reformed Church)

PART ONE

THE FIRST CHRISTIANS: UNTIL 1800

CHAPTER ONE

CHRISTIANITY IN PRE-COLONIAL INDONESIA

The South Indian Thomas Christians trace their faith back to the Apostle Thomas and sometimes also to S. Bartholomew. Scholars are divided on this issue. The possibility of relatively easy travelling from Palestine via Egypt to South India in the first century cannot be denied by any serious scholar. The defenders of an apostolic origin base their arguments on the apocryphal *Acts of (Judas) Thomas* (c. 200) and other third or fourth century documents, the living tradition of the Kerala Christians and also on the ancient tradition of S. Thomas' tomb near Mylapore (Madras).

Some historians do not accept a voyage of one of Jesus' disciples as far as India, but all acknowledge the presence of Christian communities in southern India at least since the fourth century. In 67 AD there was already a Jewish colony in Cochin. During the fourth century Persian Christians either reinvigorated the apostolic church, which had declined over the course of time, or they founded migrant communities on India's coasts. The merchant *Thomas of Cana* and other saintly men are mentioned in old documents as preachers of Christianity in 345. Since these early times the South Indian Christians have been closely connected with the colourful Church of Mesopotamia and Persia. Naturally they followed the teaching, terminology, and Syriac liturgy of the Persians and therefore were regarded as 'Nestorians'. The connections between the patriarch in Seleukia-Ktesiphon and the 'bishop of the Indians' had been quite close as far as the political situation under Muslim government permitted.

Persian Christians in South-East Asia

The southern or maritime Silk Road was already in use by merchants and travellers from Persia during Sassanid times, that is before (and certainly during) Umayyad rule, beginning in 661. I-ching used a *Posse* (Persian) ship for his voyage from Canton to Palembang in 671. There were several Persian colonies in Canton and in Hainan.

The Persian or 'Nestorian' Church calls itself the 'Church of the East'. Bishops from 'India' attended its synods in the years 820 and 893. Metropolitans of India are mentioned in Persian documents in the sixth and in the fourteenth centuries, and even 'missionary bishops' to the 'Isles of the sea', of Dabbag (Sumatra or Java?), Sin and Macin (China), who certainly got as far as South

India. This means that at least in the beginning of the sixth century Christianity was well established in India.

Cosmas Indicopleustes met churches in Malabar, Sri Lanka and 'the rest of the Indias' during his visit in the 520s. In the seventh century a metropolitan of Fars (south Iran) was reprimanded because he neglected his duties to the Indian churches "which extend from the borders of the Persian Empire to the place they call *Qalah*, which is at a distance of 1200 *parasangs* [about 4,000 miles]". This sentence raises two questions: When was the first metropolitan of India appointed, and where was *Qalah* situated?

The first metropolitan for 'India' had probably been appointed by Patriarch Timothy I (728–823). *Qalah* could mean Galle (Ceylon), but also Kalah in Malaya. After a study of many Arab manuscripts, G.R. Tibbets locates *Qalah* on the west coast of Malaya, near the islands of Langkawi. From around this place Christians have been reported as early as 650. Others identify *Qalah* with Klang and/or Kedah, important harbours for exchange of goods between merchants from India, China and the Indonesian archipelago. Already before 850, Kalah (Chinese *Ko-lo*) was a stop *en route* to China as mentioned by Ibn Khurdadhih. Persian merchants are known to have frequented the Sumatran harbours of Palembang and Lambri (now Banda Aceh). A Persian colony on the Malay Peninsula is reported in Chinese sources during the fifth and sixth centuries. In 717 the Ceylonese *Vajrabodhi* travelled with 35 Persian merchants to Srivijaya. In Sri Lanka too there was a Persian Christian community in the sixth century as reported by Cosmas Indicopleustes.

During these times missionary monks were trained in the Euphrates and Tigris region of Mesopotamia in great numbers to be sent to the East. Some Persian monks sailed together with Christian merchants "to the country of the Indians" during Sassanid times (sixth century). During Patriarch Timothy I's reign (780–823) "many monks crossed the sea to India and China with only a staff and a script." On their way to China, they certainly passed the Straits of Malacca. What do we know about Christians in this area?

In all probability the above-mentioned place of *Qalah*, 1,200 *parasangs* away from 'India', is the Malayan harbour town of Kalah, somewhere around present day Kedah. During the ninth century Kalah became even more important to the Arab seafarers, who together with Persians traded there with Chinese and Malay merchants. Kalah, Lemuri, Fansur, and Nias occur time and again as stops on the way from the Persian Gulf via Sri Lanka to China.

From all this reliable data it can be stated that Persian and Arab seafarers and merchants sailed to India, visited and lived in different harbours on the West Malayan coast, with some of them sailing further on to China. Persians are known to have used the southern or maritime Silk Road at least since the fourth century. Arab or *Tashih* traders in the Malayan waters are mentioned as early as 750 and then in greater numbers travelled to China. Quite a number

of them settled in South China harbours and some at intermediate stops. Five hundred Persian families lived during the fourth century in *Tun-sun* in the Malayan Peninsula. Christians preferred to travel with Persians and on their ships. Among them even some monks sailed to South-East Asia. Nestorian church documents speak about itinerant bishops in India and the lands beyond. This background is the setting for the question whether there have been Christian communities on Indonesian soil before the arrival of the Portuguese in these waters (1511).

Christians in Baros, North Sumatra, and some other places in the Malay Archipelago

A historian and geographer, who lived in Egypt during the twelfth century, collected all available information about churches and convents in Africa and Asia. He was of Armenian origin and called Shaikh Abu Salih al Armini. He visited India twice. His book *Tadhakur fihī Akhbar min al-Kana'is wa'l Adyar min Nawahin Misri wal aqtha'aha* was written in the twelfth century in the Coptic tradition. A manuscript was purchased in Egypt in the seventeenth century by Vansleb and preserved in the *Bibliothèque Nationale* in Paris. This manuscript was translated and edited by B.T.A. Evetts in 1895 in Oxford.¹ Abu Salih used the books of Abu Jafar al-Tabari (died 923) and of Al Shabushti (died 988) on the same subject, but he also collected new information wherever possible.

The chapter on India (pp. 296–300) speaks about the Apostle Thomas as its first missionary, about the Christians in the city of Quilon on the coast of Travancore (South India), and its churches. Then he continues:

Fahsur: Here there are several churches; and all the Christians here are Nestorians; and that is the condition of things here. It is from this place that camphor comes; and this commodity (is a gum which) oozes from the trees. In this town there is one church named after our Lady, the Pure Virgin Mary.

Immediately afterwards Salih talks about Sana in Yemen. This short notice of Abu Salih needs some clarification, for example on Fahsur. A. Butler, who added the notes to Evetts translation, says it should be written *Mansur(ah)*, a country in north-west India, "...famous among the Arabs for its camphor." Better known for its camphor and frequented by merchants from the Malabar Coast of India is Fansur or Pansur, near Baros on the west coast of northern Sumatra. As with the place, the period of this Christian community cannot be determined exactly. But all information about Persian merchants in South-East

¹ Evetts (ed.) 1895, reprint 1969.

Asia, and the Christians among them, points to a period between the ninth and the eleventh century.

Except for the short notice given by Abu Salih, there is no further information on the Christians at Fansur/Baros. It may be interesting to know that Ebedjesus of Nisibis (1291–1319) mentioned Dabbagh as the district of a bishop. Dabbagh during this period was a common name for Sumatra or Java. In Malacca the Portuguese discovered the foundation of a Chaldean church, after their arrival in 1511. In 1503 three travelling bishops were appointed by Elias V, one among them for Zabagh (Dabbagh), the other two for Sin and Masin (China).

At the court of queen Tribhuwana (1329–1250) of Majapahit and in Palembang Father J. de Marignolli OFM on his way home from Beijing (1347) met some, possibly local, Christians. Recent local research uncovered an old place name near Baros, Janji Mariah, which could mean ‘Promise of Mary’ or just a ‘solemn’ promise. Recent excavations have shown close connections between Baros, India and the Persian Gulf existing from the ninth to the eleventh century.²

Some Indonesian writers took the conclusion that the first Christians had arrived in the seventh century and established a community in Northern Sumatra. As we have seen above this opinion can not be based on solid facts for the seventh until the ninth centuries.³

Adolf Heuken SJ

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(for a more elaborate bibliography see Heuken 2002)

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² Letter of C. Guillot, leader of the excavations at Lobu Tua near Baros to A. Heuken, 25–11–2000.

³ In the first chapter of the five volume history of Catholicism in Indonesia, published in Indonesian in the early 1970s, the Jesuit Jan Bakker wrote the chapter on the pre-colonial period. Bakker identified in the text of Abu Salih al-Armini Fahsur with the place Fansur or modern Baros in Sumatra and took for granted that the various churches of that place were a sign of a Christian community, already in existence in the middle of the seventh century or about 650 CE. This latter fact was an amplification of the reference to Christians in Kalah, in a letter by Iso'yabh III, Nestorian Metropolitan of Erbil and Mosul. (Muskens 1972-I:27–36; cf. R. Duval 1905:182).

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CHAPTER TWO

1530–1670: A RACE BETWEEN ISLAM AND CHRISTIANITY?

It is as a matter of fact impossible to understand the spread of Islam in the archipelago unless one takes into account the antagonism between the Moslem traders and the Portuguese.¹

There is little doubt that the Schrieke theory of the race between Islam and Christianity is one of the most hotly debated theories concerning the spread of Islam and Christianity in the Malay-Indonesian archipelago. Since the time Schrieke proposed his theory some other scholars have questioned its validity. One of the ardent critics of Schrieke's theory is Naguib al-Attas. He refuses to accept the argument put forward by this Dutch scholar that competition among Muslims and Christians had accelerated the spread of Islam, particularly between the eleventh and seventeenth centuries. Al-Attas is of the opinion that there is no continuation of the crusade between Islam and Christianity in the archipelago, since Islam did not regard Christianity as a serious contender. Furthermore, according to al-Attas, it is well known that it was only from the nineteenth century onwards that Christianity made any impact at all in the archipelago.²

Al-Attas could be right, since he is one of the scholars who propose that Islam had spread in the archipelago, albeit in limited numbers, since the first century of Islam (or the seventh century CE). The Portuguese had not arrived in the region during this period. But al-Attas seems to have misread Schrieke's theory, since the Dutch scholar proposes that the race between Islam and Christianity took place mostly in the sixteenth century, during which period the Portuguese attempted very seriously to gain the upper hand in the Malay-Indonesian archipelago.

Taking into consideration recent studies on the spread of Islam and Christianity, one may be tempted to accept Schrieke's theory. One of such recent studies is Reid.³ Implicitly accepting the basic argument of Schrieke, Reid proposes that what was taking place during the same period, as put forward by Schrieke, was the polarisation between global religions and the rise of religious boundaries, particularly between Islam and Christianity. The increasingly sharper polarisation between the two religions basically resulted from the 'race

¹ Schrieke 1957-II:233.

² Al-Attas 1969,18:21–22.

³ Reid 1993:143–145.

between them' to win new converts. As Reid argues, in the sixteenth century large numbers of people, both rural and urban, were clearly converting to Islam, and identifying themselves as part of an international Islamic community. This explicit identification, according to Reid, can be attributed primarily to two factors: the direct and intense shipping links between Southeast Asia and the Red Sea area, and the sharper polarisation between the *Dar al-Islam* [Abode of Islam] and its enemies: *Dar al-Harb* or Abode of War.

Reflecting on the history of Islamisation in the archipelago, the Schrieke theory has a lot of truth, though as Meilink-Roelofs reminds us, the crusading motive on the part of the Portuguese must not be overemphasised.⁴ The theory, combined with other theories, in fact, can give us a better grasp of not only the history of Islamisation but also of Christianity in the archipelago. Not only that, the Schrieke theory remains relevant to subsequent and recent history of the two religions in Indonesia in particular. In fact, the contemporary period is witnessing the ever-heated competition between Islamic *dakwah* (preaching) and Christian missions in order to win new converts.⁵

The Race Theory: An Overview

To begin with, according to Schrieke, the Portuguese expansion in the archipelago must be viewed as a sequel to the Crusades in Europe and the Middle East. In his opinion, it was actually the lust for adventure and the ambition for nobility, combined with religious zeal, which were the driving forces setting the expansion of the Portuguese in motion. Following the expulsion of the Moors (Muslims) from the Iberian Peninsula, the Portuguese, after having gained a foothold in Ceuta on the north coast of Muslim Africa, proceeded to make further conquests along the west coast and finally rounded the Cape of Good Hope on their way to India and the Malay-Indonesian archipelago.⁶

Schrieke emphasises, more than any other factor, the crusading spirit in the following way:

Religious zeal, nourished in the tradition of the Crusades and the remembrance of the bitter struggle with the Moors in the Iberian Peninsula, certainly continued to be an essential motivation... The religious element remained a factor of significance in Spanish politics in later times as well. For the inhabitants of the [Iberian] peninsula a Mohammedan was a 'Moor', an object of abhorrence.⁷

⁴ Meilink-Roelofs 1962:117.

⁵ Hefner 1993.

⁶ Schrieke 1955-I:37; 1957-II:232-233.

⁷ Schrieke 1955-I:38.

Not only that, the Portuguese and the Spaniards, or the Europeans as a whole, harboured an antipathy and hatred for the Muslims and their faith, that they considered heathenism. Furthermore, according to Schrieke, in this way the Crusade ideal continued its influence. For a long time the Portuguese had in mind closing an alliance with the legendary Christian ruler Prester John, whose empire was thought to be located in India. With his help they hoped to be able to bring the Crusade against the Moors to a successful end in the heart of their own territory.⁸

Proposing this strong argument, Schrieke lists the harsh and violent encounters between Islam and Christianity. The conflicts between the two were clearly motivated not only by religion but also by political and economic interests. This can be seen clearly in the accounts given by Schrieke that when Constantinople had fallen (1204) the Abbasid Caliphate had succumbed before the Mongol hordes (1258) and Acre, the last stronghold of the Christians in Palestine, had been forced to submit to the Muslims (1291), then the centre of commercial activity shifted from the routes running from the Persian Gulf by way of Baghdad to the ports of Syria and Asia Minor. Another trade route, taken also by Muslims, was the sea route from the coast of Yemen through and along the Red Sea to Alexandria, in Egypt, whence the precious products of the archipelago and the Far East reached Europe by way of the Italian commercial towns. It was to that busy transit trade that Egypt owed its prosperity under the rule of the Mamluks (1250–1517).

The predominant Muslim position in the international trade was also represented by Muslim outposts along the southern coast of the Indian subcontinent. They included Randir, Surat, and Cambay (in Gujarat). In fact, they had been supposed to have not only played a significant role in Muslim international trade, but also in the spread of Islam, including supposedly in the Malay-Indonesian archipelago. By the beginning of the sixteenth century Gujarati merchants dominated all the important trading centres in the Indian Ocean trade routes. The Gujarati merchants, mingled with the Arab and Persian traders, could be found in large numbers in Malacca and probably also in Pasai, northeast Sumatra.⁹

Thus, as Chaudhuri concludes, by all accounts the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries were unusually prosperous in the history of the Indian Ocean trade. The vivid travel accounts of Ibn Battuta (1345–1346) about the Muslim trading centres extending from North Africa to the Far East, were later confirmed by travellers of the fifteenth century such as the Persian ambassadors 'Abd al-Razzaq, the Venetian Nicolo Conti, and the Genovan Santo Stefano. Based

⁸ Schrieke 1955-I:39.

⁹ Schrieke 1957-II:233–234.

on their accounts, the Portuguese policy makers created a grand plan to enter the lucrative trade. But, Chaudhuri maintains, the arrival of the Portuguese in the Indian Ocean abruptly ended the system of peaceful oceanic navigation that was such a marked feature of the region.¹⁰

The south-western archipelago: the contest and international connections

The race for religion, trade, and power in the Indian Ocean region began in 1492 with Christopher Columbus' 'discovery', while in the service of Spain, of the so-called 'New World' after being disappointed by Portuguese royal patronage. Six years later, on 18 May 1498, the Portuguese Vasco da Gama entered the Indian Ocean with his small fleet, and was piloted across the open sea from East Africa by an Indian navigator. Finally they dropped anchor before Calicut, the Malabar emporium.

With the arrival of the Portuguese in India in 1498, as Schrieke points out, the two opposing parties, Christians and Muslims, stood poised for head-on collision. On the one hand there were Muslims who had for hundreds of years carried on an extensive and profitable trade as the unchallenged masters of the Indian Ocean. They believed that it was in their interest, commercial as well as religious, to exclude any possible rivals, particularly the *kafir* or unbelieving Europeans. On the other hand, there were the Christian Portuguese who looked upon the Muslims as their natural enemies. The Portuguese *conquistadores* made it no secret that their hostility against Muslims derived from the state of perpetual war between Christendom and Islam.¹¹

Having gained a stronghold in India, the Portuguese soon began to launch their sacred mission and put into practice "a privilege allowed them through an extraordinary blessing of God" to cleanse the earth of as many Muslims as possible. Therefore, as early as 1500, the Portuguese attacked all Muslim merchant vessels on the open seas, including the ships of the Mamluk Sultans of Egypt. They also seized, plundered and killed all crew and passengers of the 'Mecca ships', large Muslim merchant ships that also carried *haj* pilgrims.¹²

The Portuguese atrocities had not escaped the attention of Muslim historiographers. The Arab chronicles of Hadramawt, Yemen, for instance, referring to the Portuguese military campaigns in the early sixteenth century (1502–1503), recorded vividly, "In this year, in the month of *Rajab*, the vessels of the Franks [Arabic term for all Europeans] appeared at sea en route for India, Hormuz

¹⁰ Schrieke 1955-I:39.

¹¹ Schrieke 1957-II:233–234; Chaudhuri 1985:64.

¹² Schrieke 1957-II:234.

and those parts. They took about seven vessels, killing those on board and making some prisoners. This was their first action. May God curse them.”¹³

The violent attitude of the Portuguese created not only what Chaudhuri calls a ‘catastrophe’ for the commercial activities in the Indian Ocean, but also a religious rage on the part of the Mamluk Sultans and later, as we will see, the Ottoman Sultans as well. The Mamluk Sultans of Egypt, after receiving complaints from Muslim rulers of Gujarat and Southern Yemen, dispatched Fra Mauro, the prior of the monastery of Zion on Mount Sinai, to the Pope in Rome. Protesting the barbaric conduct of the Portuguese, the Sultan warned that he could take retaliatory measures against the Christian pilgrims in Palestine. The protest, which the Pope passed on to the Portuguese King Manuel, produced no change in Portuguese behaviour. In contrast, they intensified their zeal to destroy the Muslim trade as well as pursuing their passion for a trade monopoly by venturing farthest east to the Straits of Malacca and to Maluku or the Moluccas.¹⁴

This was the typical way of the Portuguese in their attempts to expand their realm in the archipelago. As Reid shows,¹⁵ the Portuguese as a rule targeted the harbour towns at which the whole of the Southeast Asian export trade appeared to be concentrated, and Malacca was such a city. Given the terror which the Portuguese had already spread everywhere in the Indian Ocean, it is no surprise that as soon as they made their first contact with Malacca in 1509, they met with the strong opposition of its population, consisting mainly of Javanese, South Indians, Gujaratis, Chams, Tagalogs and others.

Since the possession of Malacca was crucial for their monopoly, the Portuguese made no concessions. They were finally able to conquer the city in 1511, as Reid explains, for three reasons: firstly, because they concentrated on it an intensity of firepower unprecedented in the region ‘below the winds’; secondly, because of the element of surprise; and thirdly, because much of the city’s population quickly deserted the Sultan of Malacca. The Portuguese were also able to hold it, in spite of a dozen massive sieges conducted for instance by the Acehnese during the ensuing century, because they constructed a fort that was very difficult to breach.¹⁶ But it is important to note that from the conquest of Malacca onwards the Portuguese were involved in bitter and bloody struggles against the Muslim forces of the archipelago. This is particularly true since the Portuguese conquests were accompanied by vigorous missionary activities; and these stirred the Muslims to action in their turn.¹⁷

¹³ Cited in Serjeant 1963:43.

¹⁴ Chaudhuri 1985:63; Schrieke 1957-II:234–235.

¹⁵ Reid 1993:271.

¹⁶ Reid 1993:271–272.

¹⁷ Schrieke 1957-II:235.

The strongest and fiercest opponent of the Portuguese in the archipelago, no doubt, was the Acehne sultanate. After the Portuguese conquest of Malacca, Aceh had replaced Malacca as the major Muslim trade force in the Indian Ocean in the first quarter of the sixteenth century, and had established strong international relations with some Middle Eastern countries, particularly the Ottoman sultanate. Aceh eventually proved to be invincible to Portuguese encroachment and attacks. The Acehne on the other hand attacked the Portuguese in Malacca on several occasions (1537, 1539, 1547, 1568, 1573, and 1575) without much success.

The first open conflict and hostilities between the Portuguese and the Acehne in the Indian Ocean took place in 1526. An Acehne big ship destined for Jeddah was seized by the Portuguese in the Arabian Sea and its cargo was sold in Hormuz. Several years later, the Portuguese captured more Acehne ships, and plundered their valuable cargoes, off the coast of Arabia.¹⁸ The Portuguese were in a stronger position to be aggressive, since, as Ricklefs points out, they had reached a level of technological progress that would bring their nation into one of the most daring overseas adventures of all time. They began to use artillery aboard ship.¹⁹

Despite the more advanced armament of the Portuguese and their continued harassment and encroachment, Acehne ships were able to maintain their voyages across the Indian Ocean. Two Portuguese fleets sent in 1554 and 1555 to intercept Acehne ships were unsuccessful. Again, in 1559, the Portuguese failed to intercept and capture Acehne ships in the Red Sea. As a result, according to Venetian sources, in the years of 1565 and 1566, some fifty ships from the Kingdom of 'Ashi' [Aceh] in Sumatra arrived annually in the Red Sea.²⁰

The Portuguese terror in the Indian Ocean had come to the attention of, and became a matter of concern for, the Ottoman sultans. There is little doubt that Malay-Indonesian rulers, especially the Acehne, were well aware of the strong naval power of the Ottomans and its increasingly predominant position in the trade of the Indian Ocean in the sixteenth century. Not only that, but also, given the fact that the Ottomans were co-religionists of the Muslim Acehne, it can reasonably be expected that they saw the Ottomans as their patrons. Therefore, it is very likely that there was some direct contact between the Acehne and Turkish traders in Indian Ocean harbours. In any case, with their presence in the region, the Ottomans brought for Malay-Indonesian rulers and traders new hopes of getting some support in their struggle against the Portuguese.

¹⁸ Meilink-Roelofs 1962:145; Azra 2004.

¹⁹ Ricklefs 1990:20.

²⁰ Meilink-Roelofs 1962:144, 363.

The possibility of Ottoman support for the Acehnese, and their intervention in the Indian Ocean, was a great concern for the Portuguese. As early as 1519, the Portuguese in Malacca were worried by rumours of the dispatch by the ‘Grand Turk’ of a Turkish fleet to help the Malaccan Muslims. According to Pigafetta, who reported the rumours, the Portuguese soon sent a fleet to the Red Sea to intercept the Turks. When the Portuguese spotted some Turkish galleys stranded on a beach near Aden, they destroyed them without delay.²¹

For their part, the Ottoman authorities seemed to be fully informed of the Portuguese encroachment in the Indian Ocean. In 1525, the famous Turkish admiral in the Red Sea, Salman Reis (d. 1528), warned the Sublime Porte of the Portuguese threat to the Ottoman possessions in the Red Sea and Persian Gulf region. After giving a detailed description of the Portuguese offensive in various Indian Ocean ports, he reported the Portuguese progress in the Malay-Indonesian archipelago and their danger to the Turkish spice trade. Salman Reis finally suggested the dispatch of Ottoman power thither:

They [the Portuguese] also control the port [Pasai] of the great island called Shamatirah [Sumatra]... situated onwards beyond the island of Ceylon afore-said. It is said there they [i.e. the Portuguese] have two hundred infidels. With two hundred infidels they also captured the port of Malacca opposite Sumatra.... Apparently all the spices come from these islands. Now these spices go to Portugal. Formerly, before the Portuguese captured those ports... there used to be a great deal of revenue [of the Ottoman] from spices in Egypt and a great deal of goods available. It is said that the accursed Portuguese hold the aforementioned ports with [only] two thousand men. Therefore, when our ships are ready, and God willing, move against them, their total destruction will be inevitable, for one fortress is unable to support another and they are not able to put up united opposition.²²

There is a religious tone in the term ‘accursed’ Portuguese. Therefore, the religious motive was one of the most important motivations in the establishment of the closer links between the Acehnese sultanate and the Ottomans. An informal alliance between them had in fact existed by the end of the 1530s. Their relationship became certainly stronger with the increasing encroachment of the *kafir* Portuguese, who in 1521 had established a fort at neighbouring Pasai. The Acehnese Sultan ‘Ali al-Mughayat Shah (r. 1511–1530), however, expelled them from Pasai in 1524. When Sultan ‘Ala al-Din Ri‘ayat Shah al-Qahhar ascended the Acehnese throne in 1537, he felt an ever-growing need for Ottoman support.

The Portuguese on the other hand followed these Islamic connections against them very closely. Thus, Mendes Pinto, who was in the Straits of

²¹ Pigafetta 1968:19.

²² Cited in Ozbaran 1978:84.

Malacca region in the late 1530s, reported that Sultan al-Qahhar had already forged an alliance with 160 Turks, some Abyssinians, unnumbered Gujaratis, and some 200 Malabari mercenaries; and they had arrived in Aceh ready to fight for the Muslim cause. Not only that. Later, Pinto was also informed that additional Turkish forces, that consisted of some 300 soldiers, had arrived in Aceh and that the Acehnese sultan had signed a military and commercial pact, in Cairo, with the Grand Turk [Sulayman the Magnificent] through the Pasha of Egypt. In return for their military assistance the Ottomans were granted, by the Acehnese sultan, exclusive rights to a trading factory in Pasai.²³

Mutual animosity between the Portuguese and the Acehnese was long-lasting. According to al-Raniri, one of the most celebrated religious scholars in the Acehnese court in the seventeenth century, Sultan al-Qahhar sent a mission to Istanbul to meet the Sultan of 'Rum', a Malay term referring to the Ottoman sultans. In June 1562 an Acehnese ambassador was already in Istanbul asking for military support to fight the Portuguese.²⁴ It appears that the Acehnese envoy was among those who had escaped a Portuguese attack a year earlier, as described by the *Annals of al-Shihri*, known also as *Tarikh al-Hadramawt*. These annals are apparently the earliest Arabic source known reporting the presence and activities of Acehnese ships in the Red Sea and their battles against the Portuguese.²⁵

In 1565 another Acehnese envoy named Husayn made an appearance in Istanbul. It is likely that he was the one who brought a petition from Sultan al-Qahhar to Sultan Sulayman the Magnificent. In that petition, the Acehnese sultan addressed the Ottoman ruler as the Caliph of Islam and the Muslims. He then reported that the Portuguese had inflicted great difficulties on Muslim merchants and *haj* pilgrims on their way to Mecca and Arabian ports. Therefore, the military assistance of the Caliph was badly needed to save innocent Muslims who had continually been massacred by the infidel *Farangis* [Portuguese].²⁶

Sultan Sulayman could not himself help the Acehnese for he died in 1566. The Acehnese mission, however, won the support of Sultan Selim II (r. 1566–1574) who issued an imperial decree for a major military expedition to Aceh. Around September 1567, the Turkish admiral at Suez, Kurtoglu Hizir Reis, was instructed to sail to Aceh with a fleet of 15 galleys, and two barques with numerous master gunsmiths, soldiers, and artillery. The fleet, however, was diverted to Yemen to suppress a rebellion there, which lasted until 1571. It appears that only a small part of the Turkish force ever reached

²³ Pinto 1989:26–27, 28, 36–37, 46–47.

²⁴ Al-Raniri 1966:31–32.

²⁵ Serjeant 1963:10; Seljuq 1980:307.

²⁶ Farooqi 1988:215–216.

Aceh, and it seems that they had not taken part in a major Acehnese attack on Portuguese Malacca in 1568.²⁷

The failure of the 1568 expedition and the death of Sultan al-Qahhar in 1571 did not lessen the Acehnese desire to expel the Portuguese from the region. According to one Indonesian historian al-Qahhar's second successor, Sultan Mansur Shah (r. 1577–1588), renewed Aceh's political and military relations with the Ottoman Empire.²⁸ This is substantiated by Portuguese historical records. Jorge de Lemos, Viceregal Secretary to Goa, reported to Lisbon in 1585 that the ruler of Aceh had again been negotiating with the Ottoman caliph for military assistance to mount a new offensive against the Portuguese.²⁹

It is not necessary to provide further accounts on subsequent relations between the Acehnese and the Ottomans. What is clear is that the race between Muslims and Christians was evidently there, mostly of course involving trade and politics, but clearly also religion. And it is also clear that the Portuguese had almost no chance to spread Christianity, excepting in Malacca where the Portuguese were able to put down some trace of Christianity. More than that, the Portuguese fairly soon ceased to be such a revolutionary force in the west of the archipelago; and it is also evident that they failed to control the Asian trade. This is because they simply had to spend all their available resources to defend themselves from the formidable Acehnese attacks. While on the other hand for the Acehnese Muslims, supported by Islamic international connections, the continued encroachment of the Portuguese had only led to further consolidation of Islam.

The contest for the eastern archipelago

The contest for trade, politics, and religion between the Portuguese and Muslims soon moved to the eastern archipelago or precisely to the Moluccas, a name ultimately derived from the Arab traders' term for the region, *Jazirat al-Muluk* or the land of many kings. The Portuguese came initially to Ambon, then to Ternate, and later to the island of Tidore. It is necessary to recall that immediately after the capture of Malacca the Portuguese had dispatched an exploratory expedition from Malacca to the Moluccas under Francisco Serrão. This was followed between 1511 and 1522 by regular trading voyages. As Reid pointed out, the Portuguese moved quickly to the Moluccas once they discovered that it was the true source of cloves and nutmeg. After initially having harboured in Ambon, the Portuguese moved to Ternate, the main centre of

²⁷ Reid 2005:79–80.

²⁸ Zainuddin 1961:272–277.

²⁹ Boxer 1969:423.

the clove trade in the eastern archipelago. But, it is important to note that the Portuguese could never control more than a fraction of Moluccan cloves, let alone any other product, because of their involvement in the complex set of antagonisms and alliances.³⁰

It is important to point out, as Meilink-Roelofs makes clear, that Islam had penetrated the eastern archipelago region some fifty to eighty years before the coming of the Portuguese.³¹ According to De Graaf's assessment, Islam reached the Moluccas in the latter half of the fifteenth century. But he admits that there had been traces of Muslim influence already a century before that period. It seems that the first ruler in the Moluccas converting to Islam was the king of Ternate.³²

Before long, the Portuguese were entangled in bitter struggles not only among Muslim local rulers, but also against the Spaniards. The ruler of Muslim Ternate in particular warmly welcomed the Portuguese since he hoped that the Portuguese would not only buy their spices, but also help him in the fight against his rivals. Therefore the presence of the Portuguese, who were allowed by the Sultan of Ternate to build their central fort (1522), gave the inhabitants of Ternate island a certain amount of prestige *vis-a-vis* their neighbours.³³

Faced with the close political and economic alliances between the Portuguese and the Ternatans, the Sultan of Tidore associated himself with the Spaniards who had come to the Moluccas region after the death of Magellan (1521). The Spaniards not only bought the spices for a price eight times as much as the Portuguese paid, but more importantly provided also much sought prestige to the ruler of Tidore.

This naturally led to a struggle between the Portuguese and the Spaniards. The conflicts among the Europeans themselves further eroded their prestige in the eyes of native Muslims. The Portuguese and Spaniards seemed to have realized that conflicts and hostilities among them would be of great benefit only to the Muslims. Therefore, after the Spanish capitulation on Tidore, they signed the Treaty of Zaragoza (1529) that formally put an end to their conflicts with the Portuguese in the Moluccas. But in practice this did not work. There were repeated skirmishes among them until 1546. Only at the end of the sixteenth century, when Portugal became a part of the Spanish empire (1580), did the presence of the Spanish in the Philippines serve to buttress Portuguese authority in the Moluccas islands. But that came too late, because of political changes that had already taken place in Muslim power and politics.

³⁰ Reid 1993:272.

³¹ Meilink-Roelofs 1962:155.

³² De Graaf 1970:135–136.

³³ Meilink-Roelofs 1962:154–156; Reid 1993:272–273.

By the second half of the sixteenth century, the relationship between the Portuguese and the Sultan of Ternate had grown steadily worse. In the 1560s the Portuguese became increasingly irritated as Sultan Hairun of Ternate proved talented in manipulating them to advance his own authority and that of Islam. In 1570 the Portuguese treacherously murdered him. Hairun's son Baabullah used the outrage against this act to drive the Portuguese out of Ternate. Baabullah's victory over the Portuguese made him highly respected among the natives in the region, and in the years that followed most of the Moluccan islands came within his sphere of influence.³⁴

There is no doubt that the religious factor was evident in the contest for the eastern archipelago. Both Meilink-Roelofs and Reid conclude that the coming of the Portuguese and Spaniards had intensified the religious race between Muslims and Christians. As Reid maintains, in Eastern Indonesia as a whole Muslims and Christians were almost on a par in the mid-sixteenth century. The unstable *modus vivendi* between the Portuguese and the Sultanate of Ternate in the clove trade allowed Christian as well as Muslim missionaries to make some headway among the still largely animist people of the Moluccas.³⁵

The success of Sultan Baabullah of Ternate in expelling the Portuguese undoubtedly provided momentum for the further Islamisation in the Moluccas as a whole. The Sultan, for instance, compelled most of the Christian supporters of the Portuguese throughout the Moluccas to accept Islam as a sign of loyalty. Baabullah had already been an effective propagandist for Islam during his father's time. Now, after his victory, he was able to spread the Muslim faith through much of the Ambon area, to Buton, Selayar, some of the coastal kingdoms of east and north Sulawesi, and even to southern Mindanao. Reid points out that the Portuguese and Spaniards believed that this crusading Sultan introduced "a great number of Arabian and Persian false prophets into the Moluccas, and sent envoys and missionaries to Brunei, Mindanao, Java and Aceh to encourage the holy war."³⁶

As a result, during Baabullah's reign (1570–1583), and until the arrival of the Dutch in 1600, in spite of complicated religious loyalties, there was a stronger sense than ever since the arrival of Islam that the acceptance of Islam was an essential part of loyalty to the ruler of Ternate.

On the other hand, the hope of the Portuguese (as well as the Spaniards) for massive conversion to Christianity in the Moluccas did not materialise. As De Graaf pointed out, this proved an idle hope. Only very few were baptized during the sixteenth century. Even the great apostle of Asia, Francis Xavier, who was in the Moluccas in 1546–1547, was unable to loosen the hold of Islam

³⁴ Meilink-Roelofs 1962:159; Reid 1993:147.

³⁵ Reid 1993:147.

³⁶ Reid 1993:148.

there.³⁷ This failure had a lot to do with the erosion of the Portuguese image that had already suffered from the way in which many Portuguese behaved themselves towards the native Muslims, and from the corrupt administration of various Portuguese official representatives in the Moluccas.³⁸

Conclusion

As Reid concludes, the Portuguese period was a period during which polarisation and religious boundaries were clearly drawn. Only by the mid-seventeenth century was this sharp distinction between Islam and non-Islam fading. The major conflicts were no longer between crusading Catholics and Islam, but between the religiously neutral VOC and its allies on the one side and those who sought a freer system of trade on the other. Among both Muslims and Christians the age of crusades motivated by religious fervour was over.³⁹ Considering much contradicting evidence for later periods up until today, Reid's conclusion should be critically reassessed. But this is beyond the scope of this chapter to discuss.

Azyumardi Azra

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³⁷ De Graaf 1970:135-136.

³⁸ Meilink-Roelofs 1962:155.

³⁹ Reid 1993:143-50.

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CHAPTER THREE

CATHOLIC CONVERTS IN THE MOLUCCAS, MINAHASA AND SANGIHE-TALAUD, 1512–1680

A world of its own: the Moluccas

We do not know much about the early history of the Moluccas. There are no written records, only a few prehistoric relics. But two spices growing only on five tiny islands west of Halmahera (cloves) and on the small islands of the Banda Archipelago (nutmeg and mace),¹ were known in the East and West before the first century CE. In China cloves had been used since the Han Dynasty (206 BCE–220 CE) as ingredients in perfumes or medicines and as flavourings for food. The Indian *Ramayana* epic mentions cloves about 200 BCE. In 314 CE one hundred and fifty pounds of cloves were presented to the pope. Nutmegs are recorded for the first time in Constantinople in the year 540. Although until the sixteenth century both spices were almost exclusively collected from wild growing trees, a considerable quantity must have been harvested and traded for sago and rice. This staple food was much in demand in the Spice Islands but did not grow on any of the small islands. Sago was brought by traders from Halmahera, Seram, Kai, and Aru. Rice came from Java in Javanese or Bandanese junks which also exported the cloves, because the islanders themselves had no seaworthy cargo ships.

The Moluccas comprise several groups of islands in eastern Indonesia, but especially the so-called Spice Islands. In the narrow sense of the word, *Maluku* is used for the islands of Tidore, Ternate, Motir, Makian, Bacan, and for a few tiny islets close to them, or for the four ancient kingdoms of Jailolo, Tidore, Ternate, and Bacan. In the wider sense, however, the Moluccas comprise all the islands between Celebes (Sulawesi) and Papua (West New-Guinea), and between Moro Island north of Halmahera, and the Banda Islands in the south. This wider sense is always used in this chapter.²

¹ Mace, made from the bright red and waxy aril that covers the nut, is actually more valuable than the nut itself.

² In modern Indonesia the name Moluccas has been extended to even more southern archipelagoes like the Kai, Tanimbar and Aru islands. These will be discussed in chapter four. We will, however, not use this broadest meaning of Moluccas. In this book we will consider the region from Banda to Ambon as the Southern Moluccas, Halmahera and surrounding islands like Ternate and Tidore as the Northern Moluccas.

The Moluccas have a very mixed population, which belongs to different language families. The people of northern Halmahera, of Ternate and Tidore seem to belong to the Papuan language group. Thus they speak a non-Austronesian language, the origin of which is not known up to the present. South Halmahera, Makian and Bacan belong to the South Halmahera West-Guinea group of languages, whereas Ambon and the South Moluccas belong to the Central-Malayo-Polynesian group, an Austronesian subgroup, which differs considerably from the pure, or Western, Malay languages. All this points to a mixed population of Papuan-Malay-Polynesian stock. To communicate among the different groups—sometimes even among neighbouring villages—the islanders had to use the Malay of Malacca, which was introduced by traders and used also by Francis Xavier.

From Ambonese sources we know that migration among the Moluccan islands was still in full swing in the fifteenth century. Groups from the northern islands and from Java settled on the shores of Hitu (Ambon). Larger confederations of various clans rose and quickly became rival parties. Even the four (or five when Loloda is included) Moluccan kingdoms are traced by local myths and legends to migrants arriving in the fourteenth and fifteenth century from Halmahera.

The harvesting and storing of the spices, and the selling them when ships arrived, required at least a minimally structured society. But again, there are no records from the time before the fifteenth century. Varthema was the first writer who described the Spice Islands and the clove tree (1510). Shortly before that time social structures that transcended federations of clans and groups of villages came into being in the northern and central Moluccas, and at a lower level on Ambon. Clove harvest and food trade created a social system largely based on the distribution of wealth deriving from them.

Between Tidore and Ternate and between the *ulis* (clans) on the islands around Ambon a deep-rooted dualism seems to have been the basis of the structure of these societies. Rivalry between Ternate and Tidore, between the *uli-lima* and the *uli-siwa* on Ambon, and similarly arranged groups on Seram, pervade the whole area. Complementary dualism and rivalry, war and antagonism were regarded as necessary to create stability and coherence and keep things going! It is not clear if this social pattern corresponded to certain beliefs in the indigenous religion or had other roots. Indigenous myths about the earliest times seem to be told in order to legitimise the structures that had evolved. The dualism between Tidore and Ternate was always regarded as necessary for the survival and prosperity of the central Moluccas, a region in which there was no ethnic, political, racial, or religious unity. Unity was a legend, created and upheld by myths about the origin of 'the family of its four (or five) always quarrelling members'. The appearance of Islam and Christianity added to the fighting, endemic in the whole archipelago.

The religion of the Moluccas was an ethnic religion, a kind of animism, without a centre and with no codified creed, and with very different local beliefs. The people worshipped the sun, the moon and the stars, the sky and the earth, but also objects as presented in their ghost huts (*ureu*) and *pemalis*, (sacred stones). From the middle of the fifteenth century Islam was introduced from recently Islamised North Javanese harbour princedoms, especially from Giri-Gresik and Tuban. It was the members of the merchant class of the spice islands, who were in close contact with their partners in Javanese harbour towns, which one by one had converted from Hinduism to Islam during the late fifteenth century, who purchased the spices and provided necessary food supplies to the islanders. Some merchants were asked to stay for some time on the islands and functioned as Islamic teachers. These (Arab-) Javanese merchants were real ‘peddler missionaries’ of Islam in the Moluccan archipelago. The Moluccas would have remained a far out-of-the-way forgotten archipelago, if they had not been the only place in the world producing cloves, nutmegs and mace. Though the *cora-cora* boats of the native inhabitants travelled fast between the islands, they did not cross the sea to Java. Chinese junks, Javanese and Buginese sailing boats provided connections with the outside world. Nonetheless the nobility of the Spice Islands was aware of what was going on in Malacca and even in India. They had heard of a strong newcomer from the far West, the Portuguese. They were keen to trade with them also.

Actually the Portuguese were not traders in the real sense of the word, people who expected profit by doing business. Their extended network of ports was administered by *fidalgos*, who certainly looked for money, but quite often more by exacting tribute and engaging in a kind of plundering and piracy, than by performing calculations and bargaining. In their feudal mentality they were dealing with rulers for their king; they were not agents of trading houses.

First encounters and clashes between Moluccans and Portuguese: the political context as seen from the major Muslim Sultanate of Ternate, 1511–1663

In November 1511 three ships under the command of António de Abreu left Malacca and were guided by Javanese pilots to Banda, by way of Gresik. After loading nutmeg and mace, the ships were separated by a storm. The junk of Francesco Serrão with eight sailors ran aground on *Pulau Penyu* and pirates brought the shipwrecked crew to the coast of Ambon. They were well received by the local people, whom they supported in a skirmish with a neighbouring village. The sultans of Ternate and Tidore were already informed about the changes at Malacca and immediately sent after the Portuguese in order to become friends with so powerful a nation. Their alliance was regarded as important for the improvement of trade and their respective position among

the Moluccan rival kingdoms. Sultan Abu Lais of Ternate succeeded in bringing Serrão to Ternate, the long searched-for homeland of cloves. This little shipwrecked batch of sailors had finally (1512) come to the end of a long search prepared by Prince Henry the Navigator from the 1440s.

Abu Lais immediately promised to deliver cloves on condition that the Portuguese would build a fortress on Ternate and on no other island, send more armed men and arms, and establish a trading post. The sultan hoped that an exclusive agreement with Portugal would bring him wealth and power, as he had heard had happened to the ruler of Cochin (India). Apparently the Portuguese paid higher prices than the Asian traders.

The offer of Ternate to monopolise the clove trade, and its acceptance by the Portuguese, may have been a big mistake for both parties. A monopoly on spices would have meant for the Portuguese that other buyers could not force up the prices. But they would have certainly avoided many wars and much trouble if they had started real business on one of the many islands still inhabited by pagans. They would have avoided most of the troubles involving religion, and Ternate would have avoided the shake-up of its whole society and perhaps saved its independence for a much longer period. But in the beginning cooperation with the Portuguese brought prestige, wealth and power to Ternate in its endemic warfare and power struggles against the other Moluccan kingdoms, especially Tidore and Jailolo.

Only ten years later the trouble started. Magellan's two remaining ships under the command of Elcano arrived in Tidore via South America and the Philippines (1521). There the Spaniards were heartily welcomed as rivals of the Portuguese, who had just started to build a fort on Ternate (1522–1523). Throughout the whole Portuguese domination in the Moluccas (till 1575) Tidore, Jailolo, and other rulers sought the friendship of the Spaniards against the Portuguese. When Abu Lais, the friend of the Portuguese, died (1522) quarrels broke out among his relatives. His brother Darwis gained the upper hand with the help of the Portuguese garrison in the fort, but when Captain J. de Menese arrived in 1527 the situation changed dramatically. He was weak, but arrogant and utterly cruel. He ordered the uncle of the sultan to be gravely offended by smearing pig's fat on his face. The *sangaji* of Tobano, who had defended his people's property against marauding Portuguese soldiers, was cruelly killed by cutting of his hands, after which he was attacked by two fierce dogs. The *sangaji* retreated into the sea pursued by the dogs. He seized them with his teeth, because his arms were tied behind his back, and drowned them, and then himself.

Menese went on terrorising and killing Ternate's nobility, even the old friend and mainstay of the Portuguese, the regent Darwis. The queen mother, a most respected lady, moved away from the fort. When Menese took the young sultan hostage in his fort the queen imposed a strict ban on all food supplies to

the Portuguese fortress. Menese was forcibly replaced by a new captain, but later pardoned in Goa. The Ternateans no longer expected to receive justice from the Portuguese.

A few years later the next Portuguese captain behaved so badly that the queen together with the sultans of Tidore and Bacan boycotted all supplies. Captain G. Pereira was murdered in a conspiracy headed by the chaplain of the garrison. A short time afterwards the new captain plotted with a *pati* (the highest court functionary after the sultan) to attack Tidore, which had given protection to the queen mother and the ousted sultan of Ternate. Both had to flee to Jailolo on Halmahera. The Portuguese raised the sultan's younger half-brother Tabarija (1523–1535) to the throne and the traitorous *pati* became regent.

The next captain, Tristão de Ataide (1533–1536), was especially vicious. This confirms the saying that, “from all the four quarters of the winds murderers come to India, and from there they are degraded to Malacca, and for monstrous cases they are transferred further on to Malucco, which is the hotbed of all the evils of the world, whereas it could be turned into a place good for souls, lives, and trade.” (Galvão) Barros summarizes, “Evil and strife are endemic to the Moluccas, for the clove, though a creation of God, is actually an apple of discord and responsible for more affliction than gold.”³ Ataide deposed Tabarija and sent him with his mother and her husband to Goa to be tried by the Portuguese governor general. Hairun, Tabarija's half-brother was made sultan (1535–1570). With the support of the new sultan, Ataide attacked Jailolo, because it had sided with the Spaniards, who had provided cannons and instructions on how to build a fortress. Jailolo was conquered (1534), the old sultan taken prisoner and replaced by a collaborator. During this time of turmoil, the *sangajis* of Mamuya and Tolo in the area of Moro on Halmahera asked the Portuguese through the intervention of Baltasar Veloso, a brother in law of Sultan Hairun, to protect them against inroads from Ternate. But as the Portuguese could only protect Christians he advised them to be baptised together with their people. These Christians became the first Catholic community in Indonesia.

Luckily in 1536 the best Portuguese captain, Antonio Galvão, took command. Galvão wanted peace in order to promote trade and a native Christian community as numerous as possible. After futile negotiations he attacked Tidore, which had sheltered the former Sultan Dayalo of Ternate, who was killed in action. “He was the first king in the Moluccas to die by the sword. They (the natives) considered this a great dishonour and disgrace, because

³ For the quotation from Galvão, see Jacobs 1971:171–173; for the quote from Barros see Lach 1994:606.

in these countries custom does not permit them to wound a king, still less to kill him.”

Galvão strengthened the fortress and surrounded the Portuguese city with a wall. He fought against private trade in order to acquire all cloves for the crown. Some high class Ternateans converted to Christianity, among others Kolano Sabia, ‘an important member of the court and the household of the sultan of Ternate’, and an Arab who was said to be a descendent of the Prophet. Sultan Hairun himself seemed to have thought about embracing Christianity and sending one of his sons to the Jesuit college in Goa. According to the letters of the Jesuits, Hairun was loyal to the Portuguese crown and cooperative in trade dealings. But, because he saw no way to establish close links with the most important families in his vast island kingdom other than by following the old Moluccan custom through marriages, he could hardly become a Christian having many wives. Living with several women was regarded as no obstacle for many European kings to be regarded as ‘outstanding’ Christian princes. Nor did the Portuguese in Ternate give a better example. The remark of a Jesuit that Hairun refused to convert because of his ‘carnal vices’, is unjust.⁴ Hairun strengthened his position against a possible return from Goa of his half-brother Tabarija, who in 1544 was rehabilitated and became a Christian. Tabarija’s friend Jordao de Freitas became captain of Ternate, arrested Hairun and sent him in chains to Malacca to make place for his friend. Francisco Palha, the *feitor* of Ternate, a nobleman and a friend of Hairun, protested in vain and was put in prison himself by Freitas. The captain planned to make peace with the Spaniards, install a Christian indigenous king and convert all the islands. This was wishful thinking. Tabarija died, probably being poisoned, in Malacca on his way home from India. Hairun was cleared from all accusations and reinstalled as sultan (1546). From that time he never trusted the Portuguese again, though Captain Freitas was recalled.

At this crucial moment, Francis Xavier arrived in Ternate from Ambon, where he had instructed and strengthened the native Christians in their villages. Xavier converted many islanders in Moro and some nobles of Ternate, but Hairun could not be convinced. He answered Xavier, “Muslims and Christians venerate the same God. There will be a time when both become one religion.” A few months later Xavier returned to Malacca and Goa. He sent Jesuits to Ambon, Ternate and Moro. This was the beginning of an organised evangelisation that continued for a few decades.

In 1555 Captain Duarte de Sá took command and behaved as badly as most of his predecessors, if not worse. He stole cloves that belonged to the sultan, and because Hairun protested, he was thrown into a dirty prison together with

⁴ Andaya 1993:125.

his brother and his old mother (1557). The missionaries and the merchants protested, but in vain. The combined forces of Ternate-Tidore arose and nearly defeated the Portuguese, who were now supported by Jailolo and the Christian sultan of Bacan. The Christians of Mamuya sent provisions to the besieged fort. At this critical moment the Portuguese inhabitants of Ternate seized their captain while attending mass, and imprisoned him. Hairun together with the other hostages were released immediately.

The rivalry between the Portuguese and the Spaniards (and five decades later between them and the Dutch) harmed the prestige of the Portuguese, which had already suffered much by the misconduct, tyranny, and corruption of nearly all their officials. This did enormous damage to the spread of Christianity and strengthened the influence of Islam as an opposition to 'the Christians'. Some Portuguese officials supported Hairun after 1560 and quite often sacrificed the interests of the native Christians in order to gain greater profit in their private business. Hairun himself became increasingly anti-Christian.

A clever ruler and a brave warrior, Hairun was reportedly correct in the exercise of law. According to oral sources from the early seventeenth century, "he was a strong defender of Islamic faith", and he regarded himself as a loyal vassal of the king of Portugal. At the same time Hairun tried hard to restrict the Christians and their priests, who were protected by this same Portuguese king. But the Portuguese captains often acted against the interests of their king too. In 1570 the sultan was treacherously murdered on premeditated orders of Captain D.L. de Mesquita. Dying he cried, "O you *fidalgos*, why do you kill the most loyal vassal of my lord, the King of Portugal?"⁵ This peak of Portuguese stupidity and treason marked the beginning of the rapid downfall of their power and fortune in the Moluccas.

Hairun's son and successor Baabullah (1570–1583) vowed to revenge his father by throwing all Portuguese and native Christians out of the Moluccas. He was supported by most Muslim leaders when he gathered support from all the neighbouring islands to weaken the Portuguese and to kill or (re) convert all the Christians. Their villages in Morotai and in Moro were destroyed, though Tolo on Mamuya resisted successfully. The Christian king of Bacan was attacked, because he and the sultan of Tidore continued to supply food to the Portuguese. Bacan was defeated and forced into apostasy (1571). Almost the entire Jesuit mission was in a shambles in 1573.

⁵ In 1560 Hairun and Baabullah had acknowledged the overlordship of the Portuguese king. It seems that both were loyal. When Philip II of Spain became also king of Portugal in 1580, Baabullah sent a delegation to Lisbon to congratulate Philip and declare himself his loyal vassal (1583). His ambassador Naik was informed that the murderer of his father was killed by the Javanese when his ship was boarded in 1579 in Japara (Jacobs *Docu. Maluc.* II:70–75). The Ternatean mission to Lisbon was back in Ternate in 1585, after Baabullah's death.

After five years of siege, the Portuguese fortress on Ternate had to surrender. Weakened by illness and with no hope of being relieved the defenders were allowed to leave for Ambon or Malacca (1575). When Baabullah wrote to the king of Portugal seeking the punishment of the murderers of his father, he mentioned astonishingly that he would maintain the fortress for him by keeping a Portuguese captain, a *feitor*, and twelve soldiers chosen by himself. But these men too eventually departed of their own will and the fort became Baabullah's residence. It was conquered by the Spaniards in 1606.

From 1576 Baabullah's *cora-coras* (rowing boats used for warfare) re-established Ternatean control in many parts of the Moluccas and subdued new islands and ports even in northern Sulawesi and the Lesser Sunda Islands. In all these areas his fighters persecuted the Christians and revived or introduced Islam. Quite a number of Muslim teachers were now active in the Moluccas. Many Christians died for their faith, more became Muslims. The Church survived only on Ambon and on the Sangihe Islands.

Baabullah welcomed the English privateer Francis Drake (1579), who was much impressed by the wealth of this 'Lord of a hundred islands' and his extensive trade overseen by some Turks and two Italians. Because Ternate became very powerful, the frightened rulers of Bacan and Tidore took sides with the Portuguese, who were allowed to build a fort on Tidore in 1578. Formally the sultan of Tidore even acknowledged the king of Portugal as his overlord. Baabullah took revenge, poisoned the sultan of Bacan and devastated his island.

Shortly after Baabullah's death (1583) the Portuguese and Spanish forces, united since 1580, supported by Tidore and Bacan, tried in vain to re-conquer the former fortress on Ternate. The attackers were repulsed by the forces of Ternate supported by twenty Turkish gunners and the crews of Javanese junks riding at anchor. This victory created an even stronger unity among the Muslims as opposed to the two Western powers. But a few years later this 'Muslim unity' was abandoned and replaced by a close cooperation with the Dutch, who arrived on the scene in 1599. Sultan Said (1584–1606), Baabullah's successor, eagerly offered every advantage to these newcomers as long as they would help him to expel the Portuguese and Spaniards from the Moluccas. Unknowingly he tried 'to cast out the devil through Beelzebub'. The native rulers learned by hard experience that the Dutch were at least twice as rapacious as the much weaker Portuguese.

The whole political scene began to change quickly and drastically. In 1605 the Dutch seized the Portuguese fort on Ambon without a fight. It was a sudden and unexpected ending for the Catholic mission and the beginning of the transition to another denomination, the Reformed tradition of Protestantism as will be sketched in chapter five. Also the southern Moluccas, from Banda

to Ambon, were lost completely to the Dutch, and in the northern islands the fall of the fort on Tidore (1605) marked the end of Portuguese power in this region forever. A short revival of the Catholic mission was made possible by the recapture of the old fort on Ternate and some other islands by a Spanish fleet that appeared from Manila in 1606. Sultan Said had to surrender all his fortresses and to promise not to prevent anybody from becoming a Christian. Tidore, which had for long sided with the Spaniards, took advantage of the weakness of its neighbour, as did Bacan, which had kept a Christian population around the town of Labuha.

While the position of the Dutch VOC became stronger, the Spanish garrison managed to defend itself, though they often felt neglected by Manila. Sultan Hamzah of Ternate (1627–1648), a nephew of Baabullah, was raised in Manila and baptised. He kept on good terms with the Spanish and the Dutch, strengthened the grip on his vassals in the periphery and showed a liberal attitude towards all religions.

All of the Moluccas suffered in the middle of the seventeenth century because of constant wars between Ternate and Tidore, between the VOC and Spain, and especially because of the terrible *hongi tochten* (expeditions of warships) that destroyed all clove trees outside Ambon for the sake of a Dutch monopoly. Batavia was interested in keeping the war between the local rulers alive and forced Hamzah to revoke his treaties with Tidore and Manila. The sultans became more and more dependent on the VOC, the compensation money paid to them, and on Dutch arms to quell insurrections of their peoples impoverished by Dutch policy. Roughly three quarters of the population perished in the wars, especially young men who were pressed to man the *cora-cora* for the VOC expeditions. People from peripheral islands were forced to repopulate the centre.

The Spaniards kept their position in Ternate till 1663, when they withdrew the garrison out of fear of a Chinese attack on the Philippines. All these years were difficult for the native Christians and their few priests.

The events in Ternate and Tidore strongly influenced the Moluccas in general and the small Christian communities on the two islands of Ambon and Banda in particular. Of special interest is the development on Ambon, which did not recognize the overlordship claimed by Ternate, though the people of Hitu regarded themselves as its allies. The Christians of Ambon and the neighbouring Lease Islands are the only Christian communities in the Moluccas that have survived without interruption to the present day. Therefore we will give a short overview of the socio-political situation of Ambon until the arrival of the Dutch in 1605 and then concentrate on the Christian communities of Ambon and the other islands.

*Ambon and the Lease Islands:
political structures as background for religious choices*

The history of Ambon since the arrival of the Portuguese in 1512 is well documented by several Portuguese sources, by the local *Hikayat Tanah Hitu* written by Rijali and preserved in Malay and Dutch, and also by short remarks in Rumphius' *Ambonsche Historie* (composed in 1679 on Ambon).

Ambon was populated by so-called *Alfuros*, a name which actually means 'wild people who live in the mountain forests'. They probably have some affinity with the Papuans. In the coastal areas of the Moluccan islands people from different islands of the Malay archipelago, including Java, are said to have settled and formed clans. At the end of the fifteenth century these clans organised themselves in so-called *ulis* of different degrees.

These *ulis* formed groups of five or nine sub-groups each comprising a certain number of villages originating from common ancestors. The members (called *aman* or *hena*), formed a kind of clan composed of several *rumataus* or families. The *uli-lima* formed a group of five and was opposed to the *uli-siwa* or group of nine. On the island of Ambon, the *uli-lima* settled mostly on Hitu and embraced Islam from the early sixteenth century, whereas the *uli-siwa* kept to their old traditions and lived mostly on the peninsula of Leitimor. According to Ambonese cosmology the opposites have always to be brought into a unity by man, the centre of the world. This dualism, for example, made one *uli* choose to side with the opponents of Ternate, because the neighbouring *uli* was allied with that sultanate. If one *uli* became Muslim the other was inclined to choose Christianity. Friendship with the Portuguese on the part of one group automatically created opposition to them in the other group. Such a pattern was quite often displayed by Ternate and Tidore in their relations with different European powers, who were utterly confused by this Moluccan way of acting. This social structure should be kept in mind when conversions of whole villages are reported. Around 1500 three events changed the whole history of Ambon:

Firstly, Islam came to Hitu from Giri (Gresik) on Java or (also) from the north via Ternate and Wai Putih. Pati Tuban, a headman from Hitu, around 1510, met in Giri with the ruler of Ternate, Tidore Vogue, who had changed his name into Zainul Abidin (about 1470) and was married to a Javanese woman. With Giri, which was the residence of one of the *Wali Sanga*, the first preachers of Islam in Java, Ternate and Hitu kept trade and religious connections alive till the seventeenth century. Though Hitu was regarded as Muslim, in fact smaller places dependent on Hitu remained pagan until the beginning of the seventeenth century.

Secondly, cloves did not grow on Ambon before 1500, when they were brought from Hoamoal, the western peninsula of Seram. When the Portuguese

arrived on the coast of Hitu (1512), they could not yet buy any cloves. By the 1530s however Hitu had become an exporter of cloves. In the time of the VOC Ambon became the main clove producing island, especially after the Dutch destroyed all trees outside Ambon and the so-called Lease Islands: Haruku, Saparua and Nusa Laut.

Thirdly, one day fishermen from Nusatelo off the coast of Hitu brought the news that they had met white men with cat's eyes, whose language they could not understand. When they were brought to the village head, they explained that they came from Portugal to buy spices, but their ship had run on cliffs and broken apart. Though the *Hikayat Tanah Hitu* (Story XII) changed the pirates into fishermen, the story is confirmed by Portuguese reports. They were the first Europeans on Ambon (1512).

For many years the Portuguese called on Hitu to obtain drinking water and provisions or to wait for the right monsoon. Because the west coast of Hitu had no good harbours the Portuguese were shown the Bay of Ambon. Here the pagan villages of Hative and Tawiri, which were subject to the Hitunese, were ordered to assist them as far as possible. The relations of the Portuguese with the northern Hitunese were good until merchants from Java, Makassar and Banda started to accuse the Portuguese of preventing them from buying cloves. Seen from the Portuguese perspective, several buyers would force the prices up and infringe on the intended Portuguese monopoly. Besides foodstuffs the Javanese sold weapons. Against the Javanese, who used their religious ties with the more or less Muslim Hitunese, the Portuguese looked for support from the pagan Ambonese and tried to make them Christians. All this stirred up old antagonisms among the parties concerned. The old hostilities between the *uli-lima* and *uli-siwa* continued as the rivalry among the Hitunese who became Muslims and the inhabitants on both sides of the bay who looked for protection and therefore were inclined to side with the Portuguese and become Christians.

The Portuguese had built a little fort near Hitu Lama in the early 1520s. Once they supported their hosts in a war against the wild Alfuros of Seram. After the common victory a party was held. A drunken Portuguese soldier molested the pretty daughter of the headman Jamilu and slapped her father in the face when he reproached him. This was the end of the friendship between Hitunese and Portuguese. The Portuguese had to leave the north coast of Hitu permanently. Luckily they were guided by the headman of Hukunalo to the inner bay of Ambon. Here they built a protected village among heathen villages that now refused to obey their former Muslim overlords. Some Portuguese married local women. From other sources it seems that the Portuguese stayed on Hitu until 1536 and had a garrison in a fort at Hila. In that year (or in 1539) they moved via Hukunalo to Rumah Tiga near Hative on the west coast of the bay.

In 1538 a fleet of 25 *cora-cora* with 400 people from Tidore and Ternate and forty Portuguese suddenly appeared on the coast of Hitu. They came to maintain Portuguese-Ternatean control of all spice producing islands. On the coast of Hitu they met a large fleet of boats from several ports of Java, from Banda and from Makassar that were supported by the people of Hitu. Five ships full of goods were taken by the Portuguese. After this victory the Portuguese joined some compatriots living among the Ambonese on the bay. They concluded a contract with the *negeri* (independent villages) Hative, Amentelo (present-day the town of Ambon) and Nusanive (present-day Latuhalat), which asked for help and baptism. A priest remained for some time to instruct them. After these events the Portuguese enjoyed a quiet time on Leitimor and the Lease Islands. In 1546 Francis Xavier arrived from Malacca and stayed for some months among them. He cared for the Portuguese and Spanish seamen, but most of the time he visited seven Christian villages in order to give instruction. When he passed through Ambon for a second time, after visiting Ternate and Moro (1547), he promised to send priests from Goa who would stay on the island.

Later, in 1562, the situation on Ambon became so critical that a special captain was appointed for the island. Several attacks from the sultan of Ternate, who regarded the whole island of Ambon his territory, harmed the Christians very much. In 1564, an invasion of 600 Javanese and 2,000 north Hitunese from the *uli-lima* was repulsed from the bay. But in 1570 the new Sultan Baabullah sent Kaicil Liliato to Ambon in order to expel the Portuguese and to intimidate the Hative Christians. In 1572 the Portuguese fort in Hative (and Hila) was transferred to Leitimor on the eastern side of the bay. This wooden fort was surrounded by Christian villages but, because its field of fire was impeded by hills, the energetic Captain Sanches de Vasconcellos (1571–1599) replaced it in 1576 with a stone fort a few hundred metres away. Another attack by 3,000 men from Hitu followed in 1590 and created great havoc among the Christian villages.

During the time of Captain Vasconcellos (1572–1591) an almost uninterrupted war raged on Ambon between the *uli-lima* from Hitu supported by Ternate, Banda (1590 and 1592), and sometimes by Gresik on Java on one side, and the handful of Portuguese supported by the *uli-siwa* of Leitimor and the Lease Islanders on the other side. They received little help from Malacca. The alliance with Tidore caused the Ambonese to take part in numerous war expeditions all over the Moluccas. In these troubled times many Christian communities suffered large losses. At the end of the sixteenth century the Portuguese position on Ambon was very precarious and they had not much hope even of keeping their fort. In 1599 Dutch ships under the command of W. van Warwyk and J. van Heemskerck dropped anchor on the north coast of Hitu and were well received as an enemy of the hated Portuguese. But an

attack on the fort on Leitimor with Dutch support was repulsed in 1600. A small Dutch fort was built on Hitu, the *Kasteel van Verre*, which was deserted shortly afterwards because of fear of a large Portuguese fleet on its way from Goa. In 1602 Andreas Furtado arrived with 1,500 soldiers and subdued the whole of Hitu. Many of its inhabitants fled to Seram. Leitimor and the Lease Islands enjoyed a few more quiet years.

During the last decades of the 16th century the Portuguese gained lasting influence over the inhabitants of Southeast Ambon or Leitimor and its neighbouring eastern islands. Many Portuguese words were accepted into the local language. The *orang Mardijker* formed a special group of emancipated Asian-born slaves, who spoke Portuguese and lived close to the fort. Deeper and longer-lasting Portuguese influence only occurred on East Flores and Timor.

In 1604 three emissaries from Hitu asked the Dutch at Banten to throw the Portuguese out of Ambon. On 23 February 1605 the Portuguese captain surrendered the fort without a fight to the Dutch Admiral Steven van der Haghen. Actually the Jesuits together with the Christian Ambonese wanted to defend themselves, but the Portuguese had lost hope and wanted to leave. Van der Haghen who was not anti-Catholic at all, allowed the two Jesuits and the married Portuguese to stay on the island and to exercise their Catholic faith together with their Ambonese co-religionists. Though this permission was given in writing it was revoked quickly, because undisciplined Dutch soldiers destroyed the churches and village crosses and molested the two priests. This was the end of the Catholic community of Ambon and the Lease Islands, though the faithful hoped for a long time that the Portuguese would come back. Had they not been that bad after all?

After the Portuguese had surrendered their forts on Ambon and Tidore (1605) and the Spanish abandoned their fort on Ternate (1666), the Catholics in the Moluccas had lost all protection against the VOC and its Muslim allies. Have the Moluccan Catholic communities only been a temporary event with no consequences for the future? An answer will be given after the history of the whole Jesuit mission has been told.

Ambonese Catholics: Francis Xavier 1546–1547

The largest number of Christians in the sixteenth century lived on the Ambonese peninsula of Leitimor and on the small Lease Islands of Haruku, Saparua, and Nusa Laut. Therefore we begin our history of the fate of the various Moluccan Christian communities there, and then move to the central and northern Moluccas. When Francis Xavier landed at Hative, on the western shore of the Bay of Ambon on 14 February 1546, he was welcomed

by Ambonese Christians from a few villages. Around Hative and in six other villages there lived some eight thousand 'Christians'. They had asked for baptism a few years earlier (1538), when Portuguese had settled among them. They all belonged to the *uli-siwa* and were on bad terms with the largely Muslim *uli-lima* villages on the Hitu peninsula. How and why had these people become Christians?

Valentijn reports that the heathen people of Leitimor had sent emissaries to Malacca (and Goa) to ask the Portuguese to help them against their (Muslim) enemies on Hitu. These messengers came into contact with Catholicism and made the *orang kaya* of Hative ask for protection and baptism. By responding to their wishes the Portuguese on Ambon became involved in insular politics and old rivalries. When the Portuguese had to leave Hitu, they moved to the western coast of the bay. This happened around 1523 or a little later. After the victory of the above-mentioned fleet of 400 men from Ternate (1538) many *kampongs* on both sides of the bay became Christian. They may have regarded baptism more as a sign of an alliance with the Portuguese than as a sacrament based on faith.

Because of good news about many new Christians on Moro and the possibilities on Ambon, which had been given by Tabarija, sultan of Ternate, to Freitas, a friend of Xavier, he took the Banda Ship from Malacca and sailed to Ambon. Had Xavier gone to Makassar and converted the king of Gowa who was very open to Christianity, the history of Christianity in Indonesia might have been quite different. Makassar became much more important and stronger than all the petty principalities in the Moluccans. But, there grew no spices in Makassar.

Francis Xavier's visit to the Moluccas did not last long, and much time was spent travelling on foot or by *cora-cora*. He worked on Ambon from February until the end of June 1546. After being sick with exhaustion for more than a month he took a *cora-cora* to Ternate, where he arrived in July 1546 and left in April the following year, after Easter. At the end of April he was back on Ambon, where he met his friends again for a few weeks. The Banda Ship departed on the 15th May and reached Malacca in July 1547. This short visit of the 'Apostle of India' started an organised, as far as that was possible, evangelisation in the Moluccas. We will follow his apostolic journey from island to island.

In Ambon Francis Xavier probably stayed in a bamboo hut at Hative, which served also as chapel. At that time Hative was still situated on the western shore of the Bay of Ambon. He started his apostolic work immediately after his arrival, visiting the few Portuguese and the houses of the Christians in the neighbouring villages of Tawiri and Hukunalo. He travelled together with a boy, who carried a cross before him and served as his interpreter, and with a group of youthful companions. If there were any sick people in a house or children

to be baptised, he entered the house and lifted his hands to heaven. The boys travelling with him recited the Creed and the Commandments in Malay. He then read a few verses of the Gospel over the sick and baptised the children who had been born since the death of their former priest. With the help of his interpreter he assembled children and adults to teach them the prayers and the basic truths of the faith, which he had translated into Malay at Malacca. We may not be too sure that the villagers really understood Malay, as to this day older people in remote places hardly understand Standard Indonesian. St. Francis wrote himself from Ambon to his friends in Goa:

There are more pagans than Moors in these regions of Maluco. The pagans and the Moors hate each other. The Moors want the pagans to become Moor or their slaves, but the pagans do not want to be Moors, and even less to be their slaves. If there were someone to preach the truth to them, they would all become Christians, since the pagans would rather become Christians than Moors. Some seventy years ago the people here became Moors, though earlier they had all been pagans. Two or three *cacizes*⁶ came here from Mecca, a house in which, according to the Moors, there is the body of Mohammed. They converted a great number of pagans to the sect of Mohammed. The best thing about these Moors is that they know nothing about their erroneous sect. For want of one to preach the truth to them, these Moors have not become Christians. I am giving you such a detailed account as this in order that you may be seriously concerned and keep in mind the numerous souls that are being lost for want of spiritual assistance. Those who may not have the learning or talent to be of the Society will still have more than enough knowledge and talent for these regions if they have the desire to come to live and die with these people. If a dozen of them came each year, this evil sect of Mohammed would be destroyed in a short time.⁷

Xavier crossed the bay and visited the Christians on the other side, probably using more or less the same route as described by the Protestant minister François Valentijn 150 years later. A tour to the villages of (southern) Leitimor, could be done in a day or two. From his hut in Hative Xavier reached Hukunalo in a few hours, crossed the bay at its narrowest point to the partly Muslim, partly Christian village of Halong on Leitimor.

Xavier used the opportunity offered to him to sail with a *cora-cora* in three days to Tamilau on the island of Seram. Already close to its southern coast—Rodrigues tells us—high waves and a reef endangered their boat. Xavier took off the crucifix hanging round his neck and dipped it into the raging water while asking God to protect them. But his crucifix slipped from his hand into the sea. After twenty-four hours of struggling against the storm and the mighty waves they finally reached Seram. Walking on the beach in the direction of

⁶ From Arab *qādi* for a Muslim judge or, more general, religious leader.

⁷ Costelloe 1993:140–143; letter from Ambon 10-05-1546.

Tamilau, Xavier and Rodrigues saw a large crab holding the lost crucifix in its claws. Xavier full of joy thanked God, but never talked about it.

Although Xavier stayed eight days in Tamilau, he could not win anybody for the Gospel, neither of the Malay speaking town's people nor of the wild Alfuros visiting the market. With another ship Rodrigues and Xavier returned to Hative. He paid a short visit to the island of Nusa Laut, inhabited by Alfuro head-hunters and pirates. Though Xavier received a friendly reception from the villagers he only baptised one young man with the name of Francisco and predicted that he would die with the name of Jesus on his lips. Francisco of Nusa Laut was killed in action in 1575 in an attack on the Sapparua fortress of Hiamao (Ihamahu). Because the Gospel was not accepted on Nusa Laut, Xavier removed his shoes and shook the dust from them as he had done on Seram. He did not want to carry such 'evil earth along with him upon his shoes'.

When Francis Xavier returned to the Bay of Ambon, he saw eight ships riding at anchor. They had arrived from Ternate. Among the three hundred people were one hundred and thirty Spaniards, all that remained of Ruy Lopez de Villalobos' expedition of 370 men on six ships. It had been dispatched from Manila in 1542 to secure a foothold on the 'Spanish side' of the Line of Tordesillas. Because of adverse winds they could not sail to the north and were forced to stay in 'Portuguese' territory and finally had to surrender in 1545, though Tidore was willing to cooperate with the Spaniards and had given them shelter. Now they were on their way to India. Xavier met four Augustinian friars and two secular priests among his Spanish countrymen. From the Portuguese and Spanish merchants and officers Xavier received much information on the Philippines, on China and on the northern Moluccas, especially on Moro. When the fleet left Ambon in May, St. Francis was completely exhausted and fell ill himself for more than a month. From Ambon he wrote:

On this island of Moro a great number became Christians many years ago; but because of the death of the clerics who baptised them, they have been left abandoned and without instructions. Since the land of Moro is very dangerous, for the people there are extremely treacherous and mix a large amount of poison in the food and drink which they give to others, those who could take care of the Christians on Moro have refused to go there. Because of the need which these Christians of the island of Moro have for instructions in the faith and for someone to baptise them for the salvation of their souls, and also because of the obligation which I have of loosing my temporal life to assist the spiritual life of my neighbour, I have decided to go to Moro to assist the Christians in spiritual matters, exposing myself to every danger of death, placing all my hope and confidence in God our Lord.⁸

⁸ Costelloe 1993:139 Letter 55, (10-5-1546).

Xavier took the opportunity of the big fleet sailing to India, to despatch several letters to Goa and Rome. He urged his confreres in Goa to send some of their number to the Moluccas by describing the situation there. In a supplement to one of his letters Xavier added general information widely circulated in the Moluccas:

These islands have a temperate climate and large, dense forests. They have an abundance of rain. These islands of Maluco are so high and so difficult to traverse that in time of war they defend themselves by climbing to higher grounds and using these as their fortresses. They have no horses, nor would it be possible to ride on horseback across the islands. The earth frequently quakes, and also the sea, so much so that those who are sailing when the sea quakes gain the impression that they are striking rocks. It is a frightful thing to feel the earth tremble, and even more so the sea. Many of these islands spew forth fire with such a roar that there is no barrage of artillery, however loud it may be, that makes so great a noise; and the fire rushes forth with such violence from its place of origin that it carries huge rocks along with it. For want of one to preach the torments of hell to the infidels on these islands, God lets the lower regions open up for the confusion of these pagans and their abominable sins.⁹

As a superior Xavier ordered other Jesuits to come to Ambon and to establish a mission: “I am giving you this account so that you may know the need that these regions have for your presence. Even though I know full well that you are needed there, but since you are needed even more in these regions, I earnestly ask for the love of Christ our Lord that you, Father Francisco de Mansilhas, and you, Juan de Beira, come to these regions. And so that you may have more merit through your coming, I am ordering you to come in virtue of holy obedience.”¹⁰ At the end of June 1546 Xavier boarded a *coracora* and sailed for Ternate.

The Jesuits told by Francis Xavier to depart to Ambon, Fr. Juan de Beira, Fr. Nuno Ribeiro and Brother Nicolau Nunez, met Xavier when he disembarked in Malacca in July 1547. They exchanged news on India and the Society of Jesus in Europe and handed letters to him from his early companions in Rome. After sharing their spiritual experiences, and listening to their advice about the situation in their new mission field the three companions boarded the clove ship departing to the east.

The Protestant missionary on Ceylon Philippus Baldeus (d. 1672) wrote about Xavier:

The gifts Xavier had been given to work as an apostle of Jesus Christ were so exceptional, that I feel unable to judge. If I contemplate how patiently and gently he offered the holy and life-giving waters of the Gospel to the great and simple,

⁹ Costelloe 1993:142.

¹⁰ Costelloe 1993:146.

if I take into account how bravely he endured derision and insults, then I feel moved to say with the Apostle, 'Who equals him in such astonishing things?'¹¹

The difficult continuation of Xavier's work: 1547–1564

At the end of 1547 the first missionary for Ambon arrived: the young Jesuit priest Nuno Ribeiro. He baptised about five hundred people and destroyed some idols of animism. He was poisoned shortly after he escaped from his hut that was set on fire by his adversaries. Knowing that he would not live much longer he asked to be carried from *kampong* to *kampong* encouraging his congregation. After a week he died painfully on 23rd August 1549. His murderer repented and was baptised a year later.

Because the scattered Christians of the Moluccas were much in need of regular catechisation Fr. de Beira SJ travelled all the way from Ternate to Goa to get more missionaries (1552). Thanks to the support of Xavier, whom he met again in Malacca preparing his voyage to China, he succeeded in getting three young seminarians. When they passed through Malacca on their way to the Moluccas a year later (1553), the tomb of St. Francis in Malacca was secretly opened for De Beira and his companions to take leave from the founder of the Moluccan mission. They asked his blessings for the apostolate he had entrusted to them just a few years ago. The body of the saint showed no signs of decay.

When the young Jesuit Antonio Fernandez arrived in Ambon (1554) the situation had become worse: The Christians were chased away by the Hitunese and many of them were made slaves. Fernandez was called to visit the Christians on other islands too. He preached, taught and prayed with his flock and thought about preparing catechists selected from the local Christians. Not yet one month in the field he drowned when his boat was hit by a big wave.

Twelve months later Fr. Alfonso de Castro SJ arrived from Ternate with the Brothers Manuel de Tavora and Fransisco Godhindo. From his letters we learn that the few thousand Christians on Ambon and the Lease Islands (with about 43 Christian villages) did not know much about their Christian faith and easily returned to pagan customs of old. This was mainly due to the lack of instructors and because many were baptised too early. They regarded baptism as a way to obtain protection from the Portuguese. For the same reason they apostatised easily later, when the situation changed. Castro speaks of thirty Christian villages on Leitimor. He had to leave Ambon after 18 months of hard work in order to sail to Moro. He died as a martyr three years later.

¹¹ Quoted after De Graaf 1977:36.

In 1556 Fr. de Beira and the young scholastic N. Nunez travelled again via Ambon to Goa in order to get support. When these two left, no missionary remained on Ambon until Fr. Nunez returned in October 1557 and acquired a house near Hative on the Hitunese coast of the bay. The situation worsened when Captain Duarte de Sá in his greed mistreated Hairun. The sultan increasingly mistrusted the Portuguese and suppressed the Christians in his realm, regarding them as friends of his Portuguese adversaries through close business partners.

In 1558 a Ternatean fleet under the command of Kaicil Liliato sailed to Buru and forced many Christians there to apostatise. On Leitimor the Hitunese supported by forces from Liliato spread destruction and fear over the whole peninsula. Only in the mountains were the Christians able to defend themselves bravely, especially in Kilang. But the fortified village of Hative at the coast resisted too. The resistance was stirred up by Manuel, who as a small boy had accompanied St. Francis Xavier and now was the village chief of Hative. Because of the fierce resistance he organised, his brother-in-law with the help of two Portuguese tried to murder him in order to get a better bargaining position with Liliato, who wanted to consolidate Hairun's grip on Ambon. In this dangerous position when two Portuguese traitors and his brother-in-law Antonio pointed their guns at him, Manuel embraced the cross of the village and shouted, "A good Christian must die upon the cross!"¹²

For some time Manuel had encouraged the Christians on Leitimor and instructed them according to what he had learned from Xavier. He suffered many hardships. He even went to Goa to ask for missionaries. He said, "I am an Amboinese of the forest and I am not able to say what it means to be a Christian and what kind of a being God is, but I know what Father Master Francis told me, that it is good to die for the love of Our Lord Jesus Christ, and that alone gave me the courage and the strength to fight to death."¹³

During the time of these persecutions mission work was impossible, many of the faithful apostatised, for example in the area of Urimesen and Nusanive. But for the first time the Christians stood together to defend themselves. Finally in 1562 the new captain of Ternate, Henrique de Sá, came with a fleet and chased the marauding ships away from the bay, conquered Nusanive and sent its chief Ratiputi to Goa. He had bribed Portuguese officials to neglect their duties in favour of his dealings which made him quite rich.

De Sá was accompanied by six Jesuits who had just arrived from Goa: five priests and one brother. Fr. N. Viera and P. Magelhaes stayed on Ambon, and together with Manuel they rebuilt the destroyed villages and the scattered

¹² Jacobs *Docu. Maluc.* I:310 and 349.

¹³ See report of Br. Osorio SJ and letter of Fr. P. Mascarcuhas SJ (1562) in Jacobs *Docu. Maluc.* I:310–312 and 347–350. Schurhammer 1980:93 and 284–286.

congregations. Many who had apostatised out of fear repented and were received again into the Church. Hative, Manuel's village, became the centre of the mission and a new church was built. Two hundred Catholic families from other villages moved to Hative. The church was officially consecrated when young Father Magelhaes celebrated his first Mass in it. On certain occasions processions were organised, music and catechism chants learned. In Nusanive Fr. Viera tried to re-convert the neighbouring *kampongs*.

After de Sá left for Ternate security became a problem again. This time the priests organised a self-defence service. They visited Oma on Haruku (1562), which also had bravely defended itself against Liliato's bands and their Muslim neighbours from the north, who obstructed the building of a church on that island. Eight hundred persons from surrounding kampongs were baptised in 1562. In 1563 more or less ten thousand Catholics lived on Ambon and the Lease Islands. But dark clouds appeared again from the north.

*Unfulfilled hope: political support, but slow and even stagnant growth,
1564–1605*

In 1564 the Hitunese Tahalele with the help of Javanese from Gresik and with protection from Hairun gained control over the whole of Ambon. The Portuguese governor of Ternate refused to send help, because he wanted to be on good business terms with Hairun who supported the Hitunese. The captain of the fort on Ambon was poisoned and the sultan of Bacan gave up protecting the Christians. Many faithful in Nusanive and Hative, who had not fled to the mountains, died as martyrs for their faith. Their villages were burnt down. The two Jesuits moved to the smaller islands, but even there they were not safe and had to flee to Ternate. The *pati* of Ulat on the island of Saparua gave an example of his faith, when he was cruelly killed by the villagers of Siri-Sori, who later converted and became Christians (1570). In 1565 the whole mission was in a shambles.

Because the Portuguese on Ternate remained inactive two Christian Ambonese sailed together with a missionary to Goa in order to ask for better protection, because the local captains neglected their duties in order to enrich themselves. When the Ambonese arrived in Goa, the king of Portugal had already sent a letter to the governor concerning the complaints of the Jesuits about the failure of the secular arm to protect the native Christians in the Spice Islands. The king ordered the governor to build a fort on Ambon in order to support the garrison of Ternate with food in case of siege, to prevent the Javanese from buying cloves on Ambon and to protect the growing Christian community there.

The new fort showed everybody that the Portuguese would settle permanently on Ambon. Immediately a few neighbouring villages asked for priests.

Four priests and one brother were kept very busy on Leitimor, South Hitu and Saparua. Fr. Mascarenhas reported the baptism of eight thousand adults, some of whom had waited for years. But Fr. de Gois added: “We are worried about so many baptisms, because the number of missionaries is insufficient to instruct even a fifth of them.” After a village had become Christian some Christian prayers were practiced and prescribed and a great cross was erected in order to remind the neophytes of their new faith.

1570 was a fatal year for the mission. After Sultan Hairun was treacherously murdered in Ternate his son and successor Baabullah (1570–1583) took revenge. Under the command of his uncle, Kalasineo, five big *cora-cora* sailed to Ambon to chase the Portuguese away and convert the Christians to Islam. Another seven *cora-cora* from Buru joined this fleet. Change of religion seemed necessary in those days to guarantee loyalty. Suddenly the Ternateans together with the Hitunese attacked the Portuguese ships in the bay of Ambon and tried to burn the fort. Thanks to a few brave soldiers the unexpected attack could be repulsed. But the scattered Christian villages were attacked by Baabullah’s forces strengthened by people from Hitu and the islands of Buru and Seram. The village head of Hatuaha, recently baptised, refused to apostatise and was cruelly murdered by a *prahu* (boat) which was dragged over him. Ulat on Saparua proved strong enough to defend itself and ‘welcomed’ the Portuguese sent to support them with several baskets full of heads of slain attackers.

When the wooden fort took fire and nearly burned down the Portuguese commander thought to retreat from Ambon. But a certain Sancho de Vasconcellos opposed him and told him that he would not abandon the native Christians. Vasconcellos succeeded in establishing a small fort on the Leitimor side, where most of the Christian villages were situated (1571). About this restless time the Jesuit superior of Malacca wrote to Rome (1574), “In the Moluccas and on Ambon there is always warfare and the whole Christianity is destroyed. The support sent from here and from India is so little that according to my opinion, the whole Moluccas will be lost.”¹⁴ Vasconcellos thought the (second) wooden fort not safe enough and too close to two hills. A little further to the east he built a larger fort of stone, today the *Kampong Batu Merah* in the city of Ambon.

After the fort of Ternate had capitulated to Baabullah (1575), two priests and two brothers from there arrived in Ambon, but three of them left again shortly afterwards. Fr. Mascarenhas and Br. A. Gonçalves stayed alone in the whole mission because the other *confrère* sailed to Tidore to care for the Portuguese and their native wives who had moved there from Ternate. The next thirty years, until the fall of the fort of Ambon to the Dutch in 1605,

¹⁴ Letter of J. de Mesquita SJ to the Jesuit general in Rome, 30-12-1573 in Jacobs *Docu. Maluc.* I:648.

were a continuous fight against all hope without support and success, a way of the cross for the faithful and their pastors.

In the late 1570s about 3,000 Christians lived around the new fort and another 8,000 on the rest of Leitimor and the Lease Islands. Among them were quite a number of faithful from Ternate, even relatives of Sultan Baabullah, and also a group of so-called *Mardijkers* or freed slaves, mostly imported from India. The kampong where they lived still bears the name *Mardika*. In March 1581 the first Jesuit Visitor arrived on Ambon: the Italian Father Bernadino Ferrari. Immediately he built two small churches outside the fort, which made it much easier for the local people to attend Mass and instruction. He reported after a few months:

The Christians of Ambon are partly persecuted, partly cheated by the Ternateans, (and) rebelled against the Portuguese. And because they are much cruder than the people of the Moluccas [= around Ternate]—they live in the woods and speak another language,—they kept of their religion not more than its name. Except a few, they easily give up their religion and Christian names, so that a great part of this area has relapsed into Mohammedism. There are enough Muslims to instruct and circumcise them, though they do not offer their service for nothing but ask good money for it. Only a few villages remain Christian.¹⁵

To improve the mission in the seven Christian villages Fr. Ferrari urged that they should be visited regularly. Boys should be instructed in several places and the best among them should be sent to the colleges at Malacca or Goa to study Latin. “In not too long a time we will be able to serve these peoples much easier with native priests.” The missionaries should not live alone too long in order to be able to go to confession. Too much work makes them sick and weak. After twenty years in the Moluccan mission Fr. Magelhaes, for example, was completely exhausted. He had worked in Ambon (1561–1563) and in Morotai, brought the gospel to Manado and the Sangihe Islands. Fr. Ferrari came a second time to Ambon (1583) and visited 22 villages on the Lease Islands and on Seram, baptising children and catechising adults who were Christians only in name. When Fr. Ferrari returned from a visit to the Lease Islands’ Christians (1583) he had caught malaria and was undernourished having for a long time lacked food. Though very sick he sailed to Ternate, expecting new missionaries. But in vain. Broken hearted he returned to Ambon and died in September 1584 only 47 years old, leaving the sick Fr. Rodrigues alone on the island to take care of the faithful.

After the murder of Hairun (1570) the Portuguese were unable to protect the scattered Christian villages in the Moluccas and even in Ambon, their last stronghold. When the news of the ascension of Philip II to the

¹⁵ Jacobs *Docu. Maluc.* II:100.

Portuguese throne arrived in Manila and Tidore hope and fear spread among the Portuguese merchants. Spain had long been a rival and was regarded as an enemy. The aversion between the two Iberian peoples prevented even the Portuguese and Spanish Jesuits from combining their resources, as did the jealousy between the Jesuits and the Franciscans. The faithful were left without an adequate number of priests and without protection against attacks from Ternate. The few missionaries worked hard to visit the widely dispersed communities, but they could not do more than encourage them, administer the sacraments, and give some instruction every now and then. There was no time and not enough personnel to deepen the new faith and organise normal parish life.

The General Superior of the Jesuits in Rome ordered Goa to send another visitor to the Moluccas: Fr. Antonio Marta, an Italian who arrived on Ambon in 1587. After having collected information for a few months he was shocked by the situation of the Moluccan mission and wrote to Goa and Rome:

There are seventy villages here, only thirty-four are controlled by the Portuguese. According to information from experts there had been 4,000 Christians who have apostatised and became Muslims. About 25,000 people are still Christians though in name only, cared for by just one father... The people are good and do not reject Christianity, as the inhabitants of the Philippines do. They really ask us to build churches in their villages and are willing to do everything we want. All bad things and the whole unrest in this region is created by the prince of Ternate, who is the most powerful ruler in the Moluccas. There will be a great harvest as soon as the power of the sultan of Ternate has been destroyed. According to my opinion, even fifty fathers would not be enough then to serve all the people.¹⁶

In Fr. Marta's report of 1588 we read that daily mass was celebrated in the churches or in the houses of the natives where there was no church. Instruction was given in Malaccan Malay, which was also used in confessions. Funerals were simple. The mission needed a new strategy or it would just drag on, showing no increase of manpower through all the years. Fr. Marta sailed to Goa to get more help from his regional superior and also to Malacca to discuss the future with the bishop there. He pushed the governor in Goa to provide better protection. Indeed Ambon was much in need of it.

Just when Fr. Marta entered the Bay of Ambon again in late 1590 a big fleet from Banda and Hoamoal (Seram) also entered the bay, took some Portuguese ships and blockaded the fort for one month. Fr. Marta rushed to Tidore and asked the Jesuits in Manila to push the government there to send four hundred soldiers for urgent protection, "because the Portuguese are too weak". But Manila was not at all in a hurry to help the Portuguese. Fr. Marta

¹⁶ Original in Italian, Jacobs *Docu. Maluc.* II:192–194.

was convinced that without protection, Christianity could never survive in the archipelago. When he was in Ambon in April 1592, only Fr. L. Masonio from Naples was still working on the island.

His Jesuit superior in Goa did not at all agree with Fr. Marta's involvement in politics, perhaps because he was a Portuguese and Fr. Marta in his misery had looked to Spanish Manila to obtain some support. It seems that some rulers in the Moluccas at that time formed a coalition to oust the Portuguese permanently. Fr. Marta mentions Banda, Hoamoal, Buru, and Ternate. Their action took the form of *jihad* or a 'Holy War' and the Muslims became much more resolute and brave. Only the sultan of Tidore protected the Portuguese at the end of the 16th century.

In 1593 Fr. Marta asked all six missionaries in writing to answer his questions about a continuation of the Moluccan mission. Of the three missionaries on Ambon, Fr. João Rebello replied most extensively. In his opinion the Portuguese were too few and had lost all their spirit and bravery. Things would even deteriorate steadily. The commanders of both forts in Tidore and in Ambon seemed to think of nothing else than quickly making a fortune. They neglected the service of their king and of God completely:

I think we should not desert these Christians; not even in these circumstances! One priest does not achieve less in the service of the Lord here than in a college. The mission has been difficult for many years and left without help, who now dares to abandon it? All the more as there are no priests who know the language of this country and are able to take over the pastoral care. Therefore everybody should devote himself completely to his work without thinking about leaving.¹⁷

Lorenzo Masonio, the only priest in Ambon in the early 1590s, also advised not to go away though the number of Christians decreased everywhere. The withdrawal of the Jesuits would make the rest loose hope altogether. He stopped baptising because many Christians apostatised easily. The other Jesuits stationed in Tidore and Labuha on Bacan, also advised to stay. In his despair Fr. Marta wrote in December 1593 to Rome from Cebu, where he had asked in vain for help from the Spaniards, "The mission will be lost! Half of the seven Jesuit priests and two brothers must leave, for there is no more work to do; new missionaries are unnecessary." His Jesuit superior, Fr. A. Pereira, felt bitter and discouraged because the mission was neglected by all sides. In 1595 nobody in India volunteered to work in the Moluccas. The whole archipelago was unsafe. Even on Leitimor the missionaries dared no longer visit the villages. Everywhere whole villages apostatised. In 1597 it was reported that individual villagers travelled with their children in groups to the fort in order to receive instruction there, though some missionaries now and then still dared

¹⁷ Jacobs *Docu. Maluc.* II:365–371.

to visit the villages close to the fort. In 1598, the new Jesuit superior, Fr. Luiz Fernandez, regarded the mission as lost, but none of the fathers wanted to leave Ambon. Many Christians left their faith because of fear of the growing Muslim power, even on 'Christian' Leitimor. The sultan of Tidore, who was still an ally of the Portuguese, became old; the collaboration between Goa and Manila did not work, though both represented the same king. The promised financial support of the crown was so small that the Jesuits in the Moluccas had to plant clove trees and take part in the spice business.

In several letters of 1600 Fr. Luiz Fernandez reported the arrival of four Dutch ships in Hitu-Lama. They had announced an intention to be back within three years. This created great unrest, because the Hitunese had asked the Dutch Admiral van Warwijk to assist them in their attacks on the Portuguese fort. But in these early years the Dutch were more interested to get their ships loaded with spices than to be involved in local wars.

In 1600 the Hitunese together with four hundred Javanese and three Dutch ships attacked the fort of Ambon, but retreated when the Leitimor Christians and the Portuguese overpowered a great *cora-cora* and killed more than a hundred of the attackers. In a second attack a Portuguese round shot hit the ammunition depot of the main Dutch ship. The crew lost six men and was busy to extinguish the fire.

The final blow to Portuguese influence and the Catholic mission was given by Dutch Admiral Steven van der Haghen in 1605. His ten ships, together with twenty Hitunese *cora-cora*, entered the Bay of Ambon and on the 23rd of February drew up in battle array and fired some shots at the fort. After brief negotiations the Portuguese commander capitulated. The Dutch allowed the Portuguese garrison to withdraw with all its weapons. Those who remained had to swear allegiance to the Dutch and were allowed to stay.

The Ambonese Christians, who lived around the fort, panicked and feared to be left to the mercy of the hated Hitunese. They fled into the mountains. Fr. Masonio visited Van der Haghen on board his ship and promised to get the Ambonese back to their quarters if the Dutch would provide protection. The Dutch admiral promised that all Catholics would be received "under the protection and safeguard of the States and their Prince." He confirmed "that the 16,000 Christians are allowed to live according to the Christian way of living, to visit their churches and celebrate there the Holy Mysteries. Nobody, neither Portuguese nor native Ambonese, will be molested, and it is not forbidden to them to live according to their former Christian customs and faith."¹⁸

¹⁸ Jesuit letters, see Jacobs *Docu. Maluc.* II:679–693. The Dutch version runs, "Ten anderen sall een yder leven in syn gelooff, gelyck hem Godt in 't herte stiert ofte meent saligh te worden; dogh dat niemand den anderen sall molestie noch overlast doen." See Tiele 1886-I:281–292.

The next day Fr. Masonio brought twenty-two elders of Christian villages to swear loyalty and accept the *seguros* or letters of security. The same promises were given to the Christian villages on the Lease Islands a few days later. Van der Haghen succeeded also in establishing “a general peace, which united the Muslims and Christians on Ambon and the neighbouring islands with each other. Copies in Malay and Portuguese were made thereof.”¹⁹ On the 16th of March 1605 the Portuguese garrison left the island after so many decades and sailed for Malacca or to the island of Solor.

Some 35 Portuguese who were married to Ambonese women stayed with the local Christians. Everything seemed well till Van der Haghen had to leave for Banda, though before leaving he dismantled two churches and took their wooden beams to use on Banda. In spite of that the Jesuits thanked him twice for letting them stay among their flock.

After the admiral had left, the Dutch garrison became angry that the Jesuits according to the agreements were allowed to preach in Portuguese and administer the sacraments to their parishioners. The soldiers started to loot the churches, to destroy the statues, to steal the bells, to remove the crosses in the villages and to tear the cassocks from the body of the priests. Not only did the commander Frederik de Houtman not protect the Catholics, but also he gave orders that the Jesuits, all mestizos, and Portuguese had to leave Ambon within three days (on 12 May 1605). The Jesuits together with one hundred and fifty people, men, women and children, were put on a small ship and sent away without anyone who knew how to navigate. The ship drifted to the Sangihe Islands, north of Celebes (Sulawesi). After thirty-nine days it reached the harbour of Cebu, north of Mindanao in the Philippines in June 1605.

When the people of Hative on Hitu asked Van der Haghen, who in August 1605 had regained control of the unruly garrison, to be allowed to keep their weapons in order to protect themselves, they were refused. They could not defend themselves any more and Governor De Houtman did not care to protect them either. They lost nearly everything except their faith, which the Dutch regarded as a superstition and which had to be eradicated as soon as possible. The Catholic mission in Ambon and in the Lease Islands was dead. Had it all been in vain?

Dutch documents tell us that nearly all inhabitants of the city of Ambon were Catholics. They had four fine churches and a small hospital, La Misericordia. The Jesuit church of St. James was from mid-1605 used for Protestant services and in 1630 it was replaced by a stone building called St. Paul's Church. Most Lease Islanders were Christians too, but some villages were Muslim. The whole Catholic community in these islands consisted of about 16,000 faithful. How

¹⁹ Tiele 1886-I:288, 361.

did the VOC act after it had conquered the first Christian country in Asia? The Protestant minister François Valentijn wrote nearly a century later, “In order to let the popish superstition slowly die by itself, it was enough in the beginning, that they were deprived of their priests and had no opportunity at all to exercise it anymore. The crosses established here and there were taken away and everything wiped out with tenderness (*zagtigheid*) and without making them feel it.” According to the spirit of this *zagtigheid* all statues and crosses in the villages had to be removed. In 1607 the heads of the villages complained that they had received no instruction at all after the Jesuit fathers had to leave the island and that they ‘lived like beasts’. Admiral Matelief told the physician of the fort to instruct the children, to teach them how to pray, and to read and to write in Dutch. There was no Dutch minister available yet. The *ziekentroosters* (comforters of the sick) of the fort were uneducated men, did not care about the islanders and refused to learn Malay. The first Protestant service for the people was held in 1612 by the Protestant minister Paludanus van den Broek who knew some Malay.

When van der Haghen was appointed governor of Ambon in 1616, he contradicted the first Dutch minister on Ambon, Caspar Wiltens, who regarded the Ambonese as ‘dull-witted and lazy’. Van der Haghen wrote:

The Ambonese are always boasting of the Portuguese fathers, who were such devout men, so solicitous and industrious about instructing the Ambonese and the islanders, and who did not spare themselves to go from one island to the other and from one village to the next; who were always sober and never to be found at banquets and dances; who were never engaged in other things than in attending to their church service, in teaching the people, in visiting and consoling the sick, and in assisting the poor in their wants, supporting them with their own resources. They do tell this in such a vivid way as if they see them still before their eyes.²⁰

Catholics in the Northern Moluccas: Ternate, Tidore, Bacan and Moro

The two volcanic islands of Tidore and Ternate off the west coast of the long island of Halmahera became the power centre of the Moluccas. It was the cloves that only grew here and on the tiny islands of Motir and Makian, that brought money and power to the upper class of these two islands, and connected them with the trade system of Southeast Asia. The rulers of Tidore and Ternate were at odds with each other most of time, but rivalry was regarded as a necessary factor for keeping the Moluccas in harmony as we discussed

²⁰ Letter of St. van der Haghen, 14-08-1617, in Tiele 1886-I:220–222; Jacobs *Docu. Maluc.* III:372.

above. The Portuguese in 1523 established a small fort on Ternate and opened it with the celebration of a mass.

Since around 1470 Ternate had slowly accepted Islam. Because of the bad behaviour of the Portuguese and especially their captains, and also because of the lack of priests, evangelisation among the Ternateans hardly ever took place, though some of them, even highly placed persons, asked for baptism.

There was a church and a chapel on Ternate and a short-lived school established by Captain A. Galvão. The secular priests on the island cared only for the Portuguese, except Fr. Simon Vaz, who went to Moro on northern Halmahera, where at the initiative of the merchant Gonçalo Veloso the first Christian native community in the Moluccas had been established. Their conversion and fate will be told in the next section.

Though Galvão wrote that “Maluco is a breeding place of all the evils in the world”, there were a few excellent men among them, like the former pirate Balthasar Veloso. He had come to Ternate in 1524 and had married the daughter of Sultan Bayan Sirullah, a half-sister of Hairun. Veloso was one of the most influential persons in Ternate, respected by the Ternateans and the Portuguese alike.

Balthasar Veloso welcomed Francis Xavier, when he arrived from Ambon in July 1546, accepted him as an honoured guest in his house and fully supported his apostolic endeavour. In this house Xavier met the queen mother Pokaraga, who was well versed in the Qur’an, and Xavier often conversed with her on religious matters. She had got some knowledge of Christianity in Goa, where she and her son, Sultan Tabarija, had met Xavier already. Finally she was baptised by St. Francis and chose the name (Dona) Isabel. Her conversion made a great impression on the nobility of Ternate. Her second husband, Patih Serang, later became a Christian too.

Francis Xavier was very busy during his three months’ stay on Ternate. The native wives of the Portuguese, their children and slaves knew hardly anything about Christianity. Therefore he gave simple catechism instruction twice a day for children and adults. Although Xavier spent much of his time with the Portuguese he took care of the native Christians as well. A number of Ternateans had been baptised during the time of Captain Galvão; for example a cousin of the raja of Jailolo, Kolano Sabia, a royal counsellor of Hairun, and an Arab who claimed to be a *said*, a descendant of the Prophet Muhammad.

When Xavier returned from his three months’ journey to Moro he found a new captain and a new sultan in Ternate. Captain Freitas had been deposed and Hairun reinstalled as sultan; Niachil Pokaraga, the regent for her son Tabarija, had been robbed of her property, and was not allowed to go to Goa to complain about the way Hairun treated her.

During the following months Xavier gave instruction in Malay, which he now spoke quite fluently. He converted many Portuguese from their sinful

lives. Even Hairun who at that time was not anti-Christian, told Xavier he would like to send one of his many sons to the Jesuit college of Goa. He also gave permission to convert his pagan subjects. He regarded himself as Xavier's friend and was thinking about Christianity also. But the bad behaviour of the Portuguese and the many women he had married to keep his widespread island kingdom together by family ties prevented him from conversion.

When Baabullah had succeeded in expelling the Portuguese from his island (1575), any mission work on and from Ternate became impossible. But thirty years later the Spaniards from the Philippines supported by Tidore took the former Portuguese fort in Gamalama (1606) and exiled the sultan of Ternate to Manila. Franciscans and Dominicans arrived from the north and some Jesuits who had stayed on Tidore (1578–1605) returned too. They hoped to revive the mission at least in the northern Moluccas in close cooperation with Manila: "We will rebuild our old mission from the ruins!" wrote the veteran missionary Fr. Fernandez SJ too optimistically. His Jesuit brethren still worked on Labuha (Bacan) and Siau (Sangihe Islands). But the situation was not at all that rosy. The Dutch joined with the Ternate nobility that had fled to Halmahera. They brought them back and built a fort on the island (1607), in exchange for a monopoly on cloves. In Ternate, religion was no topic for the Dutch VOC: If natives of Ternate became Christians its officials handed them over to the sultan to be punished.

In 1610 two more Franciscans arrived and built a church and a convent outside the walls of Gamalama, in the island of Ternate. There were about sixty native and as many Chinese Catholics, besides thirty mestizo families and the Spanish garrison. A small group of *cazados* on Tidore and the Spanish garrison there were visited regularly by a priest from Ternate. The situation was far from good: the Spaniards showed little sympathy for the 'Portuguese' mission of the Jesuits though half of them were Italians. They preferred the Spanish Franciscans whose convent was sponsored by the Spanish crown. The Franciscans had established a good hospital on Ternate with a very competent brother looking after the sick. The assigned subsidy to the Jesuits was cut in half; which was still more than what they were supposed to receive from Goa.

Fr. Masonio reported that the native Christians lost their spirit and still stuck to their old heathen or Muslim way of life. He blamed the 'Spanish' government, which had forbidden the punishment of public moral offences committed by the Spanish soldiers and native Christians. The governor would like the 'Portuguese' Jesuits to transfer their mission to the Spanish Franciscans. The old dualism of the Moluccas generated new scions: the rivalries between the bishops of Malacca and Manila, between the Jesuits and the Franciscans. It seems that tribal feelings pervaded everything in this part of the world: Being an ally of Ternate meant being an enemy of Tidore; Catholic Ambonese

of *uli-siwa*, friends of the Portuguese, were regarded as enemies of changing coalitions of the Hitunese *uli-lima* with Javanese and Ternate Muslims and Dutch Calvinists. An enemy of the Portuguese was a friend of the Spaniards and (later) of the Dutch; royal jurisdiction in Portuguese *padroado* was set against the Spanish *patronato* of the same king though of different governments.

After the mission in Moro had been lost (1613/14), the Spanish part of Ternate was nearly the only place where a Catholic community survived. Because of the superior power of the Ternatean—Dutch coalition nearly all the faithful around the Spanish forts on Ternate and Tidore were without priests for years.

The eight Christian villages on Ternate were no longer looked after properly from the 1640s; consequently many remained Christian in name only. In 1648 peace between Spain and the Netherlands was signed in Münster, Westphalia, and the two garrisons on Ternate ceased to harass each other. We know hardly anything about the next twenty years, before the Spanish garrison was withdrawn in 1663. The soldiers were needed in the Philippines to protect the country against the Chinese warlord Tcheng-Tchen Koung or Coxinga who threatened the Spaniards from Taiwan. The last Spaniards left the Moluccas in 1677. Many native Christians and *Merdicas* followed them after they had destroyed their houses and churches, and started a new life in Maragondong and other places in the island of Luzon.

The Christians of Moro

Though the most powerful sultans of the Moluccas resided on Tidore and Ternate, they depended on the much bigger island of Halmahera nearby for one of their main staple food: sago. On its coast only a few miles away from Ternate reigned the sultan of Jailolo. With the help of the crews of Spanish ships that had drifted off their course when looking for a home passage to Mexico (in 1529) the sultan of Jailolo had seized some Ternate territory. Therefore the sultan of Ternate with the help of the Portuguese Captain I. de Ataide attacked Jailolo in 1533. Two paramount chiefs of Moro (north-eastern of Halmahera), who had supported their overlord of Ternate, complained to the Portuguese merchant Gonçalo Veloso about difficulties with the people from Ternate. Besides the provisions for the sultan they also took private property of the heathen villagers for themselves. The Moro people were treated like slaves by Ternate and had to flee to the forest after their houses had been sacked.

Veloso advised them to become Christians and then ask the Portuguese for protection. When Veloso sailed home the two chiefs sent a few of their men with him to tell the Portuguese captain that if they were protected against the marauding Ternateans they would become Christians. Ataide gladly received

their request and the visitors from Moro were instructed and baptised before they sailed home. Their chiefs, the *sangajis* of Mamuya and Tolo, were so delighted that they themselves went to the fort of Ternate and were baptised together with seven companions.

When these neophytes returned to their villages nearly all inhabitants wanted to become Christians and the chiefs of neighbouring villages asked to be baptised too. The Vicar, Simon Vaz, was sent to Mamuya and Fr. Francisco Alvares followed later. A small detachment of soldiers erected a modest fort to protect the Christian villages as promised. Two simple churches were built and the villagers catechised. Then Captain Ataide took such unpopular measures that the kings of Jailolo, Tidore and Bacan united against him and the new Christians. They were asked to leave their new religion and to acknowledge the former sultan of Ternate as their lord. The feared warriors of the Tabaru tribe from the mountains were incited by the sultan of Jailolo against the Christian villages and so frightened them that many of the new Christians apostatised, because the few Portuguese soldiers were too weak to protect them.

Fr. Simon Vaz stayed with a few Portuguese at Sao, a large village on the south-western coast of the island of Morotai, only twenty miles away from the Moro area on northern Halmahera. In 1535 the priest and all his followers were killed by the people of that village who, just a short time before, had been baptised by him. They are the first martyrs of Indonesia.

The Christian villages became the object of a bargain between the new sultan of Jailolo and a former ruler of Ternate, who gave these villages away for Jailolo's support to regain his throne. In 1536, when Jailolo sent a large fleet to the coast of Moro Fr. Alvarez fled from the village of Sugala, but his *cora-cora* was attacked by Jailolo ships. The priest received seventeen wounds, but escaped because his greedy foes were more interested in the vestments he had thrown into the sea.

João, the chief of Mamuya refused to apostatise and for seven days resisted the attacks of the Jailolo forces. When the enemy threatened to burn the rice fields and cut the palm groves of his village, the people surrendered. João and his warriors, however, withdrew into the small redoubt. The two Portuguese soldiers fled into the woods and were slain. The Mamuya men fought for a whole day against the superior forces of the sultan. When further resistance was impossible, João slew his wife and his little children during the night, so that they would not fall into the hands of his foes and be sold as slaves in the market. He burnt his treasures and wanted to hang himself, but was restrained by his friends. The besieged surrendered the next morning. When João was brought before the ruler of Jailolo he defended his action and refused to deny his faith. At the request of his relatives the sultan spared his life.

After the resistance of Mamuya had been broken the other places surrendered as well. The people were still weak in their new faith. Native people later

told a story: “After the former Christians had burnt the church in Chiaoa near the town of Tolo, one of the leaders of the village broke away an altarpiece with a picture of the Blessed Virgin on it in order to turn it into a handle for his sword. He did not escape the wrath of God! His hands became crippled, and within a year he and all members of his family had died. The last of his relatives was pierced in the eye and run through by a swordfish as he was fishing.”²¹

The new Captain, A. Galvão, succeeded in establishing peace after Fr. Vinagre had repelled Jailolo’s forces, won back many apostates and even baptised pagan villagers (1538/39). In 1543 joint Ternate-Portuguese forces went to Moro to prevent the Spaniards from settling there. But when the Spanish Admiral Villalobos arrived he was well received by villages subject to Jailolo. The Augustinian chaplains of the fleet opened a kind of temporary convent on the beach and initiated a more systematic evangelisation. After their departure no priest dared to visit the area for some years, because war raged there and the Christian villages never enjoyed peace. They were often attacked by savage Tabaru tribesmen from the interior.

Francis Xavier told his friends in Ternate that he wanted to visit and strengthen the abandoned Christians of Moro. They tried hard to dissuade him and told him to stay away from that place, because the savage people would tear him to pieces. He replied with a smile: ‘Senhor! Because of many sins my merits with God are not so great that he would allow me to suffer such a martyrdom and tortures and death for the salvation of my soul.’²² When he was denied a ship for his voyage Xavier said in a sermon, that he did not fear the dangers nor the cruelty of his foes, nor the tortures with which he was threatened. Finally he set off at night in a *cora-cora* to sail to nearby Halmahera (1546). He followed its coast to the north. Later, in Cochin, Xavier wrote about his work in Moro:

After three months had passed, I left the city of Maluco [= Ternate] for some islands known as the Islands of Moro, which are sixty leagues from Maluco, because there are many Christian villages on them. Since they are very far from India and the natives had killed a priest who went there, many days had passed since they had been visited. On those islands I baptised many infants who had not been baptised. I remained on the islands for three months, and during this time I visited all the Christian villages. I was much consoled by them, and they by me.²³

²¹ Schurhammer 1980-III:164.

²² J.L. Rebelo according to Schurhammer 1980-III:165.

²³ Letter 59, written by Xavier on 20-1-1548 in Cochin; see Costelloe 1993:171; See Schurhammer 1980-III:187–189, who adds in a footnote, that Xavier could have baptised at most 3,000 children “but more likely much fewer.”

When Xavier came to Moro the Christians had been left alone for seven years, and numbered a few thousands in and around the bigger villages of Mamuya, Puni, Tolo, Chiaoa and Samafo. He strengthened the new converts in their faith, using an interpreter, and baptised their children. He had to walk in the heat of the day, because at night everybody feared the mountain tribe of the Tabaru. The new converts were experts in poisoning too and sometimes joined the stronger forces to save their own lives. Xavier could not stay long, because he had to go further to the islands of Morotai and Rau, where many Christians lived.

Xavier's *cora-cora* sailed to the north, visiting the Christians of many places, as in Pilea and Muravanghi before turning to the island of Rau with its three Christian communities. From Rau the boat circled the thirty-five leagues long coast of Morotai stopping at the villages that harboured Christians, till it came to Saquita, the largest town on the island in the midst of a fertile plain. From there the journey continued south until they had to turn west at Cape Dena. After a few more stops they crossed the strait between Morotai and Halmahera; and after taking leave from the brave faithful of Mamuya they set sail to return to Ternate, where they arrived in January 1547.

Fr. J. de Beira SJ was asked by Xavier to go to Ternate and arrived there in late 1547. During the following years the situation in Moro was far from good. The sultan of Jailolo tried hard to force the Christians to apostatise. The strength of the sultan of Jailolo made the Portuguese suspicious because he often sided with the Spaniards. Also the Sultan of Ternate, Hairun, became envious. The unlikely Portuguese-Ternatean alliance brought Jailolo down in 1551 and its sultan was reduced to a vassal of Ternate. A joint Ternatean-Portuguese expedition tried to recapture the town of Tolo, but could not take it because of the trenches made by the Tolonese. When the priests asked for God's support an eruption of the nearby volcano destroyed them at night. In the morning the apostate town of Tolo was recaptured. These events promoted a kind of mass conversion. Fr. Beira and three other missionaries were kept busy with instruction and baptisms. Fr. Beira called his apostolic journeys together with Br. N. Nunez 'a prolonged martyrdom.'²⁴

Frater Frois, who preserved Beira's information, tells us that the Jesuits concerned themselves considerably with the natural phenomena and environment of the Moluccas. They blessed the rice seeds of their converts before each planting and held elaborate funeral services for native Christians. They observed the practices and beliefs of these primitive agriculturists, and wrote about the islands' production of rice, ginger, and other foodstuffs.

²⁴ Schurhammer 1980-III:180–181 for sources on his life. De Beira's letters in Jacobs *Docu. Maluc.* I:105–131.

In the early 1550s there were seven Christian villages in Moro and another eleven on the two islands of Morotai and Rau. Fr. de Beira worked on Rau till 1556, when he went back to Goa completely worn out by his sufferings and nearly out of his mind. Fr. de Castro arranged with Hairun that the Christians and Muslims of the town of Samafo on northeast Halmahera were to be separated, even though this caused some tragedies for mixed marriages. Hairun himself dismissed one of his many wives who was a Christian, giving her a generous gift. When in 1557 the Portuguese captain imprisoned Hairun without any reason Baabullah, his crown-prince, sent a *cora-cora* to fetch Fr. Castro in order to bring him to Ternate, perhaps to use him as a hostage in exchange for his father. But the crew of the boat was so upset by the imprisonment of their lord, that they regarded the priest as their own prisoner, tied him, stripped him of his clothes and gave him no food. When he was brought to Baabullah's residence, the prince gave him new clothes and food, and tried to make him his own prisoner. But his capturers refused to hand him over to the prince. They tortured him for a month before they killed him with two strokes in January 1558, on the islet of Hiri.

After the murder of Fr. de Castro the Moro Christians were abandoned for four years and many apostatised out of fear and because of pressure. When in 1562 four Jesuits visited Moro and Morotai, the lapsed, asked for forgiveness and many children were brought from all villages to be baptised. Some sources mention more than a thousand children below three years being baptised that year. Whole villages returned to Christianity or embraced it for the first time. The most frequent obstacle was the marriages of people who had divorced their first partner, which happened quite easily. When the former Catholics around the town of Galela wanted to be reconciled the priests asked their separation from their non-Christian neighbours. But the ruler of the place, Tioliza, did not like this idea, because he did not want to loose so many of his subjects and a lot of income and power. After a long discussion with Tioliza's advisers, the whole area asked to be accepted into the Church in 1661.

After Hairun was murdered in 1570 by the Portuguese captain, his son Sultan Baabullah besieged the fort of Ternate. The few Portuguese soldiers in Mamuya were recalled and many Christians were massacred there. The mission was practically abandoned for more than thirty years (1572–1606). In 1588 Fr. Marta SJ, the Italian visitor of the Moluccan mission, reported that there had been about sixty to eighty thousand Christians in twenty-nine *kampongs* before the outbreak of the persecution in 1568. There was a short revival (1606–1613) when Spaniards from the Philippines had established themselves in the northern Moluccas. Fourteen Christian villages were fused into three with a reduced population of 1,700 inhabitants. Fr. da Cruz SJ, who had just been expelled by the Dutch from Ambon (1605), went to Tolo, where he reconciled hundreds and baptised many others. The faith of the

simple islanders had not died and revived as soon as a priest stayed among them. A report of 1612 mentions that, “all Moro is Christian again.” But when the Dutch VOC pushed the Spaniards out of Halmahera, and the Spanish governor evacuated the island too early, the Christians were left at the mercy of their mortal enemies, the Ternateans. Through constant persecution they were decimated, enslaved or carried off to other places like the people of Sao, Sopi, Mira and Saquita by Sultan Muzaffar of Ternate in 1628. Morotai and Rau were practically depopulated and much later repopulated by other people from Halmahera. In Moro the last Christians concentrated around Galela and Tolo, and defended themselves under the leadership of Kibo, the legendary last Christian ruler of Tolo, whose grave was still revered in the 1920s.

A Christian sultanate in Bacan, 1557–1609

“The island Bacan produces cloves, the others do not.”²⁵ Tomé Pires wrote this first news about the islands of Bacan in 1515, four years after the Portuguese sailed these waters for the first time. Bacan was the most southern sultanate of the Moluccas. It comprised the relatively large island of Bacan and the island of Kasiruta, where the sultan lived. In the late 1550s the young ruler of Bacan, a nephew of the sultan of Ternate, eloped with one of Hairun’s daughters without asking permission from her father. Shortly afterwards this woman died giving birth to her first baby. Hairun became very angry and the young man very afraid. How to confront the strongest man in the Moluccas? The sultan decided to ask for help from the Portuguese by converting to Christianity. He was baptised with his family and his nobles after short instruction given to them in 1557. He chose the name João.

This is a very eminent case of a ‘conversion’ for worldly reasons. But such motives too can result in something more permanent. Dom João, the young Christian sultan, accompanied Fr. Vaz on his tours through his realm; a big cross was erected on the shore and eight hundred people were baptised in 1562.

For ten years, from 1564 to 1574, the young priest Fernando Alvares stayed on the island and many heathen and nominal Muslims became Christian. When the sultan sent provisions to the beleaguered fort of the Portuguese on Ternate Sultan Baabullah attacked his island. After the fort had surrendered to him in 1575, the sultan of Bacan was poisoned by emissaries from Ternate (1577) and his family was captured, but his son Henrique escaped. He organised resistance, allied with Tidore and the Portuguese on Ambon. In 1581 he was killed in action. His eighteen-year-old son, Kaichil Raxa Laudin,

²⁵ Cortesão 1990:218–220.

had been converted to Islam when in custody on Ternate. He intended to revive his father's alliance against Ternate, but the Portuguese were too weak to offer him any support. Bacan's Christian period came to an early end, but not yet completely.

In 1582 another ruler on the island of Bacan, a *sengaji*, who resided in Labuha and was the son-in-law of sultan of Bacan on Kasiruta, asked for a priest. He and his people no longer acknowledged Ternate and wanted to become Christians again. Fr. Ferrari arrived and stayed on the island. Four hundred people converted in the first year and built quite a large church. With great hopes the priest wrote in 1583, "Now we have again a base of our own in the Moluccas! Here we can live and work according to our own desire. On Tidore we are only guests."

In 1583 the Belgian Jesuit Rogier Berwouts arrived in the Moluccas and went straight to Labuha, where he stayed for two years. From this place he visited the *kampongs* in the neighbourhood. From a report of A. Marta, who visited the island in 1588, we learn among other things,

The *sengaji* who governs the island, is a Christian and his name is Ruy Pereira. He was baptised in 1582 together with his wife and all the islanders, about four hundred people. Because they are afraid of being persecuted by the soldiers of Ternate, they hide in the forest. The *sengaji* stays in a big kampong, where the church is and the missionary lives together with about two hundred people. The father cares for the religious life of all the people. On their own initiative the islanders do not attend the services or go to confession, but when the father visits them, they always follow his advice. Together with the people who live in the forest, the Christians on Bacan were about five hundred.²⁶

When Father Marta asked the opinion of his confreres about handing over the Moluccan mission Father Berwout, who worked for a second term on the island, said he would like to stay, though not much progress could be expected on Bacan. Another missionary adds that if the Jesuits would leave Labuha, all the islanders would become Muslims. Because of the second wife of the *sengaji*, a former Catholic turned Muslim, her husband no longer supported the Christians. In 1594 there were only one hundred Christians left. Three years later a report states, "The state of the mission can be formulated very shortly: totally collapsed! More and more difficulties and the rising pressure from the Muslims make many Christian leave their new faith. On Tidore are a few faithful as also in Labuha."²⁷

When in 1601 the *sengaji* repented and settled his marriage, many of his subjects became more fervent Christians again. When the Spaniards had reconquered the old fort of Gamalama on Ternate (1606), the sultan and the

²⁶ For Marta's original report see Jacobs *Docu. Maluc.* II:257–259.

²⁷ Jacobs *Docu. Maluc.* II:398 (Letter of Fr. A. Pereira).

sengaji immediately sided with them against their old enemy the sultan of Ternate. However, because of lack of missionaries, Labuha received no more resident priest and was visited from Ternate only a few times a year.

When in 1609 Dutch ships appeared all the people confessed their sins, some received communion and fifteen adults were baptised, on the feast of St. Andrew (30 November). Then they all took to the forest, but when two hundred Ternateans came on shore to help the Dutch a big fight took place and many people were killed. After this battle the sultan of Ternate, the Dutch VOC, and the sultan of Bacan signed a treaty giving the Company the right to build a fort on Bacan and to monopolise all its cloves.

Makassar: a chance lost

The many small kingdoms on the great island of Celebes (Sulawesi) had not much to offer. But in 1545 a merchant of sandalwood from Malacca, Antonio de Paiva, met St. Francis Xavier in Cochin, South India. He told the priest that three ‘mighty rulers’ in a land very far away ‘maybe five thousand miles’, had recently been baptised and urgently asked for missionaries to instruct their peoples. A little later Xavier writes from Negapatnam, “Should it be that God requires me to serve him by proceeding to Makassar, I shall send a messenger overland to Goa.”²⁸ What did de Paiva tell Xavier that he so much desired to go to Makassar?

Paiva had gone to the area of present-day Makassar in February 1544 to load sandalwood. When he went ashore in Bacukiki, the harbour of Supa,²⁹ the old king asked him why the Portuguese had such strained relations with most Muslims. Paiva used this chance to explain the main teachings of the Gospel to the ruler. When he had sailed on to the neighbouring kingdom of Sian he had a chance to speak to the king, and his council too, about the gospel. When they still were pondering it the king of Supa arrived and asked to be baptised immediately. With great solemnity he was baptised and later his colleague of Sian together with thirty of his followers. Paiva explained the central mysteries of the Christian faith and promised to do his best to persuade a priest from Malacca to continue and deepen his instructions. Xavier had waited for months in Malacca for further news from Makassar.³⁰

In the beginning of 1545, Father Viegas had sailed to Makassar in order to assist the new converts made by Paiva. It seems that the warlike king of Supa

²⁸ Costelloe 1993-I:124.

²⁹ Supa, Sian (or Siang, today part of Pangkajene), and Sidenreng on the Pare-Pare Bay of Sulawesi, about 130 km north of present-day Makassar.

³⁰ Costelloe 1993-I:129.

and his neighbouring Christian friends of Sian and Sidenreng had become Christians not only because their hearts were deeply touched by de Paivas instructions. They harboured also more worldly interests: Portuguese firearms. In Supa Fr. Viegas was very busy instructing different members of the ruling families for baptism. After more than a year, he and the other Portuguese had to sail back to Malacca. The priest had just boarded the ship to depart when an uproar occurred on the beach: Helena Vesiva, the daughter of the king of Supa, was missing. It was quickly discovered that the girl had secretly gone on board with her Portuguese lover, João de Eredia, against the will of her parents. As dawn was breaking, all her relatives had assembled on the beach to bring her back by force of arms. To avoid bloodshed, Fr. Viegas ordered the anchor to be weighed and the ship to sail away. In Malacca Eredia and Helena were married in church, but relations between Malacca and Supa had been broken off. This was the bad, though romantic, news that prevented Xavier from going to Makassar. History took another course.

What happened to the abandoned Christians of South Sulawesi? In 1559 Fr. B. Dias SJ wrote from Malacca, "I obtained important information about Makassar and learned that Mohammed has not yet made an entrance there because of pork, since they eat no other meat... A number of kings who became Christians are still alive there. And I induced the captain of Malacca to write to them with a ship that was sailing there."³¹ Five years later Fr. B. Dias wrote to the superior general of the Jesuits in Rome:

I have just written to our provincial superior (in Goa) to send fathers to Makassar, which borders on Ambon where they already go. The Muslim doctrines quite often are preached here, but are not yet accepted. Therefore, there is still good hope to gain some fruits... A merchant, who this year arrived in Malacca from those regions, told us that some of the nobles of this people had asked him for a picture of Our Lady in order to honour her. This shows that their conversion should be easy.³²

In spite of their repeated requests the Christians of southern Sulawesi were not visited by another missionary during the sixteenth century. Merchants from Johore, enemies of the Portuguese, tried to win Makassar over to Islam, but the rulers pursued a wait-and-see policy, with a preference for Christianity, for about sixty years. In 1605 Makassar became a Muslim sultanate: first Gowa-Tallo and then nearly all the rulers of the area followed suit.

There are several reports about the acceptance of Islam, which show that Christianity lost because there were in the sixteenth century no missionaries

³¹ Jacobs *Docu. Maluc.* I:304–306; English translation from Schurhammer 1980:252.

³² Jacobs *Docu. Maluc.* I:456–459.

ready to sail to Makassar. All the reports tell us that the raja of Gowa³³ was disappointed by Malacca not responding to his requests. The rulers wanted all their people to confess the same religion. Therefore Muslim and Christian teachers were invited to provide more information about both religions. Finally the king chose Islam because the teachers from Johore arrived earlier. He took the name Alaudin, but left his people freedom to choose. Later Makassar always showed a high degree of tolerance towards the Catholics, even after the VOC pressed hard to have the Catholics sent away. Sultan Alaudin told the Dutch in 1607, “My country is open for all nations, and what I have is available for your people as well as for the Portuguese.” Because of its liberal politics in commerce and religion Makassar became an important centre for many Asian and European traders in the early seventeenth century. The Christians who lived in Makassar were free to exercise their religion. In the seventeenth century several priests stayed quite a long time in the city of Makassar and had their convents and churches. The Dominicans tried twice to establish a bishop there (1625 and 1633) for the region of Makassar (where they still hoped to gain some converts), the Moluccas and their Solor-Mission. But the fall of Malacca to the Dutch in 1641 spoiled all hopes.

After the fall of Malacca there was an exodus of the Catholic population, who did not trust the Dutch administration. Many sailed to Makassar, the open trading centre that welcomed merchants of all nationalities. Among these 20,000 refugees were 45 priests, though most of them stayed only for a short time. They looked after the one to three thousand Catholics, mostly Goanese, Portuguese, and a few Spaniards, who made up the international community. Their presence benefited the Makassar people, but annoyed Batavia very much. Because many missionaries travelled through Makassar to East Asia, the Franciscans opened an *hospitium* for guests in 1649, the Dominicans a convent with a church attached to it (1641–1650), and the canons of the former Cathedral of Malacca served the main church. Two Jesuits who had to leave Malacca in 1646, arrived with another two hundred refugees at Makassar.

Karaeng Pattingalloang (1600–1654), the acting head of the government, often attended mass on holidays although he was a Muslim. He presented a house to the Jesuits. This prince was highly educated, spoke and read Portuguese fluently and often ordered books from Batavia for his good library, especially on mathematics. In spite of this missionary work in Makassar itself was impossible. In 1644 a young man was stabbed to death in the house of a prince, because he had become a Christian. Pattingalloang made the king,

³³ The reader should know that Goa stands for the Portuguese town in West-India, while Gowa is the capital of the Makassarese, near to present-day Makassar in Indonesia.

who was involved in this affair, offer satisfaction to the Portuguese vicar of the diocese of Malacca, who for years had stayed in the town.

In 1660 the VOC was strong enough to force the sultan to sign an agreement which stipulated among other things that within a year's time all Portuguese had to be expelled from the whole sultanate. Some priests succeeded in staying a little longer, but by 1669 Catholicism in Makassar was extinct. Many people who were expelled sailed for Macao and Larantuka on eastern Flores.

Northern Sulawesi and the Sangihe and Talaud Archipelago

The Sangihe and Talaud Archipelagos form a natural bridge to the islands of the Philippines. In 1563 Sultan Hairun prepared a fleet to send his son Baabullah to northern Sulawesi in order to strengthen his influence there and to spread Islam. The Portuguese captain of Ternate tried to forestall this intention by sending Fr. Diego de Magelhaes to make contact with the people. For some years they had expressed their wish to be instructed in the teachings of Christ, and maybe in this way to keep their independence from Ternate. The Jesuit was received well by the ruler of Manado whom he could baptise together with one thousand five hundred of his people. The rest had to wait in order to be prepared later. The priest was asked also by the raja of Siau Island, who was on a visit in Manado, to baptise him together with his colleague. He asked Magelhaes to visit his people as soon as possible. But the father sailed first to the west, to the neighbouring area of Bolaang Mongondow, whose ruler was a son of the raja of Manado and received him well. But before he baptised anybody he sailed on to Toli-Toli, where nobody was interested in listening to him. On his way back two thousand adults were baptised in Kaidipan. Fr. Magelhaes stayed again for some time in Manado in order to instruct the people he had just baptised. He could not visit Gorontalo and the island of Siau, because his ship had to sail back to Ternate.³⁴

Fr. Magelhaes visited Manado a few times during the following years from his base on Ternate. In 1568 Fr. Pero Mascarenhas SJ, visited Siau and other islands and Manado, Kaidipan, and Bolaang Mongondow too. Though thousands of people wanted to be baptised, he only accepted a few heads of villages and used his time to instruct those people already baptised earlier by his predecessor. He promised to send another missionary, who would stay longer. Fr. N. Nunez, one of the first missionaries sent by Francis Xavier, wrote in 1569 that three rajas had already become Christians and the raja of Gorontalo wanted to follow suit. But after 1570, when the murder of Hairun shook the Portuguese power in the Moluccas, this mission seems to have been

³⁴ Jacobs *Docu. Maluc.* I:415–417.

abandoned. In spite of that the people of northern Sulawesi refused to join Ternate and become Muslims. In 1588 Fr. Marta regarded Christianity extinct in Sulawesi and its people relapsed into paganism. But several times rulers of northern Sulawesi and Siau sent messengers to Tidore asking the priests to visit them again. Finally in 1604 a priest stayed for some years. In the 1610s Franciscan missionaries from Manila arrived also.

After three unsuccessful attempts (1606, 1610, 1611) to consolidate the Catholic communities in northern Sulawesi and after two Franciscans had been murdered by Muslims from Tagulandang in 1614, a new effort was made to answer the repeated requests for missionaries. Two Franciscan priests built a church in Buhol on the north coast of Minahasa, but their visit was very short. A visit to Manado in 1617 by two Jesuits showed that the Christians baptised by Fr. Magelhaes in the 1560s had meanwhile become pagan again or turned Muslim. The two priests felt exhausted, fell ill and died within three years. Their superior regarded Minahasa as too difficult to be evangelised, the people lacking understanding and being too crude. Protection of the missionaries was impossible and the climate was regarded as unbearable. Muslim neighbours obstructed the work, especially marauding *cora-cora* from Ternate made work impossible. The Jesuits were joined by three Franciscans in 1619. Their effort to evangelise the so-called Alfuros, or the animistic people of the forest, failed. One of them, Fr. Blas Palomino OFM, was murdered in 1622.

In 1637 the young 'crown princes' of Manado and Siau went to the fort on Ternate, to be taught by the Jesuits. Manado was visited from Siau in that year too and its queen and her children were baptised. Finally in the 1640s the Franciscans succeeded in converting some Alfuros, but Fr. Lorenzo Garralda OFM was murdered in 1644 at the instigation of some *dukuns* (traditional healers), and Fr. J. Iranzo had to hide himself for eight months. Because of fear of retaliation the Alfuros, who had also killed forty Spaniards, looked for Dutch protection which they received from 1655.

In 1651 the Spaniards came to Minahasa to buy provisions for their fort on Ternate. Four years later the Dutch erected a fort close to the Spanish fortification. This and a Dutch fleet controlling the coast of northern Sulawesi since 1660 made further increase of the Catholic population very difficult. A short visit of a Franciscan and a Jesuit priest from Siau did not change the situation. The building of the stone fort 'Amsterdam' in Manado by the Dutch (1666) marked the end of Catholic influence on northern Celebes (Sulawesi). Since 1663 Protestant pastors visited some villages in Minahasa and on the islands to the north. From Siau Fr. Turcotti's last efforts and good success in Bolaang Hitam and Kaidipan in 1676 were thwarted by the Dutch governor. All Catholic activities were strictly forbidden by the VOC now in control.

The Sangihe and Talaud archipelagos, between northern Sulawesi and the Philippine island of Mindanao, are populated by people closely related to

Philippine language groups. Because the raja of Siau was baptised in Manado (1563) evangelisation began on that island, which is situated in the Sangihe archipelago. Though Christian practice seems to have always been quite superficial on Siau the islanders never lost or gave up their faith. The Kingdom of Siau comprised Siau-Island, southern Sangihe Besar, two southern islands of the Talaud Archipelago and the Kaidipan and Bolaang Hitam area on northern Sulawesi. Siau remained the centre of the mission between Sulawesi and Mindanao. Its raja, who chose the name of Jeronimo I, with great enthusiasm tried to change many pagan customs on his island, but his people, who were not yet ready, revolted and expelled him. For three years he had to live in exile with the Jesuits of Ternate.

In 1568 a Portuguese fleet set sail from Ternate to harass the Spaniards in the Philippines. Raja Jeronimo and Fr. Pero Mascarenhas boarded a ship that sailed via Manado, where emissaries from Siau asked him to visit them too. Accompanied by the former raja, the priest went on shore on the west coast of Sangihe Besar and was well received. After he had explained the Christian faith and way of living, the local ruler was baptised with many of his nobles, a great feast was organised, and a huge cross, made from the finest wood of the forest, was erected in the place where a church should be built later. The two rulers themselves assisted in erecting this sign of Christianity on Sangihe. Next year King Jeronimo succeeded with the help of a few Portuguese in subduing all the places on Siau that had once rebelled against him.

From 1570 the mission suffered everywhere from the aftermath of the perfidious murder of the old sultan of Ternate. The Belgian Fr. Roger Berwouts paid short visits to Siau between 1585 and 1588. His report speaks about several Christian villages on Siau and Sangihe Besar and stresses the need for resident pastors on these islands. Otherwise the people would become pagans again like those in northern Sulawesi. Fr. Antonio Pereira who several times had sailed to the islands (1588; 1596; 1604–1605) and stayed there for some months composed the first list of words of the Siau dialect.

Because the Christians were often attacked by Ternate and its allies on the neighbouring islands, Raja Jeronimo II and Fr. Pereira sailed to Manila in 1593 to ask for more effective protection. The raja even signed a treaty with Spain against Ternate's imperialism. After the Spaniards got a foothold on Ternate (1606) new requests from Siau poured in. But the few Portuguese Jesuits left on these islands had already been assigned to apparently more promising Moro.

It proved difficult to implant Christianity on the Sangihe archipelago. The priests could not stay long enough in one place to make the islanders grasp what Christianity meant in everyday life. The knowledge of the local dialects by the missionaries sent to this 'end the world' was very poor and several died quickly of exhaustion or shipwreck. In spite of the good will of the local rul-

ers and their repeated calls for more missionaries and for protection against the sultan of Ternate, his Dutch ally, and neighbouring Muslim rulers, the Jesuits could never provide enough skilled people for the time necessary to plant a local church. They never succeeded in educating catechists or creating Christian customs as the Dominicans had in the Solor-Mission. The local rajas, who sometimes were most interested in protection by Spanish soldiers, did not always give a good example. The Jesuits and Franciscans who visited the Christian kampongs on the islands never developed a plan for systematic evangelisation over a space of time long enough for the new faith to take strong roots.

In 1613 a Dutch-Ternatean fleet plundered the islands, and burnt the villages that refused to acknowledge the unfounded claims of the sultan. The Dutch did not care about the native Christians, they wanted to weaken the Spaniards. In 1615 they cheated hundreds of Siau islanders who were invited to board their ships. When on board they were forced to repopulate far away Pulau Ay of the Banda Islands, where the Dutch had murdered or taken away the indigenous population. In Banda the Siau people were forced to accept Circumcision (and to become Muslim), but most of them fled and later came back to Siau. This action made the people of Siau hate Ternate and the Dutch and look to Manila for help.

During the 1620s a few Franciscans from Manila worked on Siau. The Jesuits were back in 1629. In the 1630s Christian life was reported to be fine and a few more pagan villages asked for instruction. About 1631 the Jesuit Fr. M. de Faria, who just had visited Siau wrote:

The Dutch conquered the island for some time, but because it did not produce anything, they left it after taking away its inhabitants. But in a short time many people came from the surrounding islands. The number of people is large again, but does not exceed seven thousands. . . . The indigenous people remember some of our fathers. One of them who had worked on this island, as far as I know, was Fr. A. Pereira. I found the book for baptisms, left by this father which proves that he had baptised more than a thousand people. Ten years later Fr. P. Gomes arrived. His baptismal book is lost. So we don't know the fruits of his labour. He did not stay for long. . . . After his time till 1628 no missionary lived here though some of our fathers and also Franciscans passed through and baptised some people.³⁵

Fr. de Faria regarded the islanders as Christians by name only. Their raja lived in polygamy, but when he dreamed that his deceased father visited and reproached him he repented and sent his second wife home. Three churches

³⁵ Excerpt from Fr. de Faria's report to Rome, written in Manila (1631) and incorporated into the yearly report of 1632 of the Jesuit Malabar Province; see Jacobs *Docu. Maluc.* III:475–482.

were built and eight hundred people baptised. During the 1640s and 1650s alliances changed all the time and with them quite often religion. From 1653 regular parish life could be established on Siau. Thanks to cautious negotiations with the Dutch after the Spaniards had evacuated Ternate (1663), the Catholic communities could live in some peace until 1676. Sometimes even large groups asked for baptism and a priest to instruct them.

The Catholic community had dropped from 11,700 faithful in 1656 to only 4,000 in 1665: more than fifty percent in less than ten years. The Dutch governor in Ternate sent a Spaniard, who had changed sides and became Protestant, to incite the Catholics of northern Sulawesi and the Sangihe archipelago to send the Jesuits away and put themselves under the protection of the VOC. Instead, the raja of Siau wrote to Manila in 1669 to get more Jesuits and Spanish troops, but Manila was unable to send any support. Only the Jesuit provincial did send one priest. Three years later fifteen Spanish soldiers arrived. The missionaries did not always follow the flag; they followed the call of the people much earlier than the flag arrived. There was a kind of 'double mission' by Catholics and Protestants alike in the 1670s. The borders between Spanish and Dutch territory were blurred. Protestant ministers on Sangihe are mentioned from 1674 onward.

In the early 1670s there was always one and sometimes even three Jesuits on Siau, from where they tried also to look after the few Catholic villages on northern Sulawesi and on the other islands of the archipelago. From 1674 to 1677 the Italian Fr. Carlo Turcotti, who stayed on Siau, reported to his superior in Manila about the poor and hard life of the missionaries among such a crude people, who continuously waged war on all sides. In 1675 a big church was built in Ulu (Siau), and the church in Pehe had to be broadened and a house for the priest was added to the church on Kaburuang Island (South Talaud). At Tahuna on Sangihe about a thousand islanders were baptised; the raja, his brother and many people who recently had become Protestant returned to the Catholic Church. Even in the last year of the mission, in 1676, hundreds of people were baptised by the three priests still working in the archipelago.

In the Talaud archipelago two small princedoms depended on the king of Siau. In these places evangelisation was commenced only in the early 1670s. After a few prosperous years it had to be given up again (1677), when the Spanish garrison capitulated because of Ternatean-Dutch attacks.

The viable mission on the most northern island group of present day Indonesia came to a sudden end for economical reasons: the Dutch wanted by all means to establish a watertight monopoly on all cloves and nutmeg. A few years previously Fr. de Esquivel had introduced clove trees on Tagulandang Island, south of Siau. The Dutch governor tried to have these trees cut down in 1663, but in vain, because the priests had organised a strong resistance by the people. In contradiction to the stipulations of the Peace Treaty of Münster

(1648), the highest council of the VOC in the Netherlands gave orders to occupy the Sangihe Islands in 1671, though they were regarded as Spanish territory. The Dutch Governor, Padtbrugge, instigated and supported the sultan of Ternate in an attack on Siau and Tabukan (on Sangihe).

In an action instigated by his Dutch overlord, the VOC, the sultan of Ternate attacked Siau in October 1677 and conquered the Spanish Fort St. Rosa. The church and the mission house were plundered and burnt down and the three Jesuits were arrested and brought to Ternate. By manipulating Ternate to attack Spanish territory the VOC appeared not to be involved and achieved its real aim: the sultan transferred the islands to the VOC, the clove trees were cut down, the Dutch monopoly was saved, and the Christians were left for a long time without their pastors. The change of political power brought about a religious change too. Both spheres were intertwined.

The raja of Siau, Franciscus Xaverius Batahi had to sign a contract, by force of which Siau became a fief of the VOC and his Catholic subjects incorporated into the *Nederlandse Kerk* (Dutch Church). “All crosses, statues and other signs of idolatry had to be burnt” (Article 4). The raja was forbidden to allow ‘Roman papists’ to visit his islands. Until 1691 emissaries of the people of Siau went to Mindanao to ask for Jesuit missionaries, but the Spaniards were too weak to help anymore.

After Ambon (1605) and the Moro-Mission (1613), another Catholic area became the victim of political and economic changes. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries religion was very closely connected with political power and business interests all over Asia. Religious tolerance was still far away. Today the people of the Sangihe-Talaud Islands are ninety percent Protestant Christians.

Conclusion: A mission impossible?

Francis Xavier rushed through the Moluccas from Ambon to Morotai fulfilling his duty as papal legate to visit *quanto citius*, as soon as possible, all places in Asia where Christians were living. Moved by pity he sent Jesuits to look after these scattered groups of believers and to spread the Gospel at this “far end the world.” The Jesuits never numbered more than twelve at a time, mostly much less. They were sent from Goa to this “hotbed of all evils of the world”³⁶ and worked hard in a field that hardly had any prospects of achieving lasting results. The half-century of the Portuguese mission (1546–1605) was from the beginning full of disappointments and frustrations; and the Spanish

³⁶ Jacobs 1971:73, quoting Galvão; see also his footnotes about the Moluccas as a kind of Portuguese penal colony.

period (1605–1680) was overshadowed by growing Dutch obstruction. Amid never-ending fighting and wars between all the parties concerned continuous evangelisation never developed.

The existence and well being of the young communities was left to the mercy of their Portuguese protectors and the native leaders. Since Xavier's time the sultans of Ternate mostly obstructed Christianity and favoured Islam in order to build up strength against their business partners. In their shrewd policy they sometimes simulated interest and even support for the spread of the gospel. But this never prevented them from obstructing the mission, burning Christian villages and selling or killing their inhabitants. The Portuguese captains fundamentally favoured Christianity, but personal ambition and greed made them easily sacrifice their fellow Christians.

The local Christians loved their priests and protested when the Jesuits deliberated about withdrawal. Though without a prospect for basic improvement, the missionaries did not dare to forsake them, partly because of piety for the founder St. Francis Xavier, partly because of pity for their flock. Though efforts to educate indigenous catechists never progressed further than a primitive 'school', faith did take roots as is proved by the readiness of some simple people to die for Christ.

Success is no criterion for evangelisation, and human efforts alone are never sufficient to plant a church. Humanly speaking it was an impossible mission, or as an old missionary, Fr. L. Masonio, put it, "a protracted martyrdom of patience in bearing such a hard cross."³⁷ But have there been no remaining 'results'? The Dutch VOC protestantised the Ambonese, Minahasan, and Sangirese Christians, and in this way prevented them from being islamized. In the main centres Protestant ministers were placed; minor establishments were served by assistant-ministers ('comforters of the sick'). Each local congregation got a church building and a school; indigenous Christians were trained as schoolteachers and put in charge of the local congregations. In this way the continuity of Christianity in Eastern Indonesia was assured. The Catholic mission laid the foundation; the Protestants built upon that foundation. In the twentieth century the building was completed by the foundation of independent Protestant churches besides a local Catholic Church refounded by renewed mission activity.

Adolf Heuken SJ

³⁷ Jacobs *Docu. Maluc.* III:407.

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CHAPTER FOUR

THE SOLOR-TIMOR MISSION OF THE DOMINICANS, 1562-1800

The Indonesian Province of *Nusa Tenggara Timur*, or the 'Southeastern Islands', had been reached by Austronesian migrants about 2000 BCE, travelling from the north through the Moluccas. Here they mixed with people of Papuan descent, who had arrived about a thousand years earlier from New Guinea. Up to the present Papuan elements (dark skin, fuzzy hair) show themselves ever stronger in the more eastern parts of Flores, Timor and especially on the smaller islands of Alor and Pantar.

Long before Chinese junks sailed to Timor to fetch the valuable white sandalwood (*Santalum album*), the islanders brought it in small boats to the harbours of eastern Java. Sandalwood was in great demand for preparing perfumes, incense and medicine. Locally it was called *aikamenil* or by its Sanskrit name *candana*. Contact with Majapahit is indicated by Chinese sources that describe *Ti-wun* (Timor) as a vassal region of this Hindu kingdom. A Hindu temple is shown on the earliest panoramic drawings of Flores, called *Samademga*, made by F. Rodrigues in 1513.

The original religion of all the islands was a kind of animism. The village was protected by ancestral spirits, the living-dead. This ordered world of the village and its fields was surrounded by forests, the abode of unpredictable spirits which had to be placated by all kinds of offerings. Only in dire need was *dewa*, the God of the Sky, called upon. In the whole area he was regarded as the principal male deity with Mother Earth as his female complementary opposite. Moon and stars were of a lesser dignity. All kinds of evils and diseases were attributed to spirits. Ancestor worship was spread throughout the islands. It seems that the immortality of a kind of human soul was a firm belief.

Social organisation hardly exceeded small 'kingdoms' of one or several *kampongs* (villages), which were governed by headmen or *atalaki*. Some rajas enjoyed a kind of vague, regional, supremacy, for example Larantuka on East Flores, or the Behale (Wehale) in Central Timor. In general all these petty kings and *sengajis* were eagerly defending their 'independence'. Ternate and Makassar now and then tried to exert a kind of overlordship, which according to circumstances was accepted by certain coastal rajas. From the late seventeenth century some of them acknowledged, at least pro forma, the overlordship of the Portuguese crown or of the Dutch VOC.

When the Portuguese conquered Malacca (1511) they quickly became aware of the sandalwood trade, because many of the experienced Gujarati,

Bengali and Arab merchants remained in the town. They were not closely tied to the Malay ruling elite. When the sultan fled very few accompanied him, and most of them came back quickly, as soon as they realised that those who stayed behind did reasonably well under Portuguese rule. Tomé Pires wrote three years later:

The island of Solor is very large. It has a heathen king. It has many ports and many foodstuffs in great plenty. It has countless tamarinds; it has a great deal of sulphur, and it is better known for this product than for any other. They take a large quantity of foodstuffs from these islands to Malacca. . . . Between the islands of Bima and Solor there is a wide channel along which they go to the sandalwood islands. All the islands from Java are called Timor, for *timor* means 'east' in the language of the country, as if they were saying the islands of the east. As they are the most important, these two from which the sandalwood comes are called the islands of Timor. The island of Timor has heathen kings. There is a great deal of white sandalwood in these two. It is very cheap because there is no other wood in the forests. The Malay merchants say that God made Timor for sandalwood and Banda for mace and the Moluccas for cloves, and that this merchandise is not known anywhere else in the world except in these places; and I asked and enquired very diligently whether they had this merchandise anywhere else and everyone said no. With a good wind you can sail from this channel to the islands of the Moluccas in six or seven days. These islands are unhealthy; the people are not very truthful. They go to these island(s) every year from Malacca and from Java, and the sandalwood comes to Malacca.¹

Nearly fifty years passed, before the Portuguese made their first proper settlement in this archipelago. Among these visiting traders had been pious men, who talked about their faith in Christ with the indigenous providers of wood. In this way the Gospel was made known for the first time in this most south-eastern part of Asia.

A mission initiated without a worldly protector (1562–1614)

The newly appointed first bishop of Malacca (1561), the Dominican Friar Jorge de S. Luzia OP, learned from Portuguese sandalwood traders that there were quite a number of Christians on Timor who were in need of priests. The bishop told his confreres, the friars of the newly established Dominican convent at Malacca (1554), to look after these new converts in his diocese that covered all of Asia east of Malacca.

How did the people of the islands of Solor and Timor come to hear the Good News? Portuguese ships from Malacca often had to wait for weeks on

¹ Cortesão 1990-I:203. 'Solor' here means the Solor-Archipelago and (parts of) Flores, which is not yet mentioned by this name by Pires.

the shores of Solor, before the monsoon would allow them to sail home. Solor offered much better harbours than Timor, where they fetched their cargos. During these days a supposed chaplain to a merchant vessel, Fr. A. Taveira OP, is said to have baptised five thousand people on Timor (or Solor?) and on Pulau Ende which is Ende Island. There are no reliable sources about Fr. Taveira's activities. But a layman, João Soares, converted about two hundred people in Lewonama on neighbouring Flores. Before that time some Muslim teachers from India and Bengal were already active among the islanders.

In 1562 the *primeiros missionarios a Solor*, three Dominicans from Malacca, opened the first period in the long Christian history of Nusa Tenggara, which continues uninterrupted to the present day. Their superior, Fr. da Cruz, realised that living on a far away island, outside the Portuguese sphere of influence, called for some measures of protection. After the ship's crew had erected a simple convent and a small church made from wood and palm leaves, he surrounded it with a fence of palisades.

The three friars had just made contact with the people of Solor and the surrounding islands when raiders or business rivals from Java attacked their convent, but a few cannon shots from a Portuguese ship just arriving from the Moluccas made the attackers disperse quickly. This victory enhanced the prestige of the mission and some leading people of Solor were baptised. But Fr. da Cruz looked ahead. In 1566 he started to build a real fortification of five bulwarks made of limestone to protect the missionaries and the local Christians against further raids. People of Goa and Malacca gave alms to build this 'Dominican fort' and the Church of Our Lady of Mercy (*Piedade*). A small minor seminary was opened for fifty boys (1596), but later transferred to Larantuka (1613). In an adjacent village another church was built for the local community living outside the walls of the fort.

The captain of the fort on Solor was chosen by the Dominican prior at Malacca and had to be confirmed by the captain of that place (1576) for the first twenty years of its existence. After that time the appointment was transferred to the viceroy of India (1595). In 1575 a captain with twenty soldiers was sent to Solor for protection, but the Dominicans had to provide the soldiers' pay. About two thousand Portuguese traders and their families, often mestizos, lived in a *kampong* west of the fort and roughly a thousand Christian Solorese in another. Both had their own churches.

The Portuguese government in Goa granted the mission a subsidy of fifty *xerafim* a year for every missionary working in the Solor archipelago, and a *fusta* for travelling between the islands (1577/8). The few missionaries worked hard and spread to different islands around Solor. During the time of Fr. da Cruz's leadership (d. 1590) eight stations were established on Flores, three on Solor and one on Pulau Ende (1595).

Witnessing the progress, the bishop of Malacca wrote to the provincial superior of the Dominicans in Portugal to send more friars (1585). When this letter was read in the Dominican convent of Lisbon, five priests volunteered immediately and left the next day, Christmas Eve, in the Galleon *Reis Magos* to Goa. After fighting off an English pirate ship they all arrived safely on Solor to strengthen their brethren (1587), who in 1581 had already lost two members: Fr. Antonio Pestana OP was murdered by enemies of the mission from Java. He is the first of many priests and lay-people associated with the mission who died for their faith in Christ. Fr. Simão das Montanhas could not be protected by the few Christians of Lamahala on Adonara in a skirmish with the Muslims attackers from neighbouring Terong. He was killed by several lances.

Quite often we read about Javanese attacking Christian villages at this time. We are not sure about their reasons. They could have been annoyed about their losses in the sandalwood trade or they may have been plain raiders or slave hunters, a lucrative 'business' in eastern Indonesia in those days. But it may be that the upper class in some harbours on Solor had family ties with Javanese coastal cities that had become Muslim during the fifteenth and sixteenth century.

The missionaries were not afraid to travel in the archipelago, to stay for months in a kampong, or visit areas they did not know. The important thing was to baptise people in order to bind them to the church and—which at that time was regarded the same thing—to the Portuguese. We do not know much about instruction before baptism or about change of life afterwards. Some missionaries thought sufficient instruction could be given after baptism, as long as a few basic teachings had been given and accepted. But further instruction often was not realised. There were no indigenous catechists. The old people were unable to learn and remember anything 'difficult,' even how to make a sign of the cross. Another difficulty concerned the language. There were many local tongues, sometimes several on one island. Malaccan Malay was not much used outside the coastal areas. It seems that the Dominicans used Portuguese and employed interpreters. Perhaps this was one reason why the missionaries used crosses, statues, processions and songs as visual aids. The evangelisation of the uneducated people was done in a very simple way.

Until Fr. Chagas reorganised the mission (1616), most of the Dominicans worked on their own without a central agency coordinating them. The missionaries lived poorly and often in situations that were unsafe. Their lives may have been a more convincing sermon than their words, difficult to grasp by the simple villagers. Their converts' faithfulness during persecutions proved that their new Christian conviction was already well rooted.

After more than thirty years of relatively quiet development a big blow shocked the whole Christian community in the area, in 1598. Antonio Andria, the commander of the Solor fort, had pressed the natives—Christians and

non-Christians alike—to do compulsory labour supervised by his soldiers, to work on the ships or to toil on building sites without any compensation. The islanders were not yet used to working hard without any compensation. Sometimes he ‘punished’ Christians who turned Muslim again. Many people became unfavourably disposed towards the fort, regarding it more of a burden than a protection. The commander made terrible mistakes by imprisoning Dom Diogo, a *sengaji* of Solor and giving Dom Gonçalo, the *sengaji* of Lamakera, a heavy beating. Both were headmen of villages and important men of the *Paji*-group, the adversaries of the *Demon*-group. The *Paji* lived on the coast and were inclined to Islam and never friendly towards the Portuguese and later they sided quickly with the Dutch. They had close contacts with Java, and some Muslim preachers had lived among them from the early sixteenth century. The *Demon* people lived in the interior of the islands and were open to Christianity. The old antagonism between them was sharpened by their different religious choices in the sixteenth century. Both groups not only wore different clothes, but they also followed different customs. When Diogo was released, he planned to take revenge not only on Andria, but also on all Portuguese and Christians on Solor.

Diogo and Gonçalo, both enemies of Andria, concocted a plan to murder all the Portuguese, especially the commander and the Dominicans. During the high mass on the feast of S. Laurentius, the patron of the church of Lewonama on Flores, all were to be killed in the church (1598). But before taking action the plotters tried to get the support of the headman of Lewonama. This man refused and informed the priest of Lamakera. The commander was warned too, but only reprimanded Diogo. Knowing that his plans were no longer secret, Diogo acted immediately.

On the next day three groups planned to get control of Solor. Firstly, Gonçalo and his group succeeded in entering the fort by pretending to visit the church and the friary. They rushed to the house and murdered Br. Melchior, the janitor. The priests jumped from the high walls of the fort and were saved by the villagers outside the fort. The second group, the people of the *sengaji* of Lamakera, had arrived by boat, rushed to the fort, and tried to destroy everything. Andria, who had neglected his duties, had fallen asleep in his house outside the fort. The murderers did not find him and being awakened, he entered the fort by a secret door with a few soldiers and killed most of the intruders. But it was too late. All the buildings inside the walls were in flames, and because of a heavy wind many houses of the Lohayong village next to the fort caught fire also. When the third group, having arrived by boat from Lamakera, heard the signal they rushed to the villages and destroyed whatever they could. All the churches were desecrated, but the fort did not surrender, although it was besieged for some time.

Diogo's rebellion lasted for months and spread to Timor and Flores: The church of S. Maria (Gunung) on Solor was burnt down and its parish priest, Fr. J. Travasso OP, was beaten to death. Even the missionaries at Larantuka and Lewonama had to take refuge. Finally, in March 1599 ships from Malacca arrived and together with many faithful and what was left of the garrison they attacked Lamakera and razed it to the ground. The rebellion was crushed, but the mission was badly damaged. Two thousand Christians of Lamakera became Muslims (again). Diogo and his followers sided with the villages of the *Paji*-group who never again accepted Christianity. Only the village near the fort on Solor and Karmaing on Adonara remained Christian.

The end of the unrest caused by Diogo did not bring peace. On the small Pulau Ende south of Flores Fr. Simão Pacheco OP had gathered a group of Christians (1595). He had convinced the islanders who in previous years had to flee to Flores (about 1570), that they could protect themselves against the terrible Javanese raiders only by building a fort for a small Portuguese garrison. But this would only be possible if they became Christians. The three villages of Numba, Saraboro and Curolallas consented and settled around the new fort. They are said to have numbered about seven thousand people.

Next year the ambitious *atalaki* (headman) Amakera of Mari, a village in Flores opposite Pulau Ende, went to Gowa to gain support for his plans to subdue all of Flores by promising a tribute in gold and a hundred slaves yearly. The pagan king of Tallo (Gowa, Southwest Sulawesi) sent a fleet of 40 ships with 3,000 men under the command of the renegade Christian João Juang (1602). He dared not attack the fort of Solor, but while attacking the village of Sikka on Flores, which refused to hand over its priest, one hundred attackers were killed in a skirmish. The village of Paga paid a ransom. When Fr. Jeronimo Mascarenhas had warned the Christians on Ende and negotiated with João, news arrived that two ships from Solor had taken four of João's ships. He immediately had the friar killed, attacked Ende without success and then crossed over to Timor where he snatched four thousand slaves and sailed home.

Though the attack from Makassar had not reached Ende, thanks to the warnings of Fr. Mascarenhas who lost his life, the people on Ende—Christians and former-Christians—expelled all Portuguese from the island in 1605. We do not know why. In 1616, when Fr. João das Chagas visited Pulau Ende after a nine years absence of any priest, only Numba and Saraboro had remained Christian. All other villages had become again animist or Muslim. The visitor from Goa was received with great joy by two thousand faithful. He learned that three village chiefs were taken by the Dutch Captain A. van der Velde in 1614 on board his yacht, but were handed over to the people of Wolowona on Flores, who murdered them after terrible torture.

In 1614 Dom Cosma, *atalaki* from Sikka, took possession of the fort on Pulau Ende, which had been in Muslim hands since 1605, though the Dutch wanted to destroy it. The Protestant minister Justus Heurnius at the request of the governor general in Batavia visited Ende in 1638, in order to find out if a Protestant mission would be advisable. He advised that a teacher should be posted to the island and reported that roughly a year previously all Portuguese had been killed during a service in the church, because a man serving as translator had molested a local girl.

From the beginning of the seventeenth century there were several complaints about the state of the Solor mission. The king of Portugal wrote in 1604 to the viceroy in Goa instructing him to send more missionaries to Solor, and a year later he complained about the drop in conversions on Solor and Timor. It was claimed that the Dominicans were dealing with material rather than spiritual affairs. Therefore the superiors should send more pious, educated, virtuous, and apostolic workers. In 1607 the bishop of Malacca complained, that the Solor mission was declining because among the missionaries were too many *filhos da India e mestiços* (of Indian or mixed descent) who showed little enthusiasm. Three years later the mission was regarded as nearly extinct. Missionaries were lacking everywhere. Nearly all mission posts on the south coast of Flores had been abandoned between 1606 and 1613.

There are three main reasons for the sad decline. First and foremost was the lack of missionaries. Though between 1562 and 1606 there were some 64 Dominicans in this field, it seems that some of them did not stay long enough to obtain the skills and knowledge necessary in so remote an area. They were allowed to return to their convent in Malacca or Goa after only a four-year term. This regulation (1580) may have been regarded as necessary to maintain the religious standards of the friars, but it made continuous pastoral work very difficult. It prevented forming a paternal relation between the pastors and their flock, which in those days was normal and very necessary. There are no reports on how many stayed for this short term only. In 1613, for example, all seven Dominicans stayed in the Solor convent and from that place visited the different stations. They no longer lived for an extended period in the villages. Certainly only a few Dominicans had a chance to learn the native languages. A kind of Portuguese patois must have been used by many people, because it was kept long after the missionaries had left. Some of them stayed all their life and moved to different places, often difficult and dangerous to reach. The high number of martyrs and casualties prove there was an apostolic and brave spirit among many of them notwithstanding some negative reports.

The second reason is the deep involvement of some friars in worldly, even military, affairs. Because the Solor-Timor missionfield was not regarded as a Portuguese territory until 1702, the administration of finances, support,

transport, soldiers, protection, relation with native rulers and so on were regarded as the church's responsibility and not that of the government. Goa did not want to overextend its responsibility and create a new area of conflict with the Dutch. Though the viceroys of Goa (India) sometimes promised financial support and small military units, both were very unreliable and not of much value. It seems that this military involvement of the friars turned some converted villages into enemies of the mission.

The third reason is an animosity between missionaries born in Portugal and those born in India, who often were mestizos. The question of a local clergy was solved in Vietnam by Fr. A. de Rhodes SJ and by establishing major seminaries of the *Missions Etrangères de Paris* in Asia in the late seventeenth century. In India mestizos quite early became secular priests and were accepted in some orders. But it was difficult for them to achieve higher positions, as was also the case among the Protestant ministers of mixed descent in Batavia and in the Dutch civil service until the nineteenth century.

The mission was already in bad shape in the early years of the seventeenth century, when a major blow was dealt by a new and powerful enemy of the Portuguese and of the Catholics in general, the Dutch VOC. In January 1613 two Dutch ships made their appearance in the Solor archipelago. Muslims and relapsed Christians had asked the Dutch to help them chase away the Portuguese. The garrison of the fort had sailed to Timor to buy sandalwood. The Dutch commander, A. Schotte, threatened to kill everybody if the few defenders would not capitulate quickly. In April a thousand people, among them many women and children, gave up, after all houses had been destroyed by cannon balls or fire. The thirty Portuguese defenders capitulated a little too early; only two days later the garrison returned from Timor, but the fort had already been handed over to the Dutch.

The Portuguese and six Dominicans were allowed to sail with their weapons to Malacca. Only Fr. Agostinho da Magdalena and a few mestizos received permission to cross over to Larantuka, after they had promised not to oppose the Dutch. Fr. Agostinho remained the only missionary in the field for a whole year and his transfer made Larantuka the new centre of the mission, and the oldest Catholic parish still existing in Indonesia today. A small fort was built there in order to offer safety from the Dutch on nearby Solor.

Schotte wrote a report on his successful conquest of the fort on Solor and added a note about the mission.² There were three stations on Solor (Karawatun, Pamakayo, Lewolein) with 150 Catholic families, four mission posts on Adonara (Karmaing, Lewoko, Lewoingo, and Lewonama which actually is on Flores) with about 1,700 families, and on Flores another three

² Tiele 1886-I:12-15.

stations (Sikka, Larantuka, Numba) with 600 Catholic families. This made a total of about 2,450 families or more or less 12,250 Catholics.

Schotte's report is certainly not complete. Calculations were made by Rouffaer who adds, "niet te veel voor een 50-jarige missie" (not too much, even somewhat meagre for fifty years of mission). This may be true for the period of decline. But a few years later (1617), after the visitation carried out by Fr. João das Chagas, about 100,000 Catholics were reported. Though this enormous increase seems to be too high, and may have been intended to move the viceroy in Goa to grant better protection, there must have been a considerable improvement. Collecting all available sources, especially from Antonio de Sá, we may conclude that the following places were Catholic: 1° In Flores (from East to the West, and mostly on the south coast): Tropobelle, Lewonama, Lebao, Gegeh, Larantuka, Waibalun, Mulawato (Bama), Sikka, Paga, Kewa, Lena, Laka, Mari, Tongga and Lambo. On the north coast of Flores: Dondo, Maumere and Krowe. 2° In Adonara: Lamahala, Karmaing, Lewoko, and Lewoingo. 3° In Solor: Lohayong, Karawatun, Lewolein and Pakamayo. 4° On Lembata (Lomben): Lewoleba and Lewotolo. 4° In the Ende region: Numba, Saraboro and Curolallas.³

The hope of the Dutch to gain an important place for trade did not materialise. In 1614 the commander of the fort of Solor, now renamed *Henricus*, A. van der Velde, attacked the Catholic village of Karmaing on Adonara, because it had sided with Larantuka, which under the leadership of Fr. Augustinho had been fortified (Posto) and refused all Dutch calls to surrender. Van der Velde failed and was killed in action. An attack on the fort by the Tupasses of Larantuka under the command of Francisco Fernandez did not succeed either.

A coalition of the Dutch and the 'five shores' (*lima pantai*) of Lohayong, Lamakera, Lamahala (all former 'Christian' villages), Trong and Serbiti—all belonging to the *Paji*-group—did great harm to the mission. But a year later the Dutch did not consider it worthwhile to keep the fort of Solor occupied; they destroyed it and left in December 1615. The first or Solor period of the mission was finished. The second or Larantuka period started in 1614.

Lasting Foundations amidst Great Turmoil, 1614–1660

In 1614 the newly appointed Vicar-General of the Goanese Dominicans, Miguel Rangel OP, learned about the sad situation of the Solor mission. He sent Fr. João das Chagas as inspector, who in 1617 arrived with three young missionaries in Larantuka bringing the number of Dominicans in the field

³ List of names according to Lame Uran 1985:31–32.

up to seven. Das Chagas was 'a man of great virtue, wisdom and activity.' In only seven months he visited all the stations and realised that pastoral care had collapsed and that superstition and polygamy had widely spread even among the faithful of Larantuka.

Chagas cut down a 'holy tree' and introduced penitential processions on all Fridays of Lent. A heavy cross was carried by the leading men through the village. Holy Week was solemnly celebrated with sermons that appealed to deep feelings of penance and strong resolutions to live up to Christian standards. On Maundy Thursday the *mandatum* (ceremonial washing of feet) and the veneration of a 'holy sepulchre' attracted great crowds and many asked for baptism.

Fr. Chagas visited Sikka, Paga, and Pulau Ende where he installed parish priests. Fr. Andrada, who had arrived with him, tells us that he himself had built two churches and baptised or reconciled about three thousand people. The whole mission is said to have increased by thirty seven thousand in these years. There were eleven Christian villages in the whole mission. Andrada recommended that the Dominicans in India should form their own province in order to stop the discrimination against the mestizos. He also stressed the independence of the minor kings of these islands, perhaps to prevent an application of the Portuguese *padroado*, which would have limited the freedom of the Dominicans. Though the people could easily be converted Andrada feared the church would not grow because there was no bishop and too few missionaries to visit all villages regularly. During his time as superior he himself had to take care of twenty-five soldiers, a ship and the necessary ammunition. Several times he led his people to fight the Dutch and their allies.

In 1618 eighteen posts could be filled because more missionaries had arrived. The Dutch reoccupied the fort of Solor (1618–1629) and harassed the Catholic villages, regarding them as 'Portuguese', though politically their kings were independent. Even the sultan of Makassar had renounced his weak overlordship. In general the VOC cooperated closely with Muslim groups who were opposed to the Catholics. In 1620 Larantuka was attacked and the church, seminary, and many of its houses burnt down. But the Dutch were pushed back with heavy losses by Fernandez' local militia. This victory made the people of Larantuka aware that the Dutch had not only political aims but also religious ones: to make them throw off their Catholic faith. The Portuguese viceroys and the captains of Malacca did not care much, and even cautioned them not to harass the Dutch too much. But the Dutch forces were weakened by the desertion of their commander J. Th. Dayman (1624) and his successor Jan d'Hornay (1629) who had left Dutch service. Both men had witnessed the martyrdom of two Dominicans in Lamakera. D'Hornay had made a one year's truce with Larantuka a year before, but later he created much havoc and became a headache for all parties concerned.

In the 1620s Karmaing on Adonara with about a thousand Catholic families moved to the Dutch side and became Muslim (1623). The Goanese Dominicans accused their Portuguese confreres of not taking care of about fifteen mission stations, that had as a result relapsed more or less into paganism. Three Dominicans, Fr. Agostinho da Magdalena, João Bautista and Simão de Madre Dos were tortured by the people of Lamakera and finally decapitated in the presence of Dutch officers, who honourably buried their mutilated bodies (1621).

A new spirit revived the whole church of this isolated area, when Fr. Miguel Rangel OP worked for three years at Larantuka. He had come to India in 1614, but returned to Portugal and Rome in order to attract more missionaries (1619). From 1625 to 1629 he was vicar-general of the province and prior of the convent in Goa. With ten new missionaries he arrived in Larantuka in April 1630. He brought also nine pieces of artillery, just taken as booty in Aceh by the Portuguese. From merchants in Macau, which had good trading relations with Solor and Timor, he collected six more cannons, and he employed five Chinese masons and a gunsmith. Immediately he set out to restore the empty fort on Solor. Too many Dominicans had been killed in those years by the enemies of the mission. They needed a safe resort. Fr. Miguel expected great results for the mission from a strong fort, but may have put too much hope in it. He also opened a school on Solor.

Fr. Rangel said that the people of Solor are normally *candida, e simple ou ruda*. He wrote “a glowing account of Solor, its climate, products and attractions, which he represented as an earthly Eden where only man was vile. The island was famed for its upland rice which did not need the laborious cultivation of the paddy, its prolific sheep, goats and buffalos, its tasty fruits and vegetables, excellent drinking water and healthy air.”⁴ Fr. Rangel certainly had a reason for this song of praise. He wanted people to volunteer for his mission and wipe out its bad reputation. Other contemporary authors extol the prosperity of Solor too. Was its healthiness not proven by Captain Fernandez? This local leader of the native militia was a veteran of over eighty years service! He is believed to have fathered a child at the ripe age of one hundred and thirty years. Fr. M. Rangel, however, had to leave the mission after only three years, because he was appointed bishop of Cochin in India (1633–1646).

In 1630 only two stations had been provided with a resident missionary, the others were only visited occasionally from Larantuka. The Dominicans who had arrived with Rangel were posted on Adonara, in Lewoleba, Lewotolo and Queidao (all on Lomblen), on the small islands of Pantar and Alor, in a place

⁴ Rangel's report was written in 1633 Malacca, published in Lisbon, 1635 and reprinted by De Sá 1959-V:323.

near Kupang and on Rote and Sawu. Six other priests were posted in Larantuka, Sikka, Waibalun (on Flores) and in Numba and Saraboro (on Ende).

Besides Solor, Adonara, eastern Flores and Timor, there were other islands visited by the Dominican missionaries. Fr. Andrada, for example, said in his report about the island of Rote:

The people are good, friendly, and easy to get along with. They can be converted to the Law of God easily, (because) they do not pray to anything and are not superstitious. According to my opinion they are the best people on all these islands. Eight years ago (i.e. in 1621) they came to Larantuka asking for a religious. I went there with Fr. João de Anunciação and many became good Christians.... If there only would be more religious, they all would be Christians within six years.⁵

Fr. Anunciação worked for ten years on Rote (till 1631) and was replaced in 1633 by two other Dominicans. One of them, Fr. Viega stayed only for a short time on Rote, because he could not stand the ‘immoral behaviour’ of these islanders. He stepped into a boat with a young fellow and let the waves decide where to go. He drifted to Amabi on Timor and was well received by the local king and built a church and a school there. He also visited Amarase (south Timor), and then died in Batupute (1640). Though the people of Sawu Island also asked for a priest in 1624, they were only visited by passing missionaries.

These new activities and the vitality inspired by Rangel annoyed the Dutch. With six sails carrying two thousand men, they appeared off the new Solor fort (1636). The Dominican friar in charge answered the demand for surrender by shouting that they would hold as long as possible *tanto mais que so uma morte devo a Deus*: the more so since we owe to God only one death. The Dutch had to sail away without success, but—for unknown reasons—the Dominicans a few weeks later abandoned Solor too. It may have been for lack of money to support the garrison. All weapons and most Christians were moved to nearby Larantuka. The empty fort was repopulated by the Dutch ten years later, in 1646.

Another attack on Larantuka had been beaten off in 1641. A big fleet from Tallo (Makassar) appeared to reinforce Makassarese claim to overlordship on Larantuka which had been weakened by the fall of Malacca. Larantuka refused this claim flatly. During the operation all houses of the small town and the church were burnt down, and the religious images in it desecrated. The people who had fled for the woods suddenly and furiously attacked the Makassarese to revenge the profanation perpetrated by them. The parish priest had revived the spirit of his flock by promising heavenly reward. After having lost three

⁵ Biermann 1959–3:183–185.

hundred people the enemy sailed away. The people of Larantuka attributed their victory to the intervention of their *Renha Rosari* (Queen of the Rosary, patron of Larantuka).

After the raid of 1641, Fr. Jacinto was back again in Mena (Timor) accompanied by two confreres and seventy musketeers, to help the queen. He had visited this harbour a few months earlier without much success. Now, after her villages had just been destroyed by slave hunters from Makassar, the queen of Mena and the nearby kings of Lifao and Amanubau readily accepted baptism. The baptism of the three ‘royals’ and many of their followers around Lifao can be regarded as the beginning of an established church in Timor (1641).

With the help of these new Christians and the musketeers from Larantuka, Fr. Lucas defeated two kings, the one of Servião and that of *Behale* (or *Wehale*), a kind of ‘High-King’ in central Timor. Fr. Jacinto built a simple bulwark in Kupang, whose king was also baptised (1645). When the Dutch heard of this ‘fortification’ they visited the place and reported that the alleged fort was merely a house with three or four persons inside. The friar was blamed by traders from Larantuka for his military initiative because it interfered with their business. He was called back by Goa and had to leave Timor in 1649.

The military expeditions from Larantuka against Wehale, Servião and other petty kingdoms mark the beginning of the temporal ‘Portuguese’ conquest of Timor and the rejection of a domination by Tallo/Makassar, which would have led to an Islamisation of all the islands. The driving forces were the Black Portuguese of Larantuka and later of Lifao on Timor. Most of the Dominicans were Goanese Eurasians and only a few ‘white Portuguese’. Most villages or ‘kingdoms’ were pushed by Larantuka to become Christian. Examples of these are Luka, Amanence, Accao and Amabara.⁶ About twenty-two churches were reported around 1640; ample work for a big group of missionaries that had arrived from Goa. Nearly all kings on Timor were baptised, but instruction did not keep pace. Baptism often meant only to side with Larantuka against Dutch Kupang. About this time the *payao* or Great King of Larantuka, who held a superior position in the whole area, was baptised and named Dom Constantino. Since those days Larantuka became ‘Catholic’ in the sense that being a man of Larantuka meant also being a Catholic, though daily life was quite often not much affected by the new faith. Finally a truce with the Dutch was agreed and stipulated in 1661, “In the Solor Islands the Portuguese own the small fortification and the village of Larantuka, while the Dutch have the right to keep the Fort Henricus. The island of Timor is visited by both nations.”⁷

⁶ Visser 1934:156.

⁷ Visser 1934:157, “Op deijlanden van Solor besitten de Portugiesen ’t fortgen en vleecke Larentucque en de Nederlanders behouden ’t recht van possessie van ’t fort Henricus. ’t Eijlandt Timor wert van beijde natien gefrequentteert.”

At this time the Portuguese did not yet have a settlement in Timor, but their favourite port of call was Lifao (in the enclave of modern Oikussi) on the northern coast. Its native queen was one of Fr. Iacinto's most enthusiastic converts (1641). Larantuka in Flores was still the headquarters and its priest, Fr. A. Cabral OP, was very much respected. Even the head of the Dutch fort in Solor was astonished and wrote, "It is strange that the Portuguese allow their priests to rule in this way."⁸

In 1651 a new mission post was established in Maumere though the people poisoned their first priest. Sometimes it is difficult to find out who was really in control at Larantuka. Around 1650 Lifao became the new centre after the Black Portuguese of Larantuka had arrived there with Fr. Jacinto. They married Timorese women and stayed permanently. Larantuka had lost some of its importance.

During the 1650s the Portuguese from Larantuka and the Dutch from Batavia tried to regain and increase control over 'their' parts of Timor. Both of them used the respective religious leaders to maintain and extend their sphere of influence. After having built the Fort Concordia at Kupang (1653) A. de Vlaming van Oudtshoorn, who in the Moluccas had cruelly and brutally murdered thousands of people in order to defend the VOC's monopoly of spices (1650), attacked the Black Portuguese, but was beaten in an ambush by the old Ambonese Balthasar Gonçalves (1656).

After the truce of 1662 the Dutch tried to get 'their' kings to fight a proxy war against the Larantuka 'Portuguese', to provide slaves (according to a treaty with the Solorese headmen) and to throw out all the Dominicans. Fr. Jordão, for example, was warned and fled to Suai (Senovai) with all the Catholic natives from Amarase who did not follow their king who had switched to the Dutch side. They recuperated and staged a counter-attack themselves. The king had to surrender to his people and their priest. Then the Dutch interfered directly, but were defeated too by the Larantuka musketeers. Finally a great Dutch fleet passed the Straits of Larantuka on its way to Makassar (1660). The people of Larantuka felt threatened, but the Dutch did not attack, though nearly all Larantuqueiros had left for Pulau Ende.

The Solor-Timor mission of the Dominican fathers is rich in priests and laymen, who gave their lives for Christ. There are twenty-seven Dominicans and six indigenous laymen known to us by reliable reports, who were murdered by Muslim villagers or Christians who had resigned their faith. The Dutch killed about five Dominicans because they were religious.⁹

⁸ Visser 1934:158. "tis vreemt dat de Portugesen soodanich hun papen laten regeren."

⁹ A full list in Heuken 2002:156–157. Most of these martyrs are mentioned in the *Agiologio Dominicano*, the book of Dominican saints.

*'Yellow Sandalwood, White Dominicans, Black Portuguese' (1660–1800)*¹⁰

The decades following the show of force by a Dutch fleet in the Solor archipelago were marked not only by the arrival of many Portuguese in Larantuka in the early 1660s, but also by the Luso-Dutch Treaty of 1662, and by the rise of the Black Portuguese to power around Lifao on the north coast of western Timor.

The Catholic community of eastern Flores was reinforced and renewed by the arrival of many Catholic families expelled from Makassar after 1660. Fr. Lucas da Cruz who accompanied them carried the treasures of the Church of 'S. Domingu de Surian' to Flores. Some of these families who had fled from Malacca twenty years earlier (1641) settled down at Larantuka, at Konga, and at Wureh, a village on Adonara facing Larantuka. Even today these settlements are known as Kampong Malaio. These people brought with them many statues, pictures and other church appliances, which they had taken with them from Malacca to Makassar.

Because of a storm two Spanish Franciscans had to go ashore in Larantuka (1670). Later they visited other places on Flores and Timor and wrote a report about their experience to the bishop of Macau. They deplored among other things that the Christians living among heathen no longer knew the commandments of God, except those who lived in a few 'Christian' villages. The priests in Larantuka were not honoured by the Portuguese who were a rough and unruly crowd. If the priests reprimanded public sinners they were humiliated and molested, as for example in Lewonama and Gege by a band of thugs led by A. d'Hornay. During an evening procession in Larantuka in 1670 a well-known person tried to kill the priest because of false rumours. When this person died a few days later his family tried again to kill the parish priest and burn the church. Luckily other villagers succeeded in preventing this emotional reaction.

The two Franciscans had to leave Larantuka secretly, because their Lenten sermons denounced the morals of the local 'Portuguese' too frankly. They visited eastern Timor and worked among the native people there. In areas with a resident missionary the people behaved much better, even though a priest who reproached the attendants at a funeral at Lifao, because they performed heathen rituals, was killed. As late as 1752 an Episcopal letter condemned the heathen practice of human sacrifices in so called Christianised tribes on the occasion of the burial of a *datu*.

In 1679 sixteen Dominicans worked in the Lesser Sunda Islands. Though the friars were too few in number to cover the whole area they refused to

¹⁰ Quotation from Boxer 1948:VIII.

allow the Jesuits or the Franciscans to help them, even though the *Junta das Missoes* in Goa and the bishop of Malacca proposed the assistance of other religious orders (1703, 1707, 1708, 1715). In fact the Dominicans themselves had great difficulties because many of their friars had died. At the end of the seventeenth century their numbers in Asia had dropped to 130 from 310 in 1610. Finally between 1708 and 1722 some Franciscans appeared in the field and supported them. Because the Dominicans were unable to provide enough personnel, the Jesuits and the Oratorians were again invited (1722–1723, 1726). But both orders refused to step in, because the Dominicans actually did not like to share ‘their’ territory. Ecclesiastically the Solor mission came under the jurisdiction of the *padroado*-diocese of Malacca. After the fall of this stronghold to the Dutch (1641), its ‘curia’ moved to Makassar and twenty years later to Lifao.

At the same time in the area of Lifao, a new powerful group had begun to establish itself: the Tupasses also called the Black Portuguese or the Larantuqueiros. Their existence had an indirect influence on the whole Christian population of Timor and on some of the surrounding islands. Two new rival centres had emerged: Lifao and Kupang. The Dutch at Kupang relied on troops from villages in Solor and Adonara belonging to the *Paji*-group. Thus loyalties were divided as in the Moluccas; old regional lines, religious differences and Portuguese-Dutch opposition became mixed.

After the VOC had established itself firmly in Kupang (1653) the Dutch tried to attract many kings to their side. But this process sometimes caused heavy Portuguese sanctions. Dutch soldiers and sailors not seldom deserted to the Portuguese at Lifao. This place on the northern coast of Timor was largely populated by cutthroats. “Not that the Dutch garrison of Kupang were a much more edifying lot, if we are to judge from a visiting official’s description of them in 1665, leading from the highest to the lowest, a very vile and irregular life, both in drunkenness and in whoring, wherein their commander, Culenberg, sets them an example like a true captain!”¹¹

Since 1641 the Dominicans with the help of the Larantuqueiros had begun what may be called the temporal conquest of ‘their’ territory on Timor. The missionaries regarded themselves not only responsible for the spiritual affairs of their flock, but also in a certain way they represented the temporal power. Villages that had become Catholic were often attacked by the Dutch and Muslim powers who regarded them as Portuguese. Not only local kings but also strong raiders from Java and Sulawesi were called to attack the Catholic villages. Though the temporal power of the Solor Mission was not subject to the Portuguese *Estado da India*, it was regarded as part of it. In fact the Portuguese

¹¹ Boxer 1948:190 based on the *Daghregister van Batavia*, 1665:283–287.

government in Goa neglected Timor, because its empire was too extended, and since the beginning of the seventeenth century they were weakened by the Dutch and English who had appeared in these eastern waters too.

Until 1702 the temporal administration of the 'Portuguese' part of the Solor Archipelago was more or less in the hands of the Dominicans or of some mestizos they favoured. These people have been among the most successful opponents of the Dutch in Indonesia. They also felt no obligation to obey the Portuguese government in Goa. On at least two occasions they expelled the king's representatives in a most summary fashion. When William Dampier visited Lifao on a pirate ship in 1699, the place consisted of:

about forty or fifty houses and one church. The houses are mean and low, the walls generally made of mud and wattle, and thatched with palmetto leaves.... They (i.e. the inhabitants) speak Portuguese, and are of the Romish religion, but they take the liberty to eat flesh when they please. They value themselves on the account of their religion and descent from the Portuguese; and would be very angry if a man should say they are not Portuguese. Yet I saw but three white men here, two of which were Padres.¹²

The situation had become muddled after Captain Fernandez had died at Larantuka (1653) and that place got a bad reputation. "Portuguese soldiers, Macaunese traders, Dutch deserters, and Chinese smugglers who made up the male part of Larantuka's lay community"¹³ rivalled each other all the time. These Luso-Asians were all 'loyal' to the Portuguese crown, but strongly resented any interference from its representatives in Macau or Goa.

In 1655 A. d'Hornay had become the captain of a company of militiamen in Larantuka and later was appointed *Capitao-mor de Timor*, which made him the uncrowned king of Timor. But he refused to welcome any official sent by the viceroy in Goa. The monopoly on the sandalwood trade had made him very rich. At his death (1693), the first nominee of the Portuguese government, A. de Mesquita Pimentel, for a short while seized power (1696), but when he exploited the people and murdered two bastard sons of A. d'Hornay, he was expelled. Then the Da Costa clan came to power, with the support of some Dominicans, over all the islands (before 1700) except in Dutch Kupang. About this time Lifao had outstripped Larantuka as the military, political and finally also as the ecclesiastical centre.

Guerreiro, the next governor, was straight away challenged by Domingo da Costa and was not allowed to go on shore at Larantuka. Therefore he transferred the 'government' from Larantuka to Lifao, thereby founding the first official Portuguese settlement on Timor, in 1702. Later Captain da

¹² Boxer 1969:143.

¹³ Boxer 1948:181.

Costa besieged him for four years in the earthen fort of Lifao. Da Costa's Larantuqueiros were supported by Chinese sandalwood smugglers, who enjoyed also the benevolence of the Dutch in nearby Kupang. The governor finally left the island in disgust.

Captain Hamilton, a Calvinist Scots interloper, passing through Kupang, wrote in 1727:

The Portuguese of Macao drove a very advantageous trade to Timor for many years, and finding the natives to be passive Catholics, tried by fair means to get the whole government of the country into the Church's hands, but could not beguile them that way, therefore they tried force, and commenced a war, but to their cost they found that the Timoreans would not lose their liberty for fear of the loss of blood. They chose one Gonsales Gomez their general.¹⁴ He was a native of Timor and had travelled to Macao and Goa. He allowed the king of Portugal to be the sovereign and protector of their country, and they would be his loyal subjects, providing their laws and liberties might be secured to them.¹⁵

There was an atmosphere of violence everywhere. The inhabitants of the island of Kisar, for example, were cruelly made slaves by the Larantuqueiros, who killed two hundred women and children as well as taking away about four hundred people as slaves. The murder of five hundred Rotinese villagers by the Dutch happened also about the same time. The wars on Timor produced large numbers of slaves for the Batavian market, with Kupang as the nearest port of embarkation. Fighting between Dutch and Portuguese native clients was more or less endemic.

In this sad situation the Goanese Dominican Frei Manuel de Santo Antonio worked as an exemplary missionary in eastern Timor. In 1701 he was appointed bishop of Malacca. Because the VOC did not allow a Catholic bishop to reside at Malacca after 1641 the bishop had to move to Timor. After his appointment he incurred heavy criticism from Goa and was accused of being "forgetful of his duties as a prelate, only interested in those of a general or a politician,—a temptation to which many of the clergy succumb." The bishop's trouble started with the excommunication of the rebellious Domingos da Costa. But when Da Costa had made his peace with the next representative of the crown in 1705, the bishop still refused the ex-rebel the sacraments. In 1715 Da Costa even functioned as *governor interinamenta*. However, the bishop still refused the ex-rebel the sacraments and therefore was accused of fomenting fresh rebellion on the island.

When in 1722 the matter came to a head, the bishop was arrested, because of his alleged support of the 'rebel' Tupasses of Francisco d'Hornay. He was deported to Macau, and from there to Goa, where he quarrelled with the

¹⁴ This must be a mistake for Da Costa or d'Hornay.

¹⁵ Boxer 1948:186–187.

archbishop-patriarch until his death in 1733. The strong action taken by the governor in deporting the bishop did not change the situation. F. d'Hornay plotted with some native chiefs and they sealed their conspiracy with the sacrificial slaughter of a black and a white dog, symbol of the black-white habit of the Dominicans. After drinking the dog's blood mixed with their own, they murdered two missionaries in the interior and burned down several churches.

The successor of Mgr. Manuel died in Lifao in 1743, only thirty-eight years old. In 1748 the missionary Gerardo de St. José OP was appointed and ordained in Macau, and the church of Lifao was declared the (pro-)cathedral of the Diocese of Malacca. In the early 1760s Fr. Jacinto da Conceição OP arrested the governor of Timor and sent him to Goa. Mgr. Gerardo was appointed his successor, but died within a few days. It seems that he was poisoned by Fr. Jacinto. From the succession letters, which he had unlawfully opened, he had learned that he was chosen to replace the governor if he died. Fr. Jacinto ruled so tyrannically that the people rebelled and he was killed by a white Portuguese. No bishops of Malacca were appointed after this, but Episcopal vicars sometimes took over the office of acting-governor of Timor. Most of them died after a short time in office. At that time most of the church buildings were in a deplorable state: without doors, dirty, empty, and inhabited by chickens, pigs, and goats. Another governor legalised the 'revolutionaries' in order to establish some kind of peace, but in vain. Local wars and raids amongst the turbulent chieftains of Timor could hardly be stopped, because of the decentralised and tribal state of society. No strong regional authority had yet developed among the more than sixty petty kings and chiefs of the Bellos and Servião regions.

The Dutch at Kupang, who originally controlled little more territory than what was within the range of the cannons of Fort Concordia, gradually extended their influence over the neighbouring chieftains. On western Timor the claims of the Portuguese receded. Between 1729 and 1731 a coalition of Black-Portuguese and tribal warriors fought openly against the Dutch governor and his Chinese and European soldiers. The most powerful men in the island were the Black Portuguese families of d'Hornay and Da Costa. A mass attack of their Larantuqueiros on Kupang not only failed completely in 1749, but they were totally beaten at Penfui on the ninth of November that year by a small Dutch detachment and a crowd of allied tribesmen. Since that victory the Dutch gained more and more influence in western Timor and Catholic mission work became impossible in that part of the island.

A viceroy in Goa remarked sarcastically about the Timorese, "They are model subjects because they recognise the sovereignty of their legitimate monarch, as long as they are governed by men who oppress them in every possible way although without means to enforce their authority; model Christians because

they still acknowledge evangelical truths, without having pastors who guide them.”¹⁶

How did the church manage in this turbulent time? No reports tell us about the ordinary faithful. The Dutch historian P. van Dam states (1701) in his official account on the VOC, that the successes of the Portuguese were due “to their priests and clergy having got most of the natives on their side; and having thus secured a great advantage over us, they have then been able to reap the full benefits.” A request of the heads of households assembled in Larantuka (1667) sounded even more positive about the Dominican fathers, “These are they who taught our grandparents and ancestors, and who now teach us and our children; we were brought up by them; it is not right that we should abandon them and take others in their place, since they have fulfilled the duties of their office with due satisfaction.” The situation could not have been too bad, because, for example, in 1747 a second minor seminary was opened in Manatuto, the one at Lifao not being sufficient anymore.

These positive evaluations contrast with the general decline in numbers of all friars in Asia. This quantitative decline went along with a decrease in obedience, religious life and missionary spirit in the 18th century. Another viceroy commented (about 1750) that the fruit of the labours of the Dominicans “was not so much that which they gathered in the vineyard of the Lord, as that which they begat in the freedom and licence in which they lived.” And the bishop of Malacca admonished the clergy, “not to maintain women of dubious character under the common pretence that they were housekeepers,” a complaint of long standing. In the early eighteenth century the Dominican superior at Goa could only reply that “the native women were exceedingly lascivious and they all came to the vicars’ houses, principally the young ones, both by night and day, leaving the clergy with no other remedy but flight from their own homes.”¹⁷

The whole archipelago had become a hotbed of endless quarrels, expeditions, raids and even cruel wars not so different from what had been common in the Moluccas a century earlier. The missionaries had not only to protect their own lives, because there was no public authority acknowledged in the whole area, but had also to guard their faithful. Because the natives often did not dare to fight against Europeans on the Dutch side, some friars had to walk at the head of ‘their’ troops in order to instil them with bravery. This necessity certainly did not benefit their clerical state, but there was no other choice if they were to survive. Boxer’s severe judgment on the Dominicans in this respect may be too hard and influenced by the pronouncements of the governors in Goa

¹⁶ Boxer 1948:193–194.

¹⁷ Boxer 1948:197. See the very severe remarks of P. de Rego Barreto about abuses, quoted by Biermann 1924:271.

and later at Dili, who often had an aversion to the Dominicans. They had to defend themselves from the charge of covering up the use of mission funds for their own purposes and for never paying their debts. Some governors had a bad reputation and the missionaries, who supported the people and not the government officials, opposed their politics.

In the last decades of the eighteenth century the white Portuguese administration was more or less in the hands of crooks and practically did not function. Therefore the administration of Lifao and the surrounding area was left again to the Dominicans. The rival d'Hornay and da Costa clans had reached a 'truce' by rotating the headship of the Larantuqueiro forces among representatives of the two clans. An attempt by A. von Pluskow, Dutch *Opperhoofd* at Kupang, to get a hold on Lifao failed and he himself was killed in 1761. In 1769 the white Portuguese Governor A.J. Telles de Meneses foolishly murdered twenty-three emissaries of the Black Portuguese. He was besieged in the Lifao fort for a year and finally destroyed it and sailed away to the east. He chose the unhealthy village of Dili as his new residence (1771–1772), at least far enough away from Lifao and Larantuka, the centres of his 'loyal' black brethren.

During the second half of the eighteenth century the situation of the mission on Timor and Flores deteriorated. The growth had stopped. There were only eight missionaries in the whole area between 1754 and 1804. But only one priest was left about 1811 to look after all of Timor and eastern Flores until he died in 1817. Some priests appeared for a short time, but could not do much to stop the re-paganisation. After 1800 there was no parish priest anymore in Larantuka. In 1818 the archives of Larantuka were destroyed by fire in Dili. In 1834 the Dominicans were expelled from Timor as well as from all other Portuguese territories. For some years no priest worked in the whole Solor-Timor mission. Later the archbishop of Goa sent secular priests because the Diocese of Malacca had been suppressed by Rome (1838)¹⁸ and united with Goa. A travelling missionary, who resided on eastern Timor, periodically visited only Larantuka, Lela/Sikka, and some other places.

In 1856 Fr. Gregorio M. Baretto, who was born on Timor, wrote a report and stated among other things that around former Lifao, now Oikussi, and Noimuti about five hundred Catholics were left, who for years had been visited only now and then. In Larantuka the old *Confreria Reinha Rosari* and the raja tried hard to keep the faith alive. The local king regarded himself as the worldly representative of the heavenly *Renha*, the real 'Queen' of Larantuka. When the Dutch Fr. C. de Hesselle visited Larantuka in 1853, from Batavia,

¹⁸ The so-called Goanese Schism (1831–1886) made Rome suppress the non-functioning Malacca Diocese (1558–1834) and Timor was placed directly under Goa (1834) and later under Macau (1874–1940).

he still met about three thousand Catholics there and some thousands more in other places in eastern Flores.

Crosses that often had been erected by the Dominicans to show that a village had become Christian were still kept in some villages till the 1920s. Many natives still vaguely remembered the explanation of the cross as a sign of salvation and protection against evil given by the friars. During the period of decline in the 19th century these crosses may have been regarded also as magic symbols against illness, bad harvest, war and other calamities. Baptismal rituals and processions during Holy Week (including decoration of a cross) were still held by villagers near Mena and Noimuti (central western Timor). During the long period without catechetical instruction some abuses crept into the ceremonies even in Larantuka, because they were no longer understood till intensive evangelisation was begun again after the 1860 by Dutch diocesan clergy and Jesuits.

Amidst all these sad tidings there is something remarkable about the people of *Nusa Tenggara Timur*: Although nearly always in rebellion against the representative of the Portuguese crown, and left for decades without a missionary visiting them, let alone living among them, they never thought of throwing off their allegiance to Portugal and the Catholic Church.

Finally Portugal had become so weak that it resigned its claims on all islands except East Timor (and the enclaves of Oikussi and Noimuti). Uncertain boundaries made it desirable for the Netherlands and Portugal to define 'their' territories. After long discussions (from 1851) a treaty was prepared. Fr. Gregorio from Dili reminded the Catholics on Flores, "You may change the flag, but absolutely not your faith!" This reminder made them suspicious even towards the first Dutch Catholic priests, fearing that they did not belong to the 'old faith'.

The question of freedom of religion for the native Catholics on Flores and Timor led to the first Luso-Dutch Treaty (1854) that was rejected by the Dutch parliament because it only guaranteed freedom of Catholic worship. It asked for the same formulation concerning the Reformed Church members in the Dutch enclave of Mancatar, which became a Portuguese area, though there was not a single Protestant resident. A new treaty was signed in Lisbon in 1859, which promised freedom of religion in all parts exchanged between the two countries.

The missionaries of the sixteenth century had not yet developed a theory or method of missionary work. Nobody had experience and the people they encountered were completely unknown to them. The different languages, their customs, another mentality and above all their beliefs were not only unknown but also often incomprehensible. They had to proceed by trial and error. In general, they tried to win the headmen and the petty 'kings', who actually were heads of several kampongs. Then their people would follow. Preparation for

baptism was often quite short and summarily given. Instruction was always given, but there was no extended catechumenate to grow in faith and Christian living. Baptisms of the nobility were celebrated with great solemnity to impress the people. They received Portuguese names that they passed on proudly in their families until today. The missionaries travelled from place to place, but did not stay permanently in a village. They were too few and felt a need for community life in a convent on Solor or later at Larantuka.

Children were given better instruction so that they might pass on what they had learned to the older generation. In some places a school was established, for example in Solor, in West Timor and a minor seminary in Larantuka and later in Lifao, which did not produce an indigenous clergy but convinced laymen. A few young men were sent to a kind of Jesuit college at Malacca (e.g. Dom Cosma of Sikka).

As has been told above, the visitor Fr. João das Chagas introduced solemn celebrations, processions and devotions, which appealed to the people and were honoured through long priestless times. During these periods the confraternities of the Rosary in several places, but above all the *Confreria Renha Rosari* of Larantuka, played an eminent role in keeping the faithful together and their faith alive, though sometimes under the ashes of animistic notions.

An unavoidable burden of the Solor mission was the exercise of worldly power by the friars, because until 1702 Portugal did not want to be responsible for the archipelago as part of its vast sea-borne empire. This attitude saved a lot of trouble and finances for the crown, but overburdened the mission and blurred its religious aims. The friars were often involved in direct fighting and were therefore regarded as enemies by the Muslims and the Dutch. The Dominicans had to build a defence system against the raiders from inside and outside the archipelago. In this they had taken too heavy a responsibility, which in the long run spoiled their apostolic work and even some of the Dominicans themselves.

There is no place in Asia where a religion prospered without the support of a worldly power. When protection was withdrawn from the young churches of China, Japan, Vietnam and Eastern Indonesia, they suffered tremendously and nearly all were destroyed in bloody persecutions. The Catholics of the Moluccas and the Lesser Sunda Islands during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries paid a heavy tribute too. But this little plant proved viable even under severe conditions, and after decades of renewed ‘incubation’ since the 1860s it grew quickly into a majority religion in the twentieth century in Flores and Timor, now sending ‘domestic’ missionaries to many parts of Indonesia and abroad, but this later period will be subject of discussion in later chapters.

Adolf Heuken SJ

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CHAPTER FIVE

THE ARRIVAL OF PROTESTANTISM AND THE CONSOLIDATION OF CHRISTIANITY IN THE MOLUCCAS 1605–1800

Around 1600 the period of the vibrant spread of Islam and Christianity came almost to an end. In western Indonesia Gayoland, in inland Aceh, accepted Islam about 1700. The southern Batakland became Muslim in the aftermath of the Padri-movement (1803–1838). These were two inland developments, but in the coastal regions of Sumatra the decisive movements towards Islamisation had been completed about 1600. The same can be said of the central islands of Kalimantan (Dutch Borneo) and Java. It was only in East Indonesia that Islam still made some progress in the seventeenth century: Makassar and the south of Sulawesi accepted Islam in the first decade of the seventeenth century, Bima (in the island of Sumbawa) not much later. That was the end of nearly two centuries of successful Islamisation of many regions of Indonesia. We may ascribe this break to the influence of the VOC that carried out a quite effective policy of containment of Muslim rulers. The VOC also stopped the traffic between West Sumatra or Malaysia and Eastern Indonesia. Even for the people who went on the pilgrimage to Mecca conditions for travelling became more difficult.

All these elements contributed to a slowing down of the expansion of Islam, but this was not balanced by an increase in the growth of Christianity. In fact the spread of Christianity also was slow and uncertain during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. This was mostly due to the special character of the VOC as a trading company.

The VOC as an outspoken Christian ruler: its pastoral obligations

In the first contract of the VOC no article on religion was included. In 1623, at the renewal of this *octrooi*, formulated by the highest authority in the Netherlands the *Staten-Generaal*, the religious duties of the VOC were formulated for the first time. Some argue that religion was simply forgotten in 1602,¹ others stress the changing conditions in the 1620s. The VOC had started as a trading company, but in its first two decades it developed into a colonising institution as well. The first contract was based on a short stay

¹ Van Boetzelaer 1947:4, “dit moet een onwillekeurig verzuim zijn geweest.”

overseas, just sufficient to buy enough commodities. Between 1605 and 1619 the fortification in Ambon was its main settlement. But the VOC established its headquarters in Batavia in 1619 and settled firmly in factories in Bantam, Banda, Ternate, Ambon and other places. Besides, the victory of the orthodox wing of the Reformed Church during the Dordrecht Synod (1618–1619) also had strengthened the duty of the state “to maintain the sacred service of the church, to prevent and eliminate every form of idolatry and false religion.” This religious conscience, besides the new emphasis on permanent centres in the world of Asia, may have led to the insertion of the religious duty in the preamble of the VOC charter of 1623. It has to be stressed, however, that the VOC in its personnel never was restricted to Reformed people. Not only among the common soldiers and marine personnel, but even among governors general some Lutherans and Catholics were found besides a smaller number of Armenians and Mennonites as traders. The VOC could not really behave as a strict Reformed body. Different from the articles of the charter for the West Indies Company (WIC), where the company was given the task of proclaiming the knowledge of God to the inhabitants of Brazil, the VOC was given in the preamble only the general obligation to “maintain the public faith.”²

The pastoral and missionary duty of taking care of proper religious duties was already formulated in private instructions to the first two Governors General, Pieter Both (1609) and Gerard Reynst (1613). They had to “promote the eastern trade in service of the propagation of the name of Christ, the blessing of the non-Christians.” They “must nominate for their places without delay the ministers and teachers who join the fleet in order to stay in the Indies. You have to look after them, so that they will perform their duty the best they can.”³

In some districts of its vast territory, the VOC indeed supported quite outspoken missionary activities, but in most of its regions it restricted itself to pastoral care for Christian communities, mostly European, but also some Asian. The most spectacular, although in time quite restricted, missionary activities were in Taiwan. Between 1627 and 1662 a considerable number of people were baptised. Not less than thirty ministers served this mission, until this experiment was terminated by the invasion of a warlord from mainland China, Zheng Chenggong (Koxinga).⁴ There was also a quite impressive missionary endeavour in Ceylon, where the Dutch tried to transform the converts

² Koolen 1993:24.

³ Articles 10 and 13 of the instruction to Pieter Both, after Koolen 1993:25. Also in Enklaar 1947:35.

⁴ Kuepers 1978.

of the preceding Catholic mission into faithful Reformed Protestants.⁵ In the major area of their activities, the Indies, there was much less overt religious activity. Here the VOC was only willing to provide pastoral service to those who were already Christian, and to contain the further expansion of Islam. This may have had practical as well as religious reasons. As to the practical reasons, the expansion of VOC influence in Taiwan and Ceylon was strengthened by the loyalty of the new Reformed citizens in territory that was directly ruled by the VOC. In the Indies this directly ruled territory was restricted to the southern region of the small islands of Ambon and Lease, while on the tiny island of Banda the whole territory was under VOC control. For the rest, the territories where in 1600 most spices were grown were under Muslim rule. Gradually, during the first half of the seventeenth century, the growth of spices, especially cloves, in Halmahera and other territories under the influence of the sultanates of Ternate and Tidore, was destroyed and transplanted to the 'Christian' regions of Ambon and neighbouring Lease islands. But this was done gradually and no efforts were undertaken to evangelise the Muslims of this region. As we will see below, there were even various agreements with Muslim rulers in this region that the religious boundaries between Christians and Muslims would be respected and that people who tried to convert from Christianity to Islam or *vice-versa* would be denied admission by the respective communities.

There was, however, besides the more practical reasons, also a more fundamental hesitation amongst VOC leaders to propagate Reformed Christianity. First, the Dutch *Heeren XVII* or the seventeen commissaries of the VOC were mostly broad minded aristocrats rather than orthodox Reformed leaders. Second, the Reformed tradition from the time of John Calvin did not really stimulate foreign missions. For Calvin himself the 'apostolate' was restricted to the times of the apostles and this missionary duty was not extended to the following generations. But there were other voices. In the Netherlands there were some theologians who voiced their conviction that it was a Christian duty to preach the gospel. One of them was Justus Heurnius, born in 1587, who had finished his medical study in 1611 at Leiden university. In 1615 he had begun his study of theology in Groningen, the Netherlands, and published in 1618 a 300 page treatise on the "Necessity to Preach the Gospel in the Indies." For Heurnius the Catholic mission had failed and therefore God had now given the Protestants the opportunity to spread the true message of Christian doctrine. Heurnius arrived in Batavia in 1624 and worked in the Indies until 1639.⁶

⁵ Van Goor 1978.

⁶ Koolen 1993:51–52.

The strongest restrictions against a dynamic missionary spirit came from the strict theologians at the national Synod of Dordrecht (1618–1619) where the liberal followers of Arminius were declared heretical because they did not acknowledge God's eternal and absolute decrees of predestination. In this synod also a question was discussed, sent by the Batavia minister A. Hulsebos, whether children born from parents who were not Christian could be baptised? In fact the question was about children of VOC personnel who had a 'housekeeper', either a non-Christian free woman or a slave, with whom they had children. Could a child born from this relationship be baptised? The Dordrecht Synod gave as its answer that such children could not be baptised at a young age. Only as adults and after sufficient education and at their own request could baptism be administered to them. In the motivation for this denial that was repeated again and again during the two VOC centuries, two elements were mixed. On the one side there was the irregular relation that led to children who were born outside legal marriage. Therefore the moral argument was given against people who had no proper marriage bond but nevertheless had a sexual relationship. The other reason was a theology of baptism that considered the sacrament as a confirmation of membership of the covenant between God and His chosen people. In most ways this membership was acquired through descent from a Christian couple.

Only in the period 1620–1630 was there some support in the Netherlands for the ideas of the major architect of Dutch colonialism in the seventeenth century, Jan Pieterszoon Coen (born 1586), founder of the major Dutch settlement Batavia in 1619, and from 1618 until his death in 1629 governor general of the VOC in the East Indies. Coen propagated the idea to send also Dutch women to the Indies. However, after 1630 very few Dutch women came to the colony and it therefore quickly developed as an endeavour led by mostly Eurasian people of mixed origin.

When Coen died in 1629 the capital Batavia was under siege of Mataram troops. Although they could not occupy the town, all surrounding lands were still under Mataram rule. Quite a few soldiers and tradesmen were taken captive. Between 1648 and 1654 embassies were sent to Mataram to regulate relations. Rijkloff van Goens, the chief ambassador, was permitted to take home some prisoners and also their children, whom Javanese women had borne them during their imprisonment. In 1651 Van Goens returned from a journey to Mataram and brought along a boy who had been born from such a relationship, between a Javanese women and a Dutchman. This Dutchman had been imprisoned and was said "to have been circumcised by the Javanese and to have renounced Christ." After Van Goens promised that he would give the boy a proper education, the child was allowed to be baptised "not primarily on account of the child's father, who was supposed to have renounced his faith, but on account of his believing forefathers, in whom also this boy is

sanctified and accepted.”⁷ Christian faith was an immediate relationship to a covenant between God and an elected people, the Dutch Protestant community. In the coming pages we will see some aspects of the theocratic character of the Dutch colonial empire. There was no outspoken *apartheid* involved in the restriction put on the missionary character of Dutch Protestantism (as was the case in twentieth century South African Protestant politics, resulting also from the same blend of Dutch Reformed Protestantism), but there was a clear connection between ethnicity and religion and this was in practice an important restraint for the missionary activities of Reformed Christians in this period. As was indicated in the foundational charter of 1623, the VOC saw as its duty “the conservation of the public faith,”⁸ no less and no more: Reformed Christianity was the leading religion in all settlements where VOC personnel would have the ultimate authority.

For the implementation of its pastoral duties, the VOC was a well-organised, cognisant and generous employer. During these two centuries not less than 900 ordained ministers were sent to its territory and many more lower ranking religious officials, such as the *krankbezoekers* or *ziekentroosters* (respectively visitors or comforters of the sick). These latter, however, were most active on the ships, where most of the sick and dead were to be found. Even more important was the nomination of native teachers, sacristans and guardians of churches, who kept Christianity alive in the East Indonesian territories where the VOC inherited large numbers of Christians from the Jesuit and Dominican missions undertaken by the former Portuguese authority. In fact the number of academically trained and ordained expatriate (Dutch or German) ministers never was very large. But it was stable and supported by the solid administration of the VOC. The ordained ministers who were assigned to permanent posts were for the various years as follows:⁹

Ordained ministers	1625	1650	1675	1700	1725	1750	1775
Batavia	2	3	7	8	10	12	9
Moluccas (i.e. Ambon, Lease and Ternate)	3	4	6	5	9	2	2
Banda	2	2	2	2	1	1	–
Other places of the East Indies (Timor, later also Semarang)	–	2	5	3	3	5	4
Total	7	11	20	18	23	20	15

⁷ Mooij 1927–1931–II:203.

⁸ “Conservatie van het publieke geloof,” after Koolen 1993:23–24.

⁹ Adapted from the statistics of F.A.van Lieburg in: Schutte 2002:87.

From these statistics it is clear that the largest number went to the colonial head-quarters in the mixed European/Eurasian town of Batavia. A relatively large number went to the small Eurasian community of nutmeg-growers on the Banda islands. The largest native Christian community of Ambon got a fair allocation, but in fact much less than the mixed Eurasian community of Batavia.

Ambon and Lease

For the small but already stable pockets of Christians in East Indonesia the arrival of the Dutch trading company was the end of Catholic growth. When the first Dutch fleet arrived in Ambon, in February 1605, Admiral Steven van der Haghen, promised free exercise of religion to the Portuguese priests and their flock, but Frederik de Houtman, the first governor of Ambon (1605–1611), deemed it necessary to expel all Portuguese, including the clergy, a few months later, in May 1605. The Ambonese understood that the Dutch had a different religion from that of the Portuguese. Had they not thrown down the holy images and removed the crosses?¹⁰

From 1605 on the VOC sent sick-comforters and ordained ministers to Ambon. The first was Johan Stollenbecker who served as a minister between 1605 and 1609. Johannes Wogma, was nominated as a first teacher to start a Dutch-language school. The choice of this language was dictated by the wish of Cornelis Matelieff to reduce the influence of Portuguese, still the language of communication between the local population and the Dutch. Most of Wogma's pupils probably came from mixed Portuguese-Ambonese offspring, living close to the castle. At the instigation of Frederik de Houtman who had already translated a short catechism and some basic prayers into Malay, this school used in part also Malay. After Wogma's death the school was led by another Dutchman, Hendrik Tack. Gillis Hendriks was the last teacher. When he died in 1616 the school, already ailing, was closed and the experiment of a Dutch-language training within the compound of the Ambon castle had proved not to be really successful.¹¹ In this period the Muslims of northern Ambon, Hitu, were very active. In 1616 the majority of the village Nussanive next to the castle Victoria crossed over the bay to the north, to live there as Muslims.¹²

Like with the Portuguese, also Dutch personnel often served for a short period. Caspar Wiltens (born 1584 in Antwerp) was already the third or

¹⁰ Van Boetzelaer 1947:13; Keuning 1982:372–375.

¹¹ For this school, Koolen 1993:154–156.

¹² Keuning 1982:375.

fourth ordained minister to work in Ambon. He arrived in East India probably in late 1611 and worked first in Bacan and Banda before he was nominated for Ambon in 1614. He continued the efforts to develop the Dutch-language school in Ambon, and also worked on a Dutch-Malay dictionary. When he died in Ambon on 8 January 1619, he had already a gifted colleague, Sebastiaen Danckaerts, who had arrived in Banten in late 1616. After one year of training in Malay, he arrived in Ambon 2nd January 1618. Although he only worked in Ambon until 1622, he was the first to really concentrate on the native Ambonese Christians. He translated his sermons into Malay with the help of an Ambonese teacher.

Danckaerts initially hoped to establish a Dutch-language school in Ambon and even received some twenty Dutch-speaking pupils from Batavia toward this goal. But soon it became clear to him that the future for Ambonese Protestant Christianity was in the further education of the local leaders, commonly called *mèster* after the Dutch *meester* for a teacher. It is not known how the situation was in the villages outside the town of Ambon in the period 1605–1620. Were there still native teachers, continuing some education and prayer services? Besides the formal but not so effective Dutch-language school in the castle, Danckaerts was giving private education to several local native teachers until 1622. After him Justus Heurnius (working between 1624 and 1632 in Batavia and after that year until 1638 in the Ambon region) was known for his dedication to the further education of native schoolteachers. Compared to the very small number of ordained ministers, the numbers of teachers grew quickly: from 32 schools with 1,200 pupils in 1633 to 46 schools and 3,600 pupils in 1680 and finally 54 schools with 5,190 pupils in 1700. The schoolteacher became the backbone of Ambonese Christianity.¹³

Ambonese Christianity was based on a local school, where the teacher was also the leader of the Sunday morning service. The *mèster* read a Malay sermon and officiated as leader of prayers and singing. Three times a week, Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday, the teacher also officiated at evening prayers. Ideally a school was visited several times a year by the ordained minister. In the seventeenth century Ambonese Christianity developed a special ceremony for such a visit which lasted one or two days. At the beach or boundary of the village the minister and his following were welcomed by the community and in procession people went to the church for the first prayers and a first sermon. The school was visited, children and their teachers examined, baptism and marriages were administered and especially those people who were on the list

¹³ Knaap 1987:85; Niemeijer 2002:129–130; Koolen 1993:157–160. On Heurnius also Niemeijer 1999.

to be admitted to Holy Communion were scrutinised.¹⁴ Contact between the centre and the periphery not only took place during the pastoral visits of the ministers to the outer villages. According to the constitution of the church of Ambon of 1673 the teachers were ordered to come to the central town every two weeks or at least every month for consultation, classes and examination.¹⁵ These visits took place during the regular market-day. The *mèster* had to pay a fine of one *rijksdaalder* if he did not come without good reason. However, it may be supposed that many teachers liked to come to Ambon on the market day also to sell some of their produce and to buy other things.¹⁶

In the places where an ordained minister was stationed (a few places in Ambon and also for some time in Saparua), it was quite common that there was a public order to attend church services. Danckaerts noted around 1620 that, “these people here call themselves Christians, but still seek secretly the devil, while they think that they affirm their confession by eating pork. Many of them indeed come to church on Sunday, but this is more a matter of compulsion than of conviction because they will be fined a quarter of a *real* if they do not come.”¹⁷ Even where there was only a *mèster* to officiate at church service such fines could be imposed, as was also the practice in Muslim villages. The money was for the village chief and the sexton. This, of course, could also lead to abuse and therefore it was abolished in 1689 by Governor De Haas.¹⁸ In 1692 minister Van der Vorm complained that only the school children and the village chief and his wife attended Sunday service.¹⁹

Like the Portuguese, the Dutch had come to the Moluccas for the spices. Ternate was until the 1560s not only the major market for cloves, it was also an important farmland for this precious product. After the clash between the Portuguese and the people of Ternate in the early 1570s, Ambon was founded as a Christian town. After Dutch rule became more and more stable in the seventeenth century, they concentrated the production of cloves in the Christian territories of the southern districts of Ambon and the Lease islands. The VOC not only tried to obtain the monopoly of trade, but also of the production of cloves. In 1623 the last British citizens in Ambon were accused of treason and executed. From 1625 on there were yearly conflicts with the Muslims of South Seram and North Ambon (Hitu). This resulted in the violent suppression of Hitu (1642–1646) and the nearly total depopulation of South Seram (Hoamoal) between 1651 and 1656. The direct rule of the

¹⁴ For a description of such pastoral travelling and the problems involved see Niemeijer 2002a:132–142.

¹⁵ Knaap 1987:91.

¹⁶ Niemeijer 2002a:136.

¹⁷ Quoted after Niemeijer 2002a:129.

¹⁸ Knaap 1987:88.

¹⁹ Niemeijer 2002a:142.

VOC, that was initially restricted to the town of Ambon and soon thereafter to the Christian villages on the islands of Ambon and Lease, was extended more and more to the coastal regions of the Northern Moluccas, including Seram and Buru. But the VOC had to deal more directly with the Christian population than with the Muslim territories.

The boundaries between Christian and Muslim territories were already fixed in Ambon and the Lease islands about 1650 and few conversions took place after that time. But in Seram, Buru and other islands, there was still territory to occupy for the two major religions. In the 1640s G. Demmer (1642–1647) and A. de Vlaming (1647–1650) were the governors. Demmer wrote proudly in 1647 that during the five years of his rule more than a thousand couples were formally married and more than 4,500 children baptised. His successor, De Vlaming also stimulated church marriage: for sexual relations before marriage a fine of three years prison and 200 *rijksdaalders* was set.²⁰

Also for the conversion to Christianity by people of traditional religion, the VOC government had its strategy. After the submission of Hoamoal, the Ternatean stronghold on South Seram in 1656, various efforts were made for the spread of Christianity. Governor Hurdt took a special initiative in 1674, immediately after a big earthquake accompanied by a serious flood. People from Kaibobo, living in Haruku after an earthquake, were allowed to return to South Seram after they had accepted Christianity. In 1675 a campaign began on the southern coast of Seram in the village of Kamarian with the destruction of the ‘devil’s altars’ and the invitation to the population to embrace Christianity. A *mèster* was sent to the village and some people who opposed his proposals were deported to Victoria Castle in Ambon, where they ‘truly converted.’ In 1677 there was a collective baptism of the population of Kamarian, where governor Hurdt himself was present. The VOC had sent two cows and 4,500 kilos of rice for the festive meal after the baptisms, where also pagans and Muslims joined the celebration. The governor on that occasion also gave cloths to the new Christians “in order to arouse honest jealousy among the pagans living in the region.”²¹

The conversion of Kamarian was no exception, especially not during the last decades of the seventeenth century, a period during which the Dutch rule was extended more and more, after the Spanish had left their last strongholds in Ternate in 1663, and a revolt against the Dutch had failed in 1679 and ended in the temporary exile of Sultan Sibori (1681–1683). After these events the power of Ternate was broken and the Dutch could continue the double policy of containment of Islam and further spread of Christianity in pagan villages.

²⁰ Niemeijer 2002a:134–135.

²¹ Knaap 1987:90–91.

During the last decades of the seventeenth century the villages of Seruawan, Hatusua, Rumakay and Tihulale in South Seram accepted Christianity. The southern coast of Seram as far as it belonged under the Residency of Haruku, was still totally pagan in 1670, but twenty years later more than 70% were Christian. Also Piru and Lakamay, coastal villages in the northeast of the bay opposite Hoamoal, converted to Christianity. But shortly after their conversion, the new church and school were destroyed and the most prominent Christian of Piru, Abraham Kéan, was murdered. This action was again followed by a military expedition from Victoria Castle in Ambon. About 1690 it was estimated that about 15% of the population of South Seram had pledged to follow Christianity.²²

There was no action to attract Muslims as a group to Christianity. The VOC only took the position that those who were not yet Muslim, should be discouraged from embracing this religion. In the Ambonese village of Waai, where by about 1620 half of the Christian population had embraced Islam, the Dutch took firm action. The mosque was burnt down and the renegades were summoned to return to their former Christian faith.²³ Part of this containment policy was the removal of the growth of spices, especially cloves, to the 'Christian territories' of Ambon and Lease. This made the contact of the VOC with the Muslim regions of quite a different nature from their contact with the Ambonese. We should, however, not exaggerate the influence of VOC trade on Ambonese society. Clove production provided the major cash income, but was not the major livelihood for Ambonese or Moluccans in general. In fact cloves were produced to buy some extra, luxury goods. The basic economy was still a subsistence one with some rice, but mostly palm-trees, sago-trees, hunting and fishing as its basis.²⁴

The formal conversion to Christianity did not mean a total change in the life and rituals of the new Christians. The *mèster* became the centre of the Christian community, with church and school, Sunday services and some prayer meetings in evenings during the week. There were baptisms, the celebration of marriages and of Holy Communion on the occasion of the visit of the ordained minister from Ambon. The *mèster*, however, was most often not a native of the village he served: he was educated in the central town of Ambon and in a foreign language, Malay, and was nominated and paid by the central government. For many situations in daily life, on the occasion of birth, marriage, burials, harvest, earthquakes or other natural disasters, it was still the traditional religion that often was resorted to. As in so many places in the world, we can notice two religious systems in Ambon, quite separated, living

²² Knaap 1987:91.

²³ Knaap 1987:78.

²⁴ Knaap 1987:172-189.

side by side. This is often labelled the *agama Ambon*, Ambonese religion, a mixture of Christianity or Islam and traditional religion.

Reports from the seventeenth century show a continuing struggle of ministers and *mèster* against what they considered to be superstition or remnants of paganism. One of the first native Ambonese teachers, Thomas Rodrigos, announced in 1641 to the government in Ambon that in his village, Ema on East Leitimor, a statue of a pig was venerated. The statue was destroyed, but life became too difficult for Rodrigos and he had to be moved to another place. Most houses had a sacred space, where food was offered to the ancestors in a small chapel (*duyvelshuisje*, ‘abode of the devil’). Thousands must have been destroyed in these centuries, but also many rebuilt, close to the houses or deeper in the forest in inaccessible places. In 1657 a decree of the governor of Ambon imposed the death penalty for the veneration of any statue of an idol in a house, in its garden or on one’s land. But a visitation of the school and church of Kamarian relates that “in a forest, about one hour walking from the village, some *duyvelshuisjes* were found together with the statue of a dragon of 16 yards length covered with a sea-bird and with a human skull in its mouth. Minister De Leeuw chopped the head off the dragon.”²⁵

The political but also religious centre of villages was the *baileu*. It was the place where the skulls were hung in the earlier times of headhunting. The sacred possessions of the ancestors were kept here, the *mamakur*, very rare glass bracelets, also old Chinese pottery, used for offerings, as well as cloths and utensils that were used by the ancestors who had founded the village. Outside the *baileu*, giant stones were placed, *batu pemali*, also a sign of the continuing presence of the ancestors. The church and the school were built after Christianisation, but they did not replace the *baileu* in all its functions. Even in the 20th century it was still said that the church is the most important building of a village, second comes the *baileu*, because “God has priority, then the ancestor”.²⁶ The *baileu* remained the base for the village chief, although in time it lost much of its religious function. Still, we can consider the co-existence of church and *baileu* as the physical representation of the double religious loyalty of the Moluccans.

We use here the word double loyalty rather than “remnants of paganism” or even modern sociological terms like the great versus the little tradition (Robert Redfield) or the official versus the folk religion. The latter distinction, however, makes some sense: it was not only used by the political and religious authority of the VOC state, it also explains why there was no double loyalty between Islam and Christianity, but rather between the unequal (and

²⁵ Knaap 1987:86.

²⁶ J. Lusikooy unpublished thesis of 1957 *Sisa-sisa animisme di Maluku Tengah* (Remnants of Animism in the Central Moluccas), quoted in Cooley 1987:114–115.

therefore in practice often not competing) traditional religious system with the new world religions. A much later observer, Frank Cooley, who did his field research in the 1960s, noted about this double religious loyalty that it could be compared to the word of Jesus in Mark 12:17, "Give to Caesar what is Caesar's and to God what is God's."²⁷ We may question what is here meant by Caesar and what by God? Cooley identifies Caesar with the commands and institutions of the ancestors and 'God' with the gospel that was brought by Christianity. We may also take the other conclusion, that the real religious tradition still was the living custom, represented by the village chief, the *raja* as a direct offspring of the ancestors, while the ruling supra-local government had introduced Christianity. In other places therefore, Christianity was also called *agama Kumpeni*, the religious ruling of the Dutch East India Company.²⁸

In 1684 a mixed commission of VOC officials and chiefs of (mostly Christian) Leitimor, was sent to a region of South Seram (Seram Haruku) to investigate the traditional religion, also called Alifuru religion after the word used for all people of East Indonesia who were not Muslim or Christian. They found such strong local variations that they refused to give an overall description of 'Alifuru' religion. They found belief in many super-human beings, sometimes with one of them given superiority so as to be considered a Supreme Being. In Central Seram and Buru this divine being was called Alahatala, certainly after an Arabic name for the One and Highest God: *Allah ta'āla*. In addition there was a whole range of non-divine beings, related to ancestors or animals (totem): the *nitu*. Evil spirits were called *suangi*, a name also used for people possessed by evil spirit or witches. In Seram, the major initiation ritual was the loin-cloth, *cidako*, given to boys at the age of ten and to girls at the age of twelve. Some of the most obvious 'remnants' of traditional religions were the circumcision of boys and the *cemar kain* for girls. The latter was the ritual cleansing of the girls' *cidako* after their first menstruation. Belief in the spirits and rituals of initiation were for a long time continued also after Christianity was accepted as the formal religion.²⁹

The Banda Islands

The ten small islands of the Banda archipelago (together just 55 sq. km.) were the only places known where nutmeg and its side-product mace were grown, the 'fragrant gold'. Banda was also a centre in the vaster trading network of East Indonesia. A round-trip from Malacca to Banda could be completed in

²⁷ Cooley 1973:133–134; see also Knaap 1987:89.

²⁸ For Ternate see Niemeijer 2002b:147–175.

²⁹ Knaap 1987:72–74.

six months, while the voyage to North Maluku would take another half year.³⁰ In 1523, the Portuguese had set up a factory on the island of Neira where the small town of Bandaneira is located, the main settlement of the small archipelago. Nothing is known about possible conversions made by the Portuguese from their fortification in Neira. The British had founded their settlement in 1601 on Run (also Rhun). In 1599 the Dutch had arrived for the first time, but only to buy spices. In 1602 Wolfert Hermanszoon concluded a treaty with some chiefs of Banda with a very tolerant religious paragraph, “that everybody should honour their God according to the belief given to him or her by God, without hatred of the other or causing trouble and the rest will be entrusted to God who is the judge over all belief and all souls.”³¹ This was still the time of the first and peaceful encounters. Soon the Dutch would try to impose a monopoly on the spice trade. In 1609 they conquered the remnants of the Portuguese factory and renamed it Nassau Castle. Besides this place another fortification was built in 1611, now named *Benteng Belgica*.

The Dutch attack in 1609 only occurred after negotiations with the proud and independent Bandanese had failed and the Dutch admiral Pieter Verhoeven and 46 of his soldiers had been killed. This was the beginning of one of the bloodiest episodes in the history of the VOC. After some small expeditions had failed to subdue the islands a great attack was planned in 1614. It was the first of several attacks. In 1616 commander Jacob 't Lam conquered the island of Ay with the help of 800 European soldiers and 23 Japanese mercenaries. Scores of people were killed and some 400 drowned when they fled from the island and tried to reach nearby Run. The final attack was in 1621 led by Governor General Jan Pieterszoon Coen in person. With 19 ships and an army of 1,655 European and 286 Asian soldiers he attacked Banda. The final battle was on the largest island of Lonthoir (also called Great Banda). During new peace talks all the chiefs were imprisoned and 46 were put to death by a Japanese executioner, 789 members of their families were sent in exile to Batavia. During the voyage 176 of them died. The rest of the people of Lonthoir fled into the mountains and continued fighting for several months until they had to give up. At that time the last independent Bandanese who had fled to the island of Run in order to seek protection from the British, also accepted Dutch rule.³² It is estimated that, from the original population of some 15,000, only 1,500 were left after the bloody period 1609–1621. This episode is still debated but many have blamed Coen for its cruelty.

³⁰ Niemeijer 2001:251–282, esp. 256.

³¹ Quoted in Van Boetzelaer 1947:14.

³² The British only formally gave up the island of Run at negotiations in 1667 when this island and Dutch Guyana (now Surinam) was given to the Dutch in exchange for New Amsterdam (now New York), Niemeijer 1994:5.

Because of the almost total depopulation of the islands Coen proposed a resettlement with many European elements. This had already begun after the conquest of Ay in 1616, with the import of slaves from Siau. In 1621 all plots that were suited for spice-cultivation were divided into estates (*perken*) and given to Dutch settlers, that is to say, Dutch men who had married local women.³³ More and more people (many of them slaves) arrived from Gujarat, Southwest India (Malabar), Malaysia, Buton, Java and there were even Chinese. Together with the remaining Bandanese they worked in the plantations. The owners of the plantations sold their harvest against fixed prices to the VOC, which held the monopoly of the trade in spices. In fact, after 1621, a new Bandanese society had been started, a 'unique colony of exploitation,' concentrated on the cultivation of nutmeg and mace. They amounted to some 4,000 people in the 1630s.³⁴

Shortly after the conquest of Ay, minister Casper Wiltens had been transferred from Ambon to Banda. He had to make good Protestants of the slaves who were imported from Siau, conquered in 1614 by the VOC. As we saw above, there was a good number of Catholic Christians among them. Wiltens who did not have a high opinion of the Catholic mission and their converts, noted that, "This nominal Christianity gives the East India Company at least the profit that it wins some subjects for us."³⁵

When Coen conquered the major Banda islands in his bloody action, Wiltens had already left the region. He was succeeded in March 1622 by one of the most praised Dutch ministers of the seventeenth century, Rev. Adriaan Hulsebos.³⁶ He instituted the first church council and ordained Wouter Melchiorz Vitriarius to the ministry.³⁷ The first church council met in Nassau Castle, 15–17 March 1622. The church, which had close ties to the military and administrative sections of the VOC, was in fact subject to the VOC rulers. As in other places there were services in both Dutch and Malay. The Dutch-language services were also explicitly held in order "to make the coloured people, who are married to the Dutch, acquainted and familiar with

³³ A map of the major division of Great Banda in Cribb 2000:106.

³⁴ Niemeijer 1994:6.

³⁵ "Dit voordeel heeft onse Oost Indische Compagnie van dit naem-christendom datser ondersaeten mede can winnen", quoted in Niemeijer 1994:7.

³⁶ Van Boetzelaer 1947:23–28. After his first visitation to Banda Hulsebos sailed to Ambon but his ship capsized in the bay of Ambon and Hulsebos drowned in May 1622.

³⁷ Vitriarius was earlier convicted of Arminian heresy by the church council of Amsterdam. Because of the small number of people who were willing to go to the colony we meet quite a few people among church officials, who would never have obtained such a position in the homeland. Niemeijer 1994:7.

the lofty sacrament, so that they may remember it or at least know it.”³⁸ In the new mixed society of Banda, it proved impossible to make the Dutch language the commonly used one. Most services and also school education used Malay more often than Dutch. In contrast to the strict ruling on infant baptism, as issued by the Dordrecht Synod of 1619, the ministers were quite liberal in the administration of the sacrament. In the period 1623–1634 eight children and four adults were baptised on Rosengain (now *Pulau Hatta*). Among these were a slave named Maria, a Rodrigues, born from “Moorish parents,” a boy Abel “not knowing from what parents he is born.” Also the baby of Jan Bouillion van Middelburg and Maria of Siau (not yet baptised), was baptised. For adult slaves the minimal requirement for baptism was that they should be able to say the Our Father. This proves that notwithstanding strict rules, and criticism of easy baptism by the Catholics, the Dutch Protestant ministers in this extremely mixed society had to accommodate their practice to the local conditions.³⁹

In the administration of marriage we can see the same pastoral attitude. Banda Governor Sonck had in 1622 forbidden men to live in concubinage. But the cases that are illustrated in the archives of the church council show that such a floating and mixed society had its own rules. In this unruly period many people were separated from their partners and did not know where they were, or whether they still lived or had died in the terrible disaster of the Dutch conquest and its aftermath. VOC seamen, who already had a wife in their homeland, settled in Banda and married a new wife there, concealing their first marriage. To give just one case: one Isabella Bentsana of Siau had arrived in Banda with her husband, Philippus, son of one of the Christian chiefs of Siau. But this Philippus had left her for a Muslim wife and now lived in a Muslim village in Seram. Could this Isabella legally marry a Dutch newcomer, Willem Jansz from Den Briel? The church council admitted this marriage “in order to prevent worse things.” Between 1616 and 1625 there were 196 marriages registered by the Protestant church of Banda. With the exception of two, in all cases it was Asian women, while only 80 men were of Asian descent.⁴⁰

Besides the church services and the administration of baptism and marriage the school was also, in Banda, one of the major tasks of the Protestant church. In the 1620s it was estimated that two thirds of the children were from parents

³⁸ “dat de inwoonders, also swarten met duytschen ghetrouwt ende andere, het hoogweerdich Sacrament mede in gedachtenisse moghen houden oft ten minste haer bekent ghemaect worden,” Niemeijer 1994:9.

³⁹ Niemeijer 1994:13.

⁴⁰ Niemeijer 1994:17–18. There are many more examples that show the quick mixing up of the new Banda society in the 1620s.

who had died or had fled the islands during the fighting of the last decade. In 1624 there were already three schools: one in Ay (100 *costkinderen*, or orphans who lived at the cost of the VOC, and 40 *buitenkinderen*, children of free citizens), one in Great Banda (100 pupils) and a third in Run (45 children). Only the school in Run still continued the ideal of a Dutch language education. Later schools were also erected in Selamon (in Great Banda) and Rozengain. Initially there were Dutch school teachers, but after a decade several schools were taken over by Bandanese who were trained in a school where not much more was taught than elementary reading and writing, some mathematics and most of all the basic Christian teachings and prayers. Also Muslim children were obliged to enrol in the schools, they even received twenty pounds of rice per child per month. But the hope “that by these means the Muslim religion would disappear from the island” soon turned into pessimism.⁴¹ The parents of these children were stubborn (*opstinateyck inde Machumetische leere*).

In 1625 the church council asked the governor to ban all public Muslim rituals such as marriage, circumcision and common prayers. Sunday as a day of rest should be officially announced. The governor accepted the proposal and the *marinyo*, the assistant to the sexton, had to administer it. But, as was the case with this kind of decree in Batavia, they were soon afterwards forgotten. In 1625 two lay members of the church council, elders, went on a mission to the ‘Moorish Street’ of Run, but people rejected their offer to become Christian and said that they “had done enough by sending their children to the school in Ay.”⁴²

In the history of Protestantism under VOC rule, it was the church council of Banda that tried as long as possible to preserve its independence over against the local government. In line with the ruling of the Dordrecht Synod, the local administration wished to send representatives to the meetings of the church council. Succeeding ministers in Banda continued opposition to this presence. Therefore during several years no formal meeting of the church council was held. Only after the death of one of the major opponents, Rev. Michael Clarenbeek, and the departure of a second minister, Wilhelm Holthenius, in 1634, could the representative of the governor take his seat in the meetings of the church council of Banda.⁴³

As we have seen above, Banda remained a regular post for ministers. With the lack of ministers in the colony it was certainly not always easy to find suitable people who were willing to take this position. Sometimes the preparation was done in a very short time. One Jan de Graaf passed his first examination

⁴¹ Niemeijer 1994:21: “dat metter tijt door sulcke middelen de moorsche religie wel t’ eene-mael mocht comen te vervallen.”

⁴² Niemeijer 1994:22.

⁴³ Van Boetzelaer 1947:55.

on 12 January 1691, signed the confessions on 18 January, passed his final examination on 1 February, and was one day later nominated to become minister in Banda. Van Boetzelaer had the impression that the examination was not given the necessary weight.⁴⁴ A sad example of ‘tropical madness’ or a broken career is Abraham Mensing, who left for the Indies in 1733 with wife and children and worked in Banda between 1734–1736. He was totally unfit for the place and after some time in Ceylon he was placed in the poor house of Batavia, because he could not manage his own life.⁴⁵ In 1764, 140 members of the congregation of Rev. Verbeet signed a request for a higher salary for their minister, because living in Banda was too expensive and Verbeet wanted to leave his position.⁴⁶

Banda was the base for travel to Tanimbar, Kai and other islands in the southern region of the Moluccas. These were journeys of inspection, often together with other officials of the VOC administration. There was no missionary planning for these remote areas. In some islands these visits were even considered a disaster rather than a welcome call, because of the cattle that had to be slaughtered on such an occasion.⁴⁷ These travels were exceptional. Occasionally action was taken to spread Christianity. In 1669 the chief of the island of Ujir, close to Aru and in the same archipelago, requested Muslim preachers. Thereupon the governor of Banda sent immediately a Protestant missionary to nearby Wokam to contain any further spread of Islam. But such action was quite unusual.⁴⁸ Banda remained for the most part a quite exceptional, small collection of plantations, ruled by rich owners, run by many slaves and other workers, originating from many other places. It was a dominating Christian place set amidst pagans and Muslims.

Ternate and Tidore

State formation in the Moluccas had remained far behind that in the coastal regions of Western Indonesia, as we have seen in the first chapter. Ternate and Tidore were under way to become a larger political unit around 1500. Both were Muslim, Tidore much more strict than Ternate, but both had spread Islam among their subsidiaries. When Banda became a Christian society, Ternate had remained the centre of an Islamic state and culture. In the foregoing chapter it has been discussed how the Portuguese found a shelter on the small island of Ternate until the rupture of 1570, when they turned to its

⁴⁴ Van Boetzelaer 1947:111.

⁴⁵ Van Boetzelaer 1994:229–30.

⁴⁶ Van Boetzelaer 1947:194–195.

⁴⁷ Summary of a visit in 1645 in Van Boetzelaer 1947:129, 131, 209.

⁴⁸ Niemeijer 2001:259.

rival and neighbour Tidore. After the union between Portugal and Spain, the latter had joined them on Tidore. In 1606, however, the Spanish returned to Ternate where they could rebuild a fortification on the old site of Gamalama. As the result of a treaty with the Ternatean rulers, the Dutch could also build a fortification in Ternate. It was one of the many treaties between the VOC and Ternate. They had often a religious paragraph, stressing two elements: firstly that both parties would respect each other as free and independent in their beliefs; secondly that conversions of Christians and Muslims to either faith would not be permitted and runaways or people trying to convert would be sent back. There were sometimes quite liberal formulations. In 1657 the VOC even promised to the people of Tidore “not to disturb them in their religion or faith, not to defy them, not to force them to accept the Christian religion, but to leave them as they think is necessary for their own salvation.”⁴⁹ The 1669 treaty with the ruler of Sumbawa formulated this even more strongly,

Christians who enter the service of the above-mentioned kings and show themselves favourably disposed to embrace the Mohammedan faith will not by any means be accepted...nor shall the Company draw any of the king's subjects to the Christian faith against the explicit will of Their Highnesses.⁵⁰

Niemeijer supposes that this tolerant formulation should be explained from the Dutch Protestant “abhorrence of forced conversions to Catholicism,” in combination with the “religiously-inspired war of independence from Catholic Spain.”⁵¹ But we may also look to local conditions. In the Indies the diplomatic side apparently was more dominant. It was therefore a matter of good and wise diplomacy to respect those Muslim rulers who were too strong to be beaten or economically not really interesting, as was the case with Ternate and so many others. These treaties also were often ceremonially signed with an ‘inter-religious ritual’: there was not only the oath on the Bible, but also on the Qur’an and as well it happened that “parties by way of further confirmation drank water that had been poured over *kris* (daggers) which from ancient times until now signifies a pact of the highest order.”⁵²

In the rivalry with the Spaniards in Ternate, the VOC did not experience many problems. The Spanish had more problems in the Philippines and became gradually weaker. In 1617 they could still start a mission in the Minahasa, and to Siau and Sangihe, but that was the last expansion. In 1662 the Dutch order came that the Spanish should leave Ternate and Tidore. By that time the VOC had long since consolidated its monopoly on spices: already in 1607 there was

⁴⁹ For various examples concerning Ternate see Niemeijer 2001:278–279; also Steenbrink 1993:66–69.

⁵⁰ Heeres, *Corpus Diplomaticum* 1907–1955-II:423; also quoted in Steenbrink 1993:68.

⁵¹ Niemeijer 2001:259.

⁵² Examples among others in Heeres, *Corpus Diplomaticum* 1907–1955-II:11, 426, 453.

a promise of sole trade with the Dutch. While production of spices moved more and more to the 'Christian territories' of Ambon, Saparua and Banda, this process was strengthened in the 1652 treaty with Ternate in which the Sultan agreed to the systematic eradication of the spice trees, in compensation for an annual payment of 14,000 *rijksdaalder*. In 1657 a similar treaty was concluded with Tidore.⁵³ In 1667 Muslim Makassar was brought fully under VOC control with the Treaty of Bungaya.

In regard to religion, the first effect of this political development was the containment of the spread of Islam. But it was not really the beginning of a new spread of Christianity. In fact about 1660 the period of expansion for both religions ended and a period of stabilisation or even stagnation had begun. The VOC ministers took over the remaining Catholics who had converted under Portuguese and Spanish rule. In the North Moluccas these were only small pockets. Ternate itself had had around 1608 a small Christian community, consisting of a mixed group of Portuguese and Asian offspring, free citizens, often emancipated slaves (*mardijkers*). Among them were also a few native Tenatans, some of them members of the highest elite of the realm, as well as some converts from Moro, Bacan, Manado and Siau. When the Spanish left for Manila in 1663 some 200 *mardijker* joined them. The remaining Christians probably were quite few. The 1841 census mentions only 181 Christians for Ternate.⁵⁴ One or two Protestant ministers served the congregation that was formally founded in 1626, with the constitution of a church council and the arrival of a first minister in 1628. In the beginning it was only VOC personnel who joined the services in the Dutch Castle *Oranje*. Some decades later, after the Spaniards had left, they served all Christians, but their flock remained small. The same can be said of the small number of Christians that remained on Bacan and Makian.

Sangir-Talau and Minahasa after 1662

It was more in North Sulawesi and the northern islands that Protestant missionaries could continue the work of their Catholic colleagues. In this region, with no larger states, much depended on the personal choice of a religion by the local petty rulers. Statistics for 1696 mention a population of 13,100 for the whole region of North Sulawesi, with some 8,000 in Sangir, more than 1,000 in Siau, and 1,107 in the tiny island of Tagulandang (also written as Tahulandang), while not many more than 1,000 were found in Manado and

⁵³ Niemeijer 2001:262.

⁵⁴ Van Fraassen 1987:69–72.

other places on the north coast of the Minahasa.⁵⁵ The case of Tagulandang is quite interesting. In the early 1670s its ruler was glad that the Makassarese were defeated by the Dutch and he showed his loyalty to the most powerful ruler of the region by rejecting Islam and transforming the local mosque into a Christian prayer house and school. We may perhaps also accept for Siau, Sangir and Talaud such anti Makassar feelings as explaining why they were willing to support the Protestants in the early 1670s. After the defeat of Makassar and the departure of the Spanish the Dutch had remained the only supra-local power. For the petty rulers of the coastal areas of North Sulawesi and, even more, the chain of islands northwest like Tagulandang, Sangihe and Siau, it was profitable to accept the Dutch as their formal allies or overlords, to insure themselves from attacks by neighbouring islands or by Tidore which occasionally still tried to expand its realm.⁵⁶

Needless to say, the depth of conversion was in many cases not really profound. It was quite confusing that in Sangihe, after the Catholic beginnings of the 1650s, Rev. Zacharias Kaheing (also written as Caheins) introduced in his period of work, 1677–1680, Malay prayers, while his successor, Cornelius de Leeuw (1680–1688) urged the schoolmasters to translate the common formulas into Sangirese.⁵⁷ In the last decades there were regular visitations (that took some four months) and a large network of schools was established. It was considered as a major duty of loyalty to the Dutch administration that the school should be maintained. It was mentioned sometimes as a kind of *corvée* labour, to be organized by the village chief and his council. In his 1690–1691 visitation Rev. Gellius Cammiga found a place where only 20 out of 200 children were in the school. He noticed, “they only send the children of slaves to the school and keep their own children at home.”⁵⁸ In various ways Christianity entered the social system in an irregular way. The *mèster* was paid by the VOC office in Manado not in cash but in South Indian textiles. They had to pay part of it to their local chiefs. These local rulers also profited from the *denda*, the fines that could be asked from people who did not properly attend church services. The reports of the visitations repeatedly mention stories of chiefs who had more than one wife, of nightly dancing for invoking spirits for various purposes, and in general of broad ignorance of the basic doctrines of Christianity. There were some exceptions, especially in places where Ambonese *mèster* were nominated who taught not only the few

⁵⁵ Niemeijer 2001:266; see also Niemeijer 2002b:147–175, esp. 162 where statistics of 1691 are given, that are much higher, totalling 19,223. Their division is more or less similar to the numbers of 1696.

⁵⁶ Niemeijer 2002b:164; Niemeijer 2001:264.

⁵⁷ Niemeijer 2002b:166.

⁵⁸ Niemeijer 2002b:168.

Malay prayers but also recited daily parts of the catechism. In the period of decline of the VOC church personnel also had to be reduced. For this region the religious officials were, in 1763, brought back from 68 to 41: 33 *mèster* and 8 *marinyo* or sextons. After the British took over the administration of Manado in 1797 the 28 *mèster* and 7 *marinyo* were paid from their account.⁵⁹

Notwithstanding the little impact of Christianity in daily life and the obvious continuation of traditional religion, the formal membership of a world religion brought enough profit for both parties, the local elite and the VOC administration, to be continued and developed at considerable expense. It created a long lasting tradition of exclusive loyalty to Christianity, especially in the northern islands. In the Minahasa proper, there was only a very small Christian community. In the collective memory of this region, together with parts of Batak land the only more or less homogeneous Protestant territory of modern Indonesia, the conversion did not start in the 1670s, but in the 1830s with the arrival of missionaries Riedel and Schwarz.

Timor

Portuguese rule could maintain itself longest in Timor. In the previous chapter we have seen that the Catholic priests for some time even organized military defence and public administration in some territories. In the 1640s this was done by Father Antonio de San Jacinto, head of the mission in Larantuka.

The Dutch conquered the Portuguese fortification of Solor in 1613 and immediately sent two Protestant ministers “to make Solor a second Ambon.”⁶⁰ But the Dominican friars, who were permitted to continue their work from Larantuka, fostered an anti-Dutch and anti-Protestant feeling among their flock. The first Protestant ministers of Solor also entered negotiations with the raja of Kupang, who was negotiating with the Portuguese about a possible conversion to Catholicism. In fact this native ruler did not opt for any of the possibilities Christianity offered. Because the southern islands were not so important for the Dutch they did not continue their efforts to introduce Protestantism from Solor. Only in 1670 was a Protestant minister sent to Kupang, but he died soon afterwards. The same fate was experienced by his successor who arrived only in 1687. In 1674 a raja of Timor arrived in Batavia with a large company, expressing his wish to embrace Christianity. Later it was found out that this chief had been expelled by his people and hoped for Dutch

⁵⁹ Niemeijer 2002b:173.

⁶⁰ Van den End 1989-I:91.

support in order to be installed again in his previous power. Nevertheless, he returned to Kupang with a native teacher.⁶¹

In 1688, the comforter of the sick of the Dutch fortification of Kupang, ran away to the Portuguese, and thereupon in his place a native teacher, Paulus Kupang was accepted as leader of the small Protestant congregation. He performed his duty so well, that he was formally nominated as 'comforter of the sick,' a position that was still below that of a real Protestant minister, but usually only open for Dutch people. After he died in 1716, his position was taken over by an Ambonese teacher, Amos Thenu. The statistics of that time mention 84 baptised (in 1719), growing to 460 in 1729 and even 1,300 in 1753. During the 1740s there was also a strong movement towards Christianity, directed by one of the local chiefs of the island of Rote, west of Timor. Several thousands were baptised and Rote became one of the centres of Christianity (and of schooling) in the region, followed a few decades later by the small island of Sawu.

The Mixed Population of Batavia

The first permanent settlement of the VOC was in Ambon, in 1605. A first factory was built in 1609 on the north coast of West Java, at the mouth of the river Ciliwung, where in 1619 the town of Jayakarta had been conquered by the new colonial power. This town was renamed Batavia and became the international centre of the VOC. Like the town of Ambon and the society in Banda, Batavia also was a colonial creation with a very mixed population. On 3 January 1621 Rev. Adriaan Hulsebos administered Holy Communion according to the Reformed tradition for the first time. He was also the initiator of the church council that gathered for the first time on 21 January 1621. On 26 December of that year the first Malay service was held in Batavia.⁶² Quite soon it became evident that it was important to hold Portuguese services, initially in the Malay church, while later two special Portuguese church buildings were used. All the Reformed faithful of Batavia were ruled by one church council. This council had to admit a representative of the VOC directors in its meetings, as already mentioned above. Besides, all correspondence with the church in the Netherlands had to be shown to this representative. Like all aspects of life, religious matters were under strict control of the VOC administration.⁶³ The elders and deacons were lay members of the church council. For the period 1621–1723 a long list of 422 elders and 475 deacons

⁶¹ Van Boetzelaer 1947:129–130.

⁶² Van Boetzelaer 1947:23–27.

⁶³ Niemeijer 1996:92–93.

has been published in the major work about the period by Rev. François Valentijn, his *Oud en Nieuw Oost-Indiën*. This demonstrates the participation of the lay population in church affairs. Only Europeans could be elected for a post on the church council.

The first session of the church council admitted to baptism an illegitimate son of one Gerrit Claesz van Amsterdam, born out of his slave, Sembidji of Bali, “because the baby belongs to the inheritors of the covenant from the side of the father.” This was done notwithstanding the fact that Sembidji was not a Christian.⁶⁴ This was no exception but rather the common practice, although it was against the rulings of the church in the Netherlands: Batavia was a very mixed society, with a European, Asian and Eurasian population that was not only segmented but also hierarchically structured. Rough statistics for 1679 show the following composition:

Dutch	2,227	6.9
Eurasians (<i>mestiezen</i>)	760	2.3
Chinese	3,220	10.0
Free Citizens (<i>mardijkers</i>)	5,348	16.7
Javanese	1,391	4.3
Malay	1,049	3.3
Balinese	1,364	4.2
Slaves	16,695	52.0
Total	32,124	100

Mestiezen is a common word for people of mixed European and Asian descent. It may have been that the Asian component was from one of the Indonesian islands, but it may also have been the descendents of European and Indian (most often Malabar or Bengali) parents. *Mardijkers* were freed slaves, all of them also Asian. It is debated how great the percentage of Protestant Christians was among the population. The Jesuit priest Manuel Soares visited Catholics in Batavia in 1661. He was welcomed by Governor General Maetsuycker (1653–1678), who provided him with lodgings and two guards. Soares guessed that out of the European and Indian Christians one third was Reformed and two thirds Catholic.⁶⁵ His numbers may be biased. Some people said that Maetsuycker was hiding his Catholic background, while he openly denied this. But he never joined the celebration of the Lord’s Supper to refute the gossip. Soares could walk in his black cassock with rosary in Batavia, accept invitations

⁶⁴ “Also tzelve kindeken tregt des verbonds vande zyde des vader toebehoordende.” Schutte 2002:112.

⁶⁵ Jacobs 1989:279–314; Niemeijer 1996:130 and 2005:246–248.

to celebrate the Eucharist and administer baptism in private houses.⁶⁶ Between 1622 and 1783 not less than 190 Catholic priests visited the town of Batavia. Only a few were as welcome and free as Soares. Several were put in prison or sent home immediately, because the formal rule was that they were not allowed to enter VOC territory, let alone to work as a priest there.

Many slaves and also *Mardijkers* originated from the Malabar coast. They were *parruas*, who spoke Portuguese and were very loyal to the Portuguese priests and Catholic practices. In general, most Asian Christians in Batavia originated from places where the Portuguese had spread their faith: Bengal, Ceylon and the southern Indian coastal regions.⁶⁷ Schutte and Niemeijer guess that there was never a Christian majority in the town of Batavia. Besides, quite a few of them were Catholic or Lutheran. In 1768 the population of the town was estimated as 20,000 in the walled centre and 60,000 in the suburbs. If we accept a division of Christians similar to the case of Semarang at that period (see below), than this would give the number of 20,000 Reformed, 10,000 Catholics and 10,000 Lutherans. But these are just global numbers, uncertain and only about external qualifications: something more has to be said about variation in the quality of Christianity. The Reformed Church had a quite strict distinction between members who were baptised and full members who also were entitled to receive Holy Communion. Around 1700 there were about 5,000 full members. This number probably grew but never reached more than 10,000.⁶⁸

The most prominent outward manifestation of Christianity was the building of churches. Here, the Christian character of the VOC capital appeared somewhat late. In line with the building of the Jewish Kings, David and Solomon, in the 'Indian Zion' the VOC officials gave first attention to the city walls, the fortification, the administrative buildings and their own houses. In 1625 a still rather poor provisional church building was erected. In 1632 the foundation for a proper church was laid. This was followed by the first stone to be laid in 1640 and this building was finished in 1643. In 1644 Governor General Antonio van Diemen (1636–1645) built a chapel in the Castle, at his own expense. Already in 1633 a simple wooden church with *atap* or straw roof had been built for services in Malay. The so-called *Portugese Binnenkerk* (Portuguese Church inside the city walls) was built between 1669 and 1672. This fine building was initially meant for Malay services, but was also to meet the needs of the Portuguese-speaking Christians. Another Portuguese-language church was built outside the city walls in 1695, the *Portugese Buitenkerk*, now the *Gereja Sion*. In addition, in several quarters there were prayer halls. In

⁶⁶ De Graaf 1938:12.

⁶⁷ Niemeijer 1996:128.

⁶⁸ Schutte 2002:115.

1743 the Lutheran Baron Gustaaf van Imhoff was nominated Governor General (1743–1750). He stimulated the building of a Lutheran Church which, in spite of the protests of some Dutch Protestants, was inaugurated on 28 September 1749.⁶⁹

The ministers of Batavia were all Dutch. The only exception was Cornelis Senen (ca. 1600–1661), a native of Banda who was in 1621 taken to Batavia and worked as a teacher in the settlement of the Bandanese there. Later he was entrusted to lead services for the Malay and Portuguese-speaking congregations. He was, however, never a full minister, but only a probationer, a *proponent*.⁷⁰ In 1650 the number of ministers was already eight, after 1685 this was eleven. Besides the ministers, there were also comforters of the sick and teachers in the service of the Batavia church. Among these teachers there were evangelists (*catechiseermeester*) who had to teach adults who were preparing for baptism. If they went to the houses of the candidates they were also called *mèster keliling*. In 1706 there were 34 evangelists who gave religious instruction to 4,873 slaves and free people. The majority of them used Portuguese (4,440 or 91%), while 323 were instructed in Malay and 110 in Dutch.⁷¹

A major task of the VOC church was the care for the poor, entrusted to the deacons as members of the church council. Finances for this activity came mostly from gifts, collected during church service, and from bequests. There was a poor house, an orphanage and distribution of a monthly allowance in cash, for about 750–1500 poor people during the later 17th and the 18th century. Only members of the Dutch Reformed Church were entitled to receive this service.⁷²

Education was not a principal task of the church. Schools were directly supervised and subsidised by the colonial government. However, there were a number of religious aspects in all schools: besides reading, writing and basic arithmetic the singing of Psalms was one of the features of the primary school. School teachers had to agree with the Heidelberg Catechism and the Confession of Faith of the Dutch Reformed Churches. All school days should begin with the common prayers and all schoolbooks should be approved by the church council.⁷³

Because of the shortage of ministers in Batavia, efforts were made there to begin a proper education for church ministers. In 1642 a Latin School was founded, as preparation for academic education in Europe. The pupils all came from the local orphanage. Because of a lack of teachers the school closed in

⁶⁹ Heuken 2003; Van Boetzelaer 1947:183–184.

⁷⁰ Van Troostenburg de Bruyn 1893:392; Van den End 1989:392.

⁷¹ Niemeijer 1996:187.

⁷² Details in Niemeijer 1996:275–356 and 2005:330–342.

⁷³ Van Boetzelaer 1947:113–116, for the school rules of 1684.

1656 after some difficult years, when seldom a teacher worked more than one year in the school. The school produced three students for the Netherlands, two of whom returned to the Indies as ordained ministers. Several of its graduates later worked as schoolmasters. Between 1666 and 1670 a Latin School was opened again, with 24 pupils, this time no longer as an initiative of the church council. This school had to close in 1670, because with only two pupils Governor General Maetsuycker considered it too expensive.⁷⁴

Because of the status of the Dutch Reformed Church as the ‘public religion’ all other denominations and religions were formally banned. This was in fact more so in theory than in practice. Time and again the Batavia church council turned its attention to the Chinese temples and Islamic places of worship in the city.⁷⁵ The effect was quite often that on paper a ban of these places was repeated, but no firm measures were taken to stop non-Christian acts of worship. In 1651 the Batavia government, at the request of the church council, banned “any public or secret meetings for practising their evil and Mahometan religion.” These were considered as “an act which should not be tolerated by a praiseworthy government where the pure and unadulterated teaching of the only true Saviour Jesus Christ was taught and served.” An important consideration was also that many native Christians “had only recently emerged from the Moorish religion” and were still weak in the new faith.⁷⁶ Similar requests and bans were produced in 1654, 1662 and 1674, but without much result. As an answer to the same complaint of 1686, when the church council reported that recently new mosques and Chinese temples had been built, Governor General Camphuys (1684–1691) gave the mild but ironic advice, “To practice such amiable initiatives for the persuasion and conversion of the hearts of Moors and pagans, that further growth of these temples will diminish automatically and in these dangerous times no violence will be needed.”⁷⁷

In 1635 the municipal authorities stipulated that every newly baptised person would receive two *rijksdaalders* in order “to stimulate others to adopt the Reformed faith as well, and to show how we appreciate that our pagan and Moorish community attempt to seek their salvation through the only Saviour, the Lord Christ.”⁷⁸ One quite striking example of a conversion is the case of a pagan, certainly not baptised, slave, Anthoni of Bengal, who accompanied his master to the church (probably carrying his umbrella) and shared in the Lord’s Supper “out of ignorance, because he saw other slaves of the Noble Company stepping forward.” When the council examined Anthoni, he said that

⁷⁴ Koolen 1993:177–189.

⁷⁵ Steenbrink 1993:70 for twenty requests of the Church council.

⁷⁶ Van der Chijs 1885-II:169.

⁷⁷ De Haan 1910–1912-IV:432–433.

⁷⁸ Van der Chijs 1885-I:371.

he wished to be taught the Christian faith and they warned him “to refrain from such disorderly behaviour from that time on.”⁷⁹

It was not only profitable to convert to Christianity. The Chinese of Batavia had to pay higher taxes than native Indonesians, like Javanese and Malays. When Chinese converted to Islam, as they seemed to do much more often than converting to Christianity, they were for taxation purposes considered to be natives of the Indies. In Banten it was ruled that only the children of Chinese converts would be legally treated as natives, while the converts themselves were still under the direct authority of the Company and therefore subject to higher taxes.⁸⁰ Also in Batavia regulations were regularly issued to prevent the Chinese from becoming Muslim. In 1755 the Company specified that Chinese Muslims would be required to continue paying the poll-tax and that they would not be given permission to travel outside the town freely.⁸¹

The VOC administration was in many ways forced to recognize the presence not only of other Christian denominations, but also of other religions. In 1681 provisions were made for a salary to be paid to the “Mahomedan priest who had to administer the oath to Mahomedan witnesses on behalf of the college of church elders,”⁸² and a Muslim ‘priest’ was appointed as “principal supervisor of the mosque of the Coromandel Moors outside the Utrecht gate at Batavia” in 1748.⁸³ In 1754 a *Compendium of the Most Important Mahomedan Laws and Customs Concerning Inheritance, Marriage and Divorce* was compiled by the VOC administration after consultations between the Delegate for Native Affairs, and some “Machomethan priests and Kampong officers.” The preamble of this document stated that Islamic law was to be applied to Muslims in cases where civil law would apply for Europeans.⁸⁴ These regulations did not imply that Europeans were beginning to accept Muslims as such in the town. There remained a double standard. The *New Statutes of Batavia* of 1776 again formally stated that non-Christian places of worship continued to be banned.⁸⁵ Batavia was not only ethnically a very mixed town, but there remained a number of conflicting measures in its official laws and in the directives given by officials. It was not only an ‘Indian Zion’ but at the same time a free place where people of many convictions could worship.

⁷⁹ Mooij 1927–1931-III:74.

⁸⁰ Heeres, *Corpus Diplomaticum 1907–1955*-VI:13 and 415.

⁸¹ Van der Chijs 1885-VII:153.

⁸² Van der Chijs 1885-III:68.

⁸³ Van der Chijs 1885-V:548.

⁸⁴ Van der Chijs 1885-VIII:392–407.

⁸⁵ Van der Chijs 1885-IX:29–30.

*VOC settlements on the north coast of Java and other cities
of the archipelago*

In all major settlements (fortifications or factories) of the VOC some kind of religious personnel were available. In 1700 out of 18,117 personnel of the VOC, 95 or about 0.5% were serving religious needs. For later years this was even somewhat higher: in 1780 it was 0.8%.⁸⁶ This was only the European personnel: the native teachers, evangelisers/evangelists and sacristans in East Indonesia (Ambon, Ternate, Kupang) are not included in this number. Places like Makassar had for some time also resident ministers. Between 1719 and 1722 the gifted linguist Georg Henric Werndly, born in Switzerland, was minister in Makassar. He translated the Heidelberg Catechism, composed a rhymed Malay version of Psalms and made contributions to the correction of the Leijdecker Malay translation of the whole Bible.⁸⁷

After the troubles in Central Java, that started with the murder of some 10,000 Chinese of Batavia, and the flight of the remaining 25,000 to Central Java in 1740, direct rule of the VOC on the northern coast of Java was established. In 1753 Rev. J.W. Swemmelaar was nominated minister in Semarang, where he served a congregation of 1,767 Christians. According to his statistics out of this number 454 were Lutherans and 392 Catholics, covering the region from Pekalongan to Madura and Yogyakarta. Because of the large number (nearly half of the total) of non-Reformed Christians he took as his strategy “not to irritate them and not delivering sermons that would chase them out of the church and not mentioning the specific differences by name.”⁸⁸ Swemmelaar even admitted Lutherans to Holy Communion.

The translation of tracts, prayers, hymns and bible

Besides local languages, during the VOC period three major languages were used: Dutch, Portuguese and Malay. Notwithstanding the defeat of the Portuguese and Spaniards in the first decades of the seventeenth century, the Portuguese language had for a longer time a continuing impact on VOC society. In broad circles, especially among people of mixed Eurasian decent, Portuguese remained in use until the end of the eighteenth century as the common language of many slaves and also of free citizens of mixed descent. Only by 1800 had Malay become the most important language in Batavia. There was

⁸⁶ After Gaastra 2002:87.

⁸⁷ Van Boetzelaer 1947:250.

⁸⁸ “Niet te ergeren, en uit de kerk te prediken, hare namen in stuk van verschilpunten niet noemen”, Niemeijer 1998:53–73, here p. 67.

not only a Portuguese-language Protestant church in Batavia, there was also a translation of the New Testament, made by João Ferreira d'Almeida, born in 1628 as a Catholic but converted to Reformed Protestantism as a teenager. He was in 1645 in Malacca as a comforter of the sick when he made this translation from a Spanish text. In 1651–1652 this translation was revised. Ferreira d'Almeida used European Portuguese that was quite different from the *lingua franca* that was used in the Asian regions. After working for some time in Ceylon and South India he was from 1663 until 1689 minister for the Portuguese church of Batavia.

The first Malay translation of the Gospel of John was made by a senior VOC official, *Koopman* Albert Cornelisz Ruil, who went to the Indies for the first time in 1600. This translation was printed in the Netherlands in 1629. It was sometimes criticised because of its use of the elegant but complicated language of the Malay court writings rather than the common Malay that was used as *lingua franca* in VOC territory.

A full translation of the New Testament by Rev. Daniël Brouwerius was published in 1668. Several complaints were made against this minister because of his quite severe preaching. A Muslim from Makassar who was sentenced to death had to listen to his admonition to convert to Christianity and was even flogged in support of the predication. His superiors considered this “a very unusual and unsuitable method to convert pagans.” Because of this, initially the printing of his translation was not permitted by the VOC administration, but later they gave in. His translation was close to the daily language used by common people in Batavia and therefore mixed with Portuguese. Swellengrebel, a gifted linguist and experienced bible translator, commented upon his translation as follows, “This Malay has been written from hearing only. The translator apparently never saw a correctly spelled Malay text. . . . Malay readers or hearers who were not yet familiar with the Bible, must have met so many odd and strange expressions that they could not understand it at all.”⁸⁹

The ‘Leijdecker’ is the Malay equivalent of the ‘King James’ version. It is the translation by Dr. Melchior Leijdecker, born in 1645 in Amsterdam and a full graduate (with the title of doctor) in both theology and medicine, combining the same sciences as Justus Heurnius. He made a career as minister of Batavia from 1675 until his death in 1701. He was married to Antonia van Riebeeck, a daughter of the founder of Cape Town, Jan van Riebeeck and sister of Abraham van Riebeeck, the Governor General of the Indies (1709–1713). Leijdecker studied the Malay language of the Muslim courts and the Islamic schools of the archipelago and composed firstly a dictionary of classical Malay. In 1691 he was charged with the translation of the whole Bible. He had

⁸⁹ Swellengrebel 1974–1978-I:12–13.

finished this work, up to Ephesians 6, when he died in 1701. The Rev. Petrus van der Vorm, known for his knowledge of Hebrew and eastern languages, finished the work in that same year. The work remained locked in the room of the church council of Batavia after its completion because of another debate about the style of translation. Rev. François Valentijn (1666–1727) who was a minister in Ambon between 1685–1695 before returning to Europe, but active again in the Indies between 1705–1713, had started a polemic on the style of translation, pleading for the common Malay or the *lingua franca* as used in Ambon. Valentijn produced a translation of his own that was never printed and is now lost. Leijdecker's work was printed in Amsterdam, 1731–1733, in Latin script. In 1758 an edition in the Arabic script more commonly used for Malay texts was printed.⁹⁰

“Your honour employs men and not angels here...”

In 1614 Jan Pieterszoon Coen, founder of Batavia and of the VOC empire, wrote two extensive memoranda to his Dutch employers, dealing with his plan to colonise the East Indies with many European people. For Coen, religious differences provided the most important reason for colonization:

The Moors abhor us and therefore the Ternatans and Bandanese do not permit anyone from their families to marry any of us for any reason whatsoever. If sexual intercourse occurs, they terminate the pregnancy (they say) and untimely destroy the fruit and its creature that is born so that the mother will not produce pagan offspring. Your Honour employs men, and not angels here.⁹¹

In our context this remark is not only related to the male VOC personnel who were in need of European women, but it may also be extended to the evaluation of the VOC period as a whole. Baron Carel van Boetzelaer van Asperen en Dubbeldam was, between 1906 and 1919, the first *zendingsconsul*, or counsellor for the missions in the Dutch East Indies. It was his duty to negotiate in the name of all Protestant missionary societies with the colonial government. He received the name *baron subsidie*, because of his main job: to receive government support for mission schools, hospitals, and more general ‘civilisation work.’ After retirement Van Boetzelaer wrote a book on the history of the Protestant Church in the Dutch East Indies. This book, published in 1947, is from the beginning one concentrated and intense complaint about the close connection between the church, the VOC and later the Dutch colonial administration, and it celebrates the separation between the various

⁹⁰ Swellengrebel 1974–1978-I:13–20.

⁹¹ Colenbrander 1919–1953-VI:470; see also Steenbrink 1993:61.

regional churches and the colonial administration as executed since 1935. Van Boetzelaer praised the generosity of the VOC, “Very seldom has this company denied for reasons of economy something that was asked for the benefit of the church, especially in its glorious period. It has sent some 900 ministers to the Indies entirely at its own expense and besides several thousand comforters of the sick and teachers. It has spent millions for the spiritual welfare of its personnel and the population.”⁹² But this positive judgment is followed by a whole range of comments on “Conflicts and Problems: the Total Submission of the Church of the Indies to the Government.”⁹³ This total submission was considered the original sin of the Reformed Church in the colony. It was continued during the nineteenth century and only repaired in 1935.

G. Schutte has in several publications severely criticised this negative opinion of VOC policy. We should not judge the reality of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries by the ideals of the missionary spirit of the period 1850–1950. We should also not apply the liberal nineteenth century separation of state and church to the previous centuries. The core concept should be the *publieke kerk*, the public church, “protected and paid for by the government, the keeper of the public ethics and morality.”⁹⁴ In this vision it was the duty of the church as part of this public system to preach Reformed doctrine and to celebrate public liturgy. It has to be recognised that company officials, from the highest rank to the lowest, often did not organise their private life according to this public religion. It was the duty of the VOC and its church to preach to the sinners, and sometimes also to punish those who committed public offences. Schutte therefore has a quite positive opinion about the VOC, “The Company acted as a good Calvinist father of its personnel and governor for its citizens. It stimulated and favoured Christianity in many ways, directly and indirectly. In line with the spirit of that time, it considered religion as the foundation of morality and the kernel of society.”⁹⁵ Schutte relates the evaluation of the Reformed Church in the Netherlands to that of the VOC church. In the Netherlands there was “a national but at the same a confessional church, a New Testament Zion amidst a wicked and in many aspects depraved generation, and from the beginning of the seventeenth century also among the East India Moors and Pagans.”⁹⁶

In this chapter we found that mixed societies such as those into which VOC personnel entered, often developed double religious loyalties. Even if local people formally accepted Christianity, the orthodox Reformed blend of that

⁹² Van Boetzelaer 1947:5.

⁹³ Van Boetzelaer, title for chapter three, 50–78.

⁹⁴ Schutte 2002:239; Schutte in: Leonard Blussé & Ilonka Ooms 2002:87–99.

⁹⁵ Schutte 2002:98.

⁹⁶ Schutte 2002:23. See also the title of Schutte 2002, *Het Indisch Sion*.

religion was seldom the only religious guideline or inspiration. We have also seen that formal adherence to one religious denomination not only was promoted by religious leaders, afraid of syncretism and praising the superiority of their faith, but also by the Portuguese, Spanish, VOC and Muslim established governments who needed this single and exclusive loyalty for political reasons.⁹⁷

If we look at the historical context of VOC Christianity, we should note some other considerations as well. Dutch colonialism had a great impact on the economy of the whole archipelago. It reorganised and dominated trade and contacts between the islands. It brought Sumatran gold to India in exchange for textiles produced there. This economic impact has been tremendous. But what may be said about the cultural and more specifically religious impact of the VOC? The short Portuguese period has been more influential on the language and the music of the Indonesian archipelago than the longer period of the VOC. Kroncong music is Portuguese and at the same time it is seen as authentically Indonesian. Many more Portuguese than Dutch words have found their way into standard classical Malay. It is the same as with the Chinese who for many centuries had intensive trade relations with Indonesia. But at first it was Indian religion that was taken for rituals and literature and after the fourteenth century more and more Islamic influence in culture and religion was accepted. There never were as many Arabs in the archipelago as Chinese, perhaps not even a tenth of their number, but the Chinese have never had the cultural and certainly not the religious influence of Arab and Indian Muslims. Was it the same case with the VOC Dutch who dominated the international economy of the archipelago but did not extend this domination to the religious sphere, except in some areas of East Indonesia like Ambon-Lease, Sangir-Talaud and Rote-Kupang?

In the classical Malay and Javanese literature up to the 1850s the Dutch are virtually absent. They are there of course as 'infidels' in the Malay poem on the war on Makassar of the 1660s when the Dutch together with the Muslim Buginese fought against the Muslim Makassarese. But in the great encyclopaedic collection of Javanese poetry, the *Serat Centhini* (composed between 1650 until the last version of 1823), there are no Dutch on Java. Although the structure of the some 3,000 pages of this epic poem is about travel to most regions of Java, east and west, north and south, the marginal position of the Dutch in Batavia and some other coastal towns is absolutely neglected in the *Serat Centhini*.⁹⁸

⁹⁷ Steenbrink 2003:446–466.

⁹⁸ See Van der Linden 1937; for this and the following also Steenbrink 1990:141–167.

One of the very few references to Dutch religion in the Javanese literature of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries is in the *Babad Suropati*, the story of Suropati, probably a runaway Balinese slave of Batavia turned Muslim, who as an adventurer collected his own army (or should we use the modern term *militia*, a band of independent soldiers). He revolted against the Sultan of Banten in the 1670s and then fought and plundered in Central Java until he founded a realm of his own in East Java, Blambangan, where he became a respected ruler. In one of the episodes of the romantic story of this man, he falls in love with the daughter of the Dutch Governor General. The relationship is, of course, forbidden according to local customs anywhere in Indonesia and also according to Muslim law, as in this story Suropati and the daughter of the high Dutch official were nourished by the same mother. But then the girl says, “According to Dutch religion, as long as we are of the same mind, it can be sanctified by religion, even though you are my adoptive brother. Let us go into this beautiful sleeping-chamber and enjoy the pleasure of love on the bed.”⁹⁹ This is what many Indonesians of that period saw and experienced of VOC Christianity. Religious identity was not the first and most important thing for the Dutch. They respected other religions, were hesitant to begin religious debates, even forbade them to their officials, and were confirming religious boundaries. In private life, the most obvious thing was that the men took women from all regions and all religions without many problems. Jan Pieterszoon Coen repeatedly complained that “we Christians set less value on the honour of our wives than the Turks, Moors and pagans.”¹⁰⁰ Finally he stated that:

One should also be aware that these southern people are much more devout in their religion than our northern people are in theirs. Therefore both Christians and Mahometans should leave things as they are for the time being. But the people who are sent here ought to be peaceful and experienced rather than coarse, uncircumcised idiots. This is mostly the case with ministers, as a result of which their name has fallen into contempt and has almost become an object of ridicule. It is a pity that only such people as one sees here are called to the office of minister or deacon. It is almost as if we ourselves never speak of religion.¹⁰¹

This is the spicy language of Coen. In his style he explains why the expansion of Christianity was halted in the seventeenth century, except in a few regions. He also explains that religion was a marginal affair in the VOC’s business, while in respect of culture and religion as a whole the VOC period was just a marginal affair in Indonesian society as a whole. This chapter has been mostly

⁹⁹ Ann Kumar 1976:300.

¹⁰⁰ Colenbrander 1919–1952-III: 886 (from 1622).

¹⁰¹ Colenbrander 1919–1952-VI:474.

devoted to describing this process as well as discussing the few regions where VOC Christianity had some impact.

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PART TWO

1800–2005: CHRONOLOGICAL AND REGIONAL SURVEYS

CHAPTER SIX

1800–2005: A NATIONAL OVERVIEW

The Colonial era: 1800–1900

State, church, and missionary societies

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the political and religious situation in Indonesia had undergone significant changes compared with the preceding centuries. As of 31 December 1799, the Dutch East India Company (VOC) was declared bankrupt and its assets were taken over by the Dutch State. As the Netherlands had allied itself with France, during the next years all Dutch overseas possessions were lost to the English. But after peace had been restored (1815) the territory of what nowadays is Indonesia was restored to the newly established Kingdom of the Netherlands. The Dutch left the existing administrative structure in the overseas territories more or less intact, but from now on government policy in the Indies was no longer determined by a body of merchants but by the Dutch Crown and, after 1849, increasingly by Parliament. Correspondingly, it was no longer focused on trade alone, but became more and more guided by territorial and, as the century wore on, to some degree by modern 'humanitarian' ambitions. During the nineteenth century, many regions of the Netherlands East Indies, as the remaining Dutch colonial possessions in Asia came to be called, were not yet effectively controlled by the colonial government. In several regions dominated by Islam, Dutch occupation was opposed in prolonged freedom wars. Only during a short period, from 1906 until the downfall of the Dutch empire in Asia in 1942, was the whole of modern Indonesia ruled from Batavia, nowadays Jakarta.

In Europe, too, the political situation underwent significant changes. One important change was the separation of church and state, which in the Netherlands was brought into force in 1796. Under the *Ancien Régime* the state was supposed to profess a certain religion. The church embodying that religion was the established church. Other churches and religions might or might not be tolerated, but in any case the established church was to be supported by all means which were at the disposal of the state. In practice, of course, governments let themselves be guided by secular interests. The VOC suppressed Catholicism in its dominions, because it was the religion of its Portuguese enemy. But it would not act towards Islam or even the Chinese religion in the same way, because Islam was too strong and because it needed the Chinese. Conversely, the neutrality of the Dutch State after 1796 did not

mean that henceforth the State took no interest in religion or even in particular churches and their activities in the East Indies, including missions. It did, until the very end of the colonial era, again because that served its interests. However, it was not supposed to give preferential treatment to any church or religion. The tendency to keep religion at arm's length was strengthened by the ever-increasing secularisation of Dutch society in general and of the European community in the Netherlands Indies in particular. Essentially the new colonial government did not consider the church, let alone mission, to be its affair.

The resulting gap could have been filled by the Netherlands Reformed Church (*Hervormde Kerk*). Actually, during the seventeenth century this church had been competing with the VOC authorities for the control of the congregations and the mission work overseas. However, now that the state was willing to withdraw, the church was not able to seize its chance, struggling as it was to overcome the crisis ensuing from its separation from the state. Therefore the state, in the person of the rather authoritarian King William I (1814–1840), felt it incumbent on itself to look after the existing indigenous Christian communities. Together with the European (Protestant) Christians, these communities were organised into a single Protestant Church in the Netherlands Indies, which eventually included even the Lutherans, and which maintained close ties with the government in financial and organisational matters. Throughout the century, this Protestant Church included the great majority of the Indonesian Christians and most Protestants of European descent. Even as late as 1942 its members still accounted for 40% of all Protestant Christians in Indonesia. In 1935, the organisational ties with the state were severed, but until the very end of the colonial era all church activities were financed by the government (1950). Characteristically the church order, called '*Reglement*' (Regulation, 1844), did not contain a creedal formula.

At least during the nineteenth century the Protestant Church was just a government agency for the fulfilment of the religious needs of its Protestant subjects. As such, it was not supposed to do any missionary work. Even if the government had allowed it to do so, the leadership of the church would not have felt an inner urge towards mission, like there had been in the Reformed Church of the Netherlands and its representatives in the Indies during the seventeenth and the first part of the eighteenth centuries. Nevertheless, some of its members took an interest in the propagation of the faith. In Java, Eurasians reached out to the Muslim population and in this way contributed to the birth of indigenous churches. In East Indonesia, especially in the Moluccas, on the instigation of the missionaries indigenous Christians established associations which diffused information and collected money. Many entered the service of missionary societies in other regions as teachers and evangelists, even as far as North Sumatra. In many regions they formed the backbone of the mis-

sion, especially during the first years after the opening of a mission field. After 1900 the European leadership of the Protestant Church started mission work in as yet unoccupied territories in the southern Moluccas, Timor, and some areas in Sulawesi (Celebes) and Kalimantan (Borneo). For political reasons, the government permitted these activities and even actively supported them. At the same time the Indonesian personnel of the church became ever more numerous and well-educated.

During the second half of the eighteenth century there had been a rising tide of missionary interest among individual Christians in the Netherlands as well as in other European countries. They joined hands in missionary societies, which in most cases had no formal ties with any church. Two years after the London Missionary Society had come into existence, Dutch Christians followed suit by founding the *Nederlandsch Zendeling Genootschap* (NZG, 1797–1946). Here the initiative was taken by J.Th. van der Kemp (1747–1811), who subsequently became a missionary in South Africa. During the nineteenth century more societies were founded. They divided the Netherlands Indies among themselves or were allotted territories by the government, and set about christianising the population of these territories. As the Dutch missionary societies did not have access to sufficient personnel and financial means to evangelise the whole archipelago, the Dutch government allowed foreign missions to come and share the burden. The most important of these was the *Rheinische Missionsgesellschaft* (RMG) from Germany.

The Protestants could not maintain their monopoly position in the overseas territories. As a sizeable minority of the population of the Netherlands had remained Roman Catholic, there had always been Catholics among the European personnel of the VOC, but they were not allowed to have priests or church buildings. Visiting priests, if caught, would be put on board a ship and expelled. This situation was changed by the separation of Church and State. In 1808 two priests established themselves on the island of Java. The Pope organised the Netherlands Indies as an Apostolic Prefecture (from 1842: an Apostolic Vicariate). For the time being, the few priests arriving in the Indies restricted themselves to working among Catholics of European descent in the cities of Java. Only after the arrival of Jesuit missionaries (1859) was Catholic mission work started in other regions as well. As for the relationship of the Catholic Church with the State, the government attempted to treat it in the same way as it did the Protestant Church, but this church, being essentially supra-national, could not as easily be harnessed to the interests of the State. After years of conflict, the colonial state had to recognise its independence (*Nota der Punten*, 1847). The existing parishes were financed by the State, on the same basis as the Protestant Church.

Throughout the nineteenth century, the relationship among the Protestant missionary societies working in Indonesia hardly posed a problem. There was

no case of missionaries intruding in regions already 'occupied' by another mission. The government, bent on preventing any cause of unrest among the indigenous population, would have forbidden them. It could do so, because according to the statutes regulating the government of the Netherlands Indies (*Regeeringsreglement*, 1854) every European 'clergyman,' Dutch or foreign, needed a special permit to perform religious tasks, including mission work, a permit that was always restricted to a well-circumscribed area. This policy was popularly known as the "ban on double mission." Actually, all Protestant missions entering before 1900 (with the exception of the Baptists) belonged to churches of the Reformed or mixed Lutheran-Reformed type, so that there was no motive to reach out to people outside the territory allotted to them. After the turn of the century, other denominations came in, that did not feel obliged to honour the comity principle (Methodists, Adventists, the Pentecostal movement, Christian and Missionary Alliance). The Roman Catholic Church also for reasons of principle rejected any limit imposed upon its expansion. In some cases, especially in the Minahasa, it succeeded in circumventing the ban on double mission. The Protestants very much resented the encroachment of the Roman Catholic Church upon their traditional territories. As a consequence, the relationship between the two confessions, which during the first decades after 1800 had been surprisingly good, deteriorated after 1860. The ban on double mission was never formally lifted, but towards the end of the colonial era it was no longer enforced. In independent Indonesia it does not exist; here the problem is no longer the relationship among Christian denominations, but that between Christianity and Islam.

The Indonesians

During the nineteenth century, most Indonesians still lived in a traditional context. The other European countries had recognised Dutch sovereignty over what nowadays is Indonesia, but large parts of the archipelago had not yet passed under Dutch domination. The territories that were effectively dominated by the colonial government were for the greater part ruled by native princes and chiefs, supervised by a Dutch government official. The economic penetration of the archipelago had hardly begun. The *Cultuurstelsel* (a system in which the farmers were forced to grow commercial crops) had a great impact on the economy of Java and some regions of the Outer Islands, but was largely carried out by the village administration. As a consequence, throughout the nineteenth century most Indonesians never saw a European in their life, and if they saw one, there was every chance that he was a missionary. Even on the island of Java, very few people had received Western-style education. Outside Batavia, there was hardly an Indonesian to be found who spoke Dutch. Malay, the native language of populations in Malaya and the east coast of Sumatra,

had over the centuries developed into a *lingua franca* in the coastal towns, and had been adopted by the Christianised Ambonese, but was hardly known outside those areas.

In many regions, Islam had become part and parcel of the traditional context. After a great leap forward in the sixteenth century, this religion had expanded gradually, and by 1800 it was well-established in most coastal areas and in large parts of the interior of Sumatra, Kalimantan and Sulawesi and in many smaller islands as well. Only in North Sumatra, Central Kalimantan, North and Central Sulawesi, and in most of (thinly populated) East Indonesia, tribal religions, centred around the adat, the customary law inherited from the ancestors, were still alive, with tiny spots of Christianity in the Minahasa and the islands beyond, the Central Moluccas, and Timor. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, indigenous Protestant Christians numbered about 40,000 (as compared to about 16,000 in 1605). At that time there were a few thousand Catholics of European descent in Java. Among the Indonesians Catholicism had only survived in Flores and surrounding islands, which until 1859 remained under Portuguese rule; in that year the Catholics there numbered about 11,000. From an estimated population of 7 million for the whole archipelago, that makes about 0.7% Christian. Muslims can be safely estimated to have constituted about 85%, which is more or less the same percentage as today. In the second half of the eighteenth century, Hinduism had been finally driven out of Java; now it was restricted to the islands of Bali and Lombok. Of the Chinese immigrants, who were mainly to be found on Java, Bangka and Belitung, and in West Kalimantan, the great majority kept to their traditional religions.

Missions and missionaries

As has been expounded above, in nineteenth-century Indonesia Protestant Christianity was represented by the Protestant Church and by the missionary societies. Until 1859, when the Indonesian mission was assigned to the Jesuits, the Catholic Church was served by secular clergy. After 1900 other religious orders gradually took over most of the missionfield. Because the Catholic mission work began to prosper only in the twentieth century, this chapter will mostly deal with Protestant mission work in Indonesia.

Between 1800 and 1900, about fifteen missionary societies started working in the Netherlands Indies. Most of these remained active until the end of the colonial era and beyond. The largest of them was the German *Rheinische Missionsgesellschaft*, which succeeded in founding churches in South Kalimantan (from 1835) and North Sumatra (Batakland, from 1862). Among the Dutch mission bodies, the *Nederlandsch Zendeling Genootschap* (NZG) was the oldest and largest. During the first half of the century it

provided part of the personnel of the Protestant Church, especially in eastern Indonesia. The most renowned of these was Joseph Kam (1769–1833), ‘the apostle of the Moluccas,’ under whose direction the Church of the Moluccas was revitalised. But the NZG started mission work of its own in the Minahasa (northern tip of Sulawesi, 1831), in East Java (1849), among the Karo Batak in North Sumatra (1890), and in Central Sulawesi (1892). When, due to doctrinal disputes, many orthodox members broke away (1858–1864), it no longer had sufficient means to care for the large number of Christians in the Minahasa field, who were then incorporated into the Protestant Church (1874). Those who left the NZG founded several new societies. The *Nederlandsche Zendingsvereniging* (NZV) began mission work in Muslim West Java (1863); the *Utrechtsche Zendingsvereniging* (UZV) took over the work started in 1855 by German faith missionaries in western New Guinea (1862) and initiated a mission on the neighbouring island of Halmahera (1866). Also, there were several societies based on a particular church confession: the Mennonite *Doopsgezinde Zendingsvereniging* (DZV) from 1851 onward worked in the northernmost part of Central Java, while a conservative Calvinist mission started work in other parts of Central Java, which was afterwards taken over by the Dutch Reformed Churches (*Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland*, GKN). During the first half of the nineteenth century English and American missionaries worked in the capital, Batavia (LMS, BMS), Southern Sumatra (BMS, ABCFM), the Moluccas (BMS, Jabez Carey 1814–1818) and West Kalimantan (Dutch Reformed Church under ABCFM), but in time all these missions were discontinued. Only after 1900 did Anglo-American missions from various denominations (Methodists, Pentecostals, CAMA, Adventists), again come to the Netherlands Indies.

The home base of the missionary societies, especially those in the Netherlands, was rather narrow. They had to rely on the relatively small number of church members who showed an interest in mission work. A constant effort was needed to keep up the flow of gifts: each society published a magazine which was mainly filled with news from its own mission field, each had several agents who visited the local branches and the church congregations in his district, sympathising ministers held special services dedicated to the mission. The expenses were kept down, among other things by keeping the missionaries’ salaries as low as possible, about that received by a lower-grade civil servant. From that amount they were supposed to defray the cost of travelling and of the initiatives they took in spreading the Christian faith. In the 1850s an experiment was carried out with ‘tent-making’ missionaries, many of them Germans from Johannes Gossner’s *Berliner Mission*, who received no salary at all but were supposed to support themselves and at the same time pass on the Gospel “over the counter of their drugstore”, as it was expressed by O.G. Heldring (1804–1876), one of the advocates of a ‘tent-making ministry’ in the

mission. Of these ‘tent-makers,’ some succeeded and became both substantial people and respected missionaries, but by far the most found the combination impracticable and many had to decide whether to starve or to leave the mission. The societies were always in financial trouble. After the turn of the century the situation improved somewhat because the government began subsidising missionary schools and hospitals, and because the mission managed to obtain substantial gifts from business firms active in the colony.

With the exception of the Mennonites, all European missionary societies were rooted in territorial (national) churches. That fact influenced the choices they made on the mission field. They did not, like the Anglo-American missions after 1900, focus upon the population centres (actually, before 1900 there were very few cities in the Netherlands Indies). Generally they chose as their field the territory or part of the territory of a particular ethnic unit. To be sure, they applied church discipline with vigour, like their Anglo-American counterparts, but to them the fundamental notion was that of God’s covenant with all members of the baptised community. Accordingly, they administered infant baptism, which to most of the Anglo-American missionary societies active in Indonesia was anathema. They adhered to the traditional doctrines of the churches they were rooted in, and passed those doctrines on to their Indonesian congregations, without emphasising distinctive features. As a result, the churches which emerged from their mission work could without difficulties cooperate in a National Council of Churches (*Dewan* [from 1984: *Persekutuan*] *Gereja-gereja di Indonesia*, DGI/PGI, founded 1950), which was also joined by the churches that issued from the colonial Protestant Church. Conversely, most twentieth-century Anglo-American missions each brought along the specific doctrines which distinguished them from the traditional churches and from each other. Thus it is no surprise that after 1950 three different councils of churches emerged alongside the DGI/PGI: the Indonesian Pentecostal Council (*Dewan Pentakosta Indonesia*), the Indonesian Evangelical Alliance (*Persekutuan Injili Indonesia*), and the Baptist Alliance (*Persekutuan Baptis Indonesia*).

With the exception of the RMG which by 1900 had about 50 missionaries in North Sumatra alone (not including doctors and teachers), the number of foreign missionaries sent by these societies was very small. In 1850, the total was about 25; in 1900, when many new mission fields had been opened, it had increased to more than 150, including North Sumatra (in 1938 their number was about 250, not including more than 150 European doctors and nurses and a large number of teachers employed by Christian school boards). In addition, the Protestant Church had 30 assistant ministers who had been assigned to work exclusively among Indonesians. Almost without exception, those missionaries and assistant ministers (who usually had also graduated from mission seminaries) originated from what at the time was called “the

lower classes of society". Before entering the seminary, they had worked as skilled labourers, artisans, (small) farmers, in a few cases assistant teachers. Apart from doctors and other specialists, until the end of the colonial era missionaries with an academic degree were extremely rare. Those members of the higher classes who were friends of the mission sat on the Boards, but did not encourage their sons to leave for the mission field. In this respect the Dutch missions (and to a lesser degree the German) differed from their Anglo-American sister societies. Spiritually, most missionaries originated from pietistic or revivalist circles: orthodox in doctrine, but with an emphasis on the necessity of a conversion experience and a personal faith.

Originally, the education provided to the missionaries in the mission seminaries was quite rudimentary. It was generally believed that scientific knowledge was of no use to missionaries going to uncivilised peoples, and would even make them less fit for their task. In the course of the century the quality of their training was improved; it was extended to five or six years and came to include languages (so that they would be able to read books and reports on missionary work abroad) and other subjects of secondary education, besides an elementary knowledge of Christian theology and other religions, especially Islam. But new societies, founded by Christians reacting to new developments in "scientific" theology, usually returned to the original simplicity. In other words, the old mistakes were repeated. More than once, it was stated expressly that the future missionaries should not be taught to do theology for themselves. Their job was not to devise mission policy, but to implement the policy laid down by the boards. Nevertheless, not a few missionaries became experts in the fields of linguistics, Bible translation, and ethnology.

The status of the missionaries in the church was in keeping with their level of education, but also with the lack of interest of most churches in mission work. In the Netherlands and Germany, mission work was not a matter of the church as such, but of 'friends of the mission.' Accordingly, there was no such church office as 'missionary.' Besides, the continental churches were very strict in maintaining the requirement that a church minister should have an academic degree in theology. The missionaries were ordained by ministers active in their missionary society, but in their church this ordination had no validity whatsoever. As a consequence, they were not authorised to administer the sacraments in their home church, but by some gentlemen's agreement between the churches, the colonial government, and the missionary societies, they were given that authority on the mission field. On returning to the Netherlands, whatever their accomplishments in the mission field, they were not admitted to the ministry. In this way, towards the end of the era of mission tutelage over the Indonesian churches, it could happen that an Indonesian minister possessed an ecclesiastical status the missionary did not have, even if the latter acted as his superior. It should be added that the situation was different in the

conservative Calvinist churches in Holland, such as the *Gereformeerde Kerken* (GKN). Here it was the church itself which undertook missionary work, and without exception their missionaries had the same education and powers as their colleagues in the home congregations.

Opinion about other religions and cultures

Even if the missionaries came from the “lower classes”, they were children of nineteenth-century Europe. Certainly, with a few exceptions they were orthodox Christians, pious men and women, influenced by pietism and revivalism. But in the way they looked at non-Europeans, their religion and their culture, they did not substantially differ from their European contemporaries. This can be exemplified from their attitude towards non-Christian religions and non-Western cultures.

During most of the nineteenth century, missionary thinking about non-Christian religions was determined by the degeneration theory. After the Fall, mankind still possessed a certain knowledge of God. But because of man’s disobedience to God’s commandments, his knowledge had diminished and his moral level declined. In this paradigm, “dark(ness)”, “blind(ness)”, “sunk low” were the words most frequently used in describing the religious and moral state of the people being evangelised. Of course not all religions were on the same level. Muslims, being historically nearer to Christianity, had conserved more of the knowledge of the true God and were on a higher moral level than the adherents of tribal religions. But, then, they were avowed enemies of the Gospel and as such even more impervious to the truth. In all religions sparks of the original knowledge still were to be found, which could be used as points of departure for missionary preaching, and the basic fact that all humanity was descended from Adam guaranteed that even the most “debased” groups and individuals were within reach of salvation. This belief distinguished the thinking of the missionaries, or at least the great majority of them, from the hard-core racism which maintained that other races simply were unable to ascend to the level reached by Europeans, and would die out or forever remain in an inferior position.

Nevertheless, the missionaries’ general view of non-European peoples and cultures did not differ greatly from that held by their contemporaries. Humanity as a whole is making moral and scientific progress. On this road, Europeans are ahead of others (a missionary would add: because they had received the Gospel). Non-Europeans are lagging behind; their culture is inferior, as is their religion. The task of the missionary is not just to convince people of the falsehood of their religion and bring them to Christ, but to mould individuals into moral personalities capable of understanding and practising the Gospel, to organise them into a European-style Church, and to put them on the road to

civilisation by promoting general knowledge and raising the standard of living. Accordingly, the missionaries applauded the efforts of the colonial government to found schools, print books, build railways, improve sanitary conditions, and provide hospitals. Outside Java, where (with the exception of the Minahasa and parts of the Moluccas) until the end of the century no effective government administration had been established, the missionaries themselves endeavoured to provide education, medical care, and means for economic progress on an elementary level. If they criticised the government, it was not because the latter wanted to bring civilisation, but because it brought civilisation without the Gospel (or because its politics belied its civilising mission). In their view, progress without the Gospel could only mean disintegration.

In fact, to the missionaries, differing from government officials and private philanthropists, these civilising activities were not an end in themselves, but served to establish the Kingdom of God. Nineteenth-century Christians had renounced theocracy in the sense that to them the Kingdom of God was not primarily a political and social reality, which in its turn determined the social and moral attitudes of the individual, as it had been under the *Ancien Régime*. Nevertheless, they were no individualists. No less than the seventeenth-century Protestant ministers they strived for the realisation of the Kingdom of God in human society. The difference was that they situated it in the hearts of Christian individuals. Once a sufficient number of individuals had been converted, a Christian society would come into being. Of course, on the mission field that society would have to copy the Western model. Therefore, besides attacking non-Christian religious beliefs, the missionaries combated the indigenous world view as “superstition” and tried to suppress social customs considered immoral, not only head hunting, continuous warfare between villages, slavery, and gambling, but also the custom of marrying at a young age, giving dowries, slaughtering large numbers of animals at social events such as funerals, and cock-fighting.

Missionary method

The instructions given to the missionaries before they left for the mission field contained some provisions concerning the method to be followed. These instructions varied, but have some elements in common. The central activity was to be the verbal communication of the Gospel by preaching and through personal conversations. Two aspects of this communication were stressed: doctrines characteristic of a particular church were not to be discussed on the mission field, and the missionaries were to use the local language as much as possible. Besides preaching the Gospel, they were to establish schools. Converts were to be baptised and gathered into a congregation, but not without

a thorough preparation, so that the missionary could be sure of the purity of their intentions. From among them, the missionaries were to select suitable persons to be trained as evangelists and teachers.

These elements are in line with the religious and ideological background of the missions as pictured in the preceding section. The intellectualistic and individualistic outlook of nineteenth-century Christianity is transmitted to the mission field, as is the strong pedagogic strain in European culture. The missionary addressed himself to individuals, and he did so by proclaiming the Gospel and by teaching western science (even if on the most elementary level). Indigenous culture was in large measure ignored and, once the people had been converted, suppressed. According to the instructions, the missionaries had not the faintest idea that, perhaps, non-Europeans were entitled to a Gospel expressed in terms of their own culture, or that, perhaps, an individual approach would not be effective among people living in a collectivistic society. Actually, sometimes mission leaders and missionaries realised the inadequacy of the method employed, but their education had hardly equipped them to devise and apply an entirely new policy. When a mass movement towards Christianity occurred, the missionaries instinctively approached the people involved as individuals, not as a community, with the inevitable result that in most cases the movement petered out. Only towards the turn of the century did some missionaries, in the face of the refusal of the indigenous population to convert on the terms set by the mission, embark on a new course. At the same time, missionary theory, and increasingly missionary practice, began paying more respect to indigenous culture. During the first decades of the twentieth century, Dutch and German missions no longer ignored or suppressed indigenous culture, but endeavoured to conserve it in a purified form, *i.e.* after having eliminated the elements which were considered “pagan.”

The instructions obliged the missionaries to apply themselves to the local languages. Here, too, the policy of the missions was in line with its ideology: If the Kingdom of God is situated in the heart of the individual, this heart has to be converted, and this, according to the conviction of the time, required using the mother tongue. In some mission fields this policy was indeed implemented, for example among the Batak peoples in Northern Sumatra, the Sundanese in West Java and the Javanese in the central and eastern part of that island. In other fields, however, it was impossible to follow the instruction regarding the use of the local language. Where several languages were spoken, as in the mission fields of East Indonesia, the mission had to continue or revert to the practice of the VOC mission and introduce Malay as the language of the school and, in most cases, the church. In the regions served by the Protestant Church, Malay was invariably the language of church and school.

The response of the Indonesians: motives for accepting or not accepting Christianity

The missionaries tended to consider the Indonesians as mere passive objects. All that was required was preaching the Gospel to them. If they received it, they were supposed to have the same faith experience the missionary had. If they did not, they were deemed “hardened,” “blind,” “staying in darkness.” Reality was far more dynamic and complex.

In the first place, people accepted the Christian faith because they had reasons of their own to do so. They might, in some cases, be impressed by the personality of the missionary, and/or by the message he conveyed. Ludwig I. Nommensen (1834–1918) commanded respect because he knew the Batak language and custom so thoroughly, that he was able to participate in discussions about *adat* questions. Albert C. Kruyt (1869–1949) was honoured for the same reason and because of his ability to walk great distances in the forests and mountains of Central Sulawesi. In Papua (New Guinea or Papua Jaya) several missionaries made a strong impression because they did not flee when the village they lived in was attacked by hostile neighbours, but took part in its defence. On the other hand, in many cases the missionaries set the people to laughing because, at least during the first years, their command of the language was very limited and because they did not understand local customs. In many cases they even started preaching and translating hymns before they had mastered the language and acquired a thorough knowledge of local culture. Not infrequently the urge to preach the Gospel at any time, “in season and out of season”, was a cause of embarrassing mistakes and harmed the reputation of the missionary among the people.

As regards the message, sometimes people were attracted by monotheism, or by the notion that all humanity was of the same descent, or by the eschatological element in missionary preaching. Far-sighted individuals saw the potential of the new faith in breaking out of the vicious circle of inter-village warfare and head hunting. But in itself, all this was not sufficient to make them embrace the Christian faith. If they converted, they did so because of considerations rooted in their own religion, culture, and socio-political situation. They might, for example, perceive Christianity as the fulfilment of certain elements in their religion. They might convert because they were told to do so in dreams. Sometimes the prestige of Christianity as the religion of the powerful Europeans moved them to associate themselves with it. Some left their ancestral religion for Christianity for the seemingly trivial reason that the latter was cheaper, as it did not request them to bring sacrifices and hold expensive ceremonies. Sometimes (in situations where they felt they had to choose between Christianity and Islam) people chose Christianity because it allowed them to continue to eat pork, or it was thought to be more respectful of their *adat*.

In trying to understand the history of Christianity in Indonesia, however, it is not enough to look only for the motives of those who accepted the new religion. In most mission fields, by far the majority of the population did not (yet) accept it. Of course they, too, refused to convert for reasons of their own. In Muslim regions, especially in West Java, the aversion to and contempt for Christianity which is often found in Islam reinforced the reluctance to leave the traditional community which was an impediment to mission work everywhere. Elsewhere people did not move because they were content with their old religion, because they did not like the Dutch (or, as in Sumba, the Christian immigrants from Sawu), because they simply did not understand the message which the missionaries tried to convey, or because the policy of the missionaries to baptise freed slaves or adopt slave children had made Christianity the religion of the lowest strata of society. In Papua, mass conversion was long held up because the villages were involved in a cycle of revenge and counter-revenge. If the people of a certain village would convert (and as a consequence would renounce revenge) they would simply be wiped out.

However, the progress of mission work was also hampered by missionary policy itself. As has been said above, the mission focused on the individual, while traditional society was collectivistic. In many regions, individual property rights hardly existed, and for bringing in the harvest people depended on their neighbours. In this situation it was hardly possible for an individual person to become a Christian, because if he did, he would be robbed of his livelihood, as indeed many were. In many cases the mission provided these people with jobs or bought them a piece of land, but it could do so only on a restricted scale. So in many places the missionaries tried to solve the problem by gathering the Christians in separate villages on waste land which was then cultivated, the resident missionary acting as a religious and secular leader. To the missionaries, this solution was attractive because it enabled them to discipline the converts to form a model community. This pattern was applied almost everywhere: in Batakland (Hutadame), Java (Cideres, Mojowarno), Halmahera (Duma), Papua (Mansinam), etc. However, by separating Christians from non-Christians, spontaneous propagation of the Gospel by the Christians themselves was made nearly impossible, and Christianity was made even more alien and thereby unattractive.

During the nineteenth century on most mission fields the negative factors dominated. Only in Northern Sumatra and in the Minahasa did the mission succeed in breaking out of the deadlock. In the first region, the pioneer missionary Ludwig Nommensen initially applied the traditional method, founding the Christian village of Hutadame (1866). But when confronted with a mass movement towards Christianity, he accepted that the time had come to “use the casting net rather than the fish-hook”. He may have been the more ready to do so because in German missionary thinking *Volkstum* (nationality) was

more prominent than in the Dutch missions, and because in densely populated Batakland it was easier than in many other areas to keep an eye on the converts. The demographic factor may have been important in the Minahasa as well, but there it may have been decisive that there had been an indigenous Christian community since the sixteenth century and that, alone among all regions outside Java which still adhered to the ancestral religion, the Minahasa was under direct Dutch rule. Even if Johann F. Riedel (1798–1860) and Johann G. Schwarz (1800–1859) treated candidates for baptism with all the severity pietism could muster, the converts kept coming by their thousands. Elsewhere the individual approach was abandoned only towards the end of the century. Albert C. Kruyt in Central Sulawesi, Anton Hueting on Halmahera, and Frans J.F. van Hasselt in New Guinea became pioneers of a new policy.

The vitality of traditional religion. Indigenous Christianity

Traditional religion, too, was not as static as most missionaries supposed it was. It met the challenge posed by the new religion by adapting itself and absorbing Christian elements in a creative way. For example, on the island of Sumba, a traditional religious leader incorporated Adam and Eve in the creation myth. Elsewhere in a religious ceremony Adam and Jesus were invoked alongside the traditional gods. Or people adopted the ban on working on Sunday, making it a 'taboo' day, in order not to incur the wrath of the Christians' God. In many regions messianic movements occurred. In Papua these took the form of *Koreri* movements, or 'cargo cults,' in which prophets promised the arrival of unending quantities of goods. Mansren Mangundi, the central figure in the *Koreri* mythology, was identified with Jesus Christ.

Even when people had gone over to Christianity, traditional religion did not simply disappear. It lived on alongside the Christian faith. Usually, first generation Christians shunned all expressions of their religious past. Even if the missionaries did not object to the use of indigenous architectural style in church building, indigenous tunes in liturgy, etc., the converts would shy away from such things. The second generation seemed to have forgotten the past. But in the third generation (mostly only far into the twentieth century) tradition was revived. For example, young ministers would introduce traditional melodies and dances in Christian liturgy. Far more prominent, however, was the revival of burial ceremonies, which had been a central element in traditional culture. The participants would invoke the Christian God instead of the ancient gods and spirits, but apart from that the meaning of those ceremonies as honouring the dead (and their living relatives) and equipping them for life in the next world had not changed. It turned out that the bond between the living and the dead could not easily be severed, not by modern western culture and not by Christianity (as understood and brought by the missionar-

ies). The old gods rapidly passed into oblivion, but the ancestors remained or became again a living reality. Due to their individualistic approach, mission and church did not succeed in transforming traditional culture centring on the belief that the ancestors had a decisive influence on the well-being of the community. It is telling that Indonesian Christians often regarded (and still regard) offences against customary law as more serious than those against the rules of the church. In situations of collective crisis, such as the epidemic which occurred in the Minahasa in 1884, earthquakes, or aggression by neighbouring villages, even thoroughly christianised populations turned to the ancestors for help. Apparently Christianity as it was preached by the missionaries did not sufficiently fulfil the collective needs of society.

From the beginning, traditional religion and culture also lived on within the Christian faith. The people received the Gospel, but from the outset they interpreted it using a frame of reference of their own. The Indonesian Christians lived the faith in their own way, which inevitably was quite different from the ways of the western missionary. Generally speaking, the Gospel was understood in terms of the old magical and mythical worldview. This led to shifts in the understanding of the faith. To believe in God was not so much to hope for God's mercy on sinners, but rather to trust in His power to protect believers from evil. In the same way, Jesus was the Saviour, not from sin and guilt, but from the iron grip of evil powers. Accordingly, miracles, in the sense of divine interventions to save the faithful from misfortune, were not a thing of the biblical past, but part of everyday life. Christians also tended to understand the Gospel as a new *adat*, a law whose prescriptions had to be followed as scrupulously as those of the ancient law. Sin was not so much a disruption of the believers' personal relationship with God, but rather a breach of some rule. The missionaries responded to this tendency by drawing up "Christian adat regulations", which contained prescriptions and prohibitions in matters such as church going, marriage, burial ceremonies, keeping or not keeping to traditional customs etc. The sacraments were often understood in a magical way. Missionaries who had made a strong impression on the population were seen and remembered as mythical figures who had broken the opposition to the Gospel by performing powerful deeds, such as saving the village from danger. The Indonesian Christians' lack of understanding of the individual approach of the European missionaries was made clear by their incomprehension of both the missionaries' and the government's refusal to use force in christianising the population.

These tendencies were strongest in regions that had been christianised in the sixteenth or seventeenth centuries and now were within the Protestant Church, such as the Moluccas and the Lesser Sunda Islands. Especially in the Central Moluccas a distinct understanding of the Christian faith had developed, the *agama Ambon* (Ambonese religion). Here and in other regions people,

generally with the support of the Dutch government, even actively opposed missionaries who brought the Gospel as it was understood in mission circles in nineteenth-century Europe and thereby upset the local religious and social status quo. This caused the mission to withdraw from the Lesser Sunda Islands (1854) and the Moluccas (1864).

The lingering on of traditional religious concepts within Indonesian Christianity should not obscure the fact that some Indonesian Christians were profoundly influenced by modern western ideas. European society in the Netherlands Indies was strongly secularised; professed freethinkers were numerous (Multatuli was one of them). Not a few ministers of the Protestant Church and even some missionaries were theological liberals. In some regions, Indonesians from the upper class, like village chiefs or government clerks, knew the Dutch language and had regular contacts with Europeans. Some of them adopted liberal and secular concepts, and just like their European friends looked down on the traditional Christianity of most missionaries and indigenous Christians. As most missions worked in isolated regions, this phenomenon for the most part occurred within the Protestant Church, especially in the Minahasa. Sometimes people even moved directly from their traditional religion and world view to modern secularism without becoming Christians first. In the first decades of the twentieth century, when higher education became available, Christian intellectuals like Dr. G.S.S.J. Ratulangie (1890–1949), himself a Minahasan, kept aloof from the European-led churches and together with adherents of other religions devoted themselves to secular causes, such as the nationalist movement.

Unlike Africa, in Indonesia the transformation of the Gospel in indigenous Christianity hardly gave birth to “indigenous” churches. The missionaries (like later Indonesian ministers) brought the Gospel as they understood it, the people accepted it for reasons of their own and in their own way, which in large part was not perceived by the missionaries, or, if perceived, not seen in its actual context. They accepted the forms imported by the missionaries, at least in public worship. Up to the present a gap often exists between official theology and preaching on the one hand, and the way ordinary Christians (or even their leaders) believe the Gospel on the other hand. In this, the church in Indonesia is not much different from the rest of world Christianity.

Christian worship. Bible translations

Collective worship was introduced as soon as possible, even before there were converts. In the first stage, church buildings were simple, shed-like structures, built from bamboo or wood. But once sizeable congregations had been established, more permanent buildings were erected, which seated hundreds or even over a thousand. Throughout the nineteenth century, nowhere did the

missionaries use indigenous building styles. When some started to do so in the twentieth century, the indigenous churches did not adopt this initiative. Even now, church buildings applying indigenous architecture are extremely rare in Indonesia.

In most cases, from the outset worship followed the pattern familiar to the missionaries from their home congregations. Preaching stressed the contrast between the darkness and sinfulness of paganism and the salvation provided by the Christian faith. It was Christo-centric, in the sense that Jesus was proposed to the audience as the Saviour and they were exhorted to take refuge in His saving grace. The Indonesian assistant preachers usually followed this pattern. But the few sermons which have survived show that some were able to bring home to their audience the essentials of Christian believing and living in a very effective way.

Singing invariably used western tunes. On the rare occasions that a missionary wanted to use traditional melodies, he met with opposition from the newly converted themselves, who felt that the tunes from their heathen past brought them back under the dominion of evil spirits. Besides, there were some practical difficulties: traditional tunes were known only in a restricted area, and it was difficult to adapt them to the strophic form which had been characteristic of Western church singing from the times of the Early Church. An exception was Java, where missionaries valued the efforts of some Christian leaders to use *tembang*, sung poetry, for diffusing biblical stories. The rhymed version of the psalms in Malay by Georg Werndly (1735) was still used. Only in 1908 was it replaced by a version in more modern Malay, composed by the Protestant assistant minister C.Ch.J. Schröder. In addition, several nineteenth-century missionaries published translations of European hymns. In Dutch mission fields, the hymn books almost exclusively contained tunes of the pietist and revivalist type. The German missionaries, however, introduced the Lutheran tradition in hymn singing, so that in their mission fields, especially in Batakland (North Sumatra), the hymnals also contained many hymns from the sixteenth and seventeenth century.

The missions wished to provide the converts with a Bible in their own language. The complete Bible had been published in Malay in 1733 in a language which was heavily influenced by Persian and Arabic. This Leijdecker Bible became the King James Version of the Malay-speaking Christians in Indonesia. The nineteenth-century missionaries, who pursued the ideal of bringing the Gospel to the heart and mind of the people, from the beginning endeavoured to translate portions of the Bible into regional languages. They started with the pericopes they needed in their church services, but soon went on. Without exception the New Testament was translated first, then the Old Testament. To give just a few examples: the New Testament appeared in Javanese 1831, when there were hardly any Javanese-speaking Christians, the

complete Bible in 1854; in Ngaju Dayak 1846/1858, in Sundanese 1877/1891, in Toba Batak 1878/1894. Some of these bible translations are still used today in a revised version, as are the dictionaries and grammars produced by these missionary translators. Their efforts greatly contributed to the conservation and development of regional languages. Among them may be named August Hardeland (1814–1891) in Kalimantan, Sierk Coolsma (1840–1926) in West Java, Pieter Jansz (1820–1904) in Central Java, Heinrich Sundermann (1848–1919) on the island of Nias. Not all translations were made by missionaries; the Netherlands Bible Society (NBS, founded 1814 after the example of the B&FBS) trained and sent a number of specialised translators, of whom N. Adriani (1865–1926, Central Sulawesi) was the most famous. Of course all bible translators had to rely on Indonesian assistants. But not until the second half of the twentieth century did Indonesians themselves translate the Bible into their mother tongues.

In regions where Malay had become the language of the church, Leijdecker's version was soon considered antiquated. In 1879, the NBS published a new translation by the Mennonite missionary H.C. Klinkert. It is no surprise that in the Moluccas this translation was never accepted. The Moluccan Christians clung to the Leijdecker version, which in their eyes was Holy Scripture incarnate, even if lists had to be compiled containing the translation of words which had become (or had always been) unintelligible. The Klinkert Bible was generally used in the Malay (Indonesian) speaking churches until 1974 (New Testament 1938).

Church organisation

By their instructions, and by the repeated injunctions of the mission boards, the missionaries were cautioned not to baptise converts prematurely. This guideline was throughout to the liking of most missionaries. Originating from Christian groups stressing individual sanctification, they tried to create similar groups on the mission field. People who asked for baptism had to follow a catechism course. The handbooks mostly were translations of Dutch or German originals. In addition, converts were put on trial: their behaviour was watched carefully by the missionary. Mostly this probationary period lasted one or two years, but in some cases it took up to ten years for the candidate to be baptised. Once admitted to the congregation, they were expected to behave like born-again Christians, and were put under church discipline if they failed. It is telling that registers of baptisms sometimes had a separate column: "apostate." Usually the missionaries did not disturb traditional ceremonies or destroy statues, amulets and other objects belonging to the sphere of traditional religion while the people still clung to it. But once they had converted, performing traditional ceremonies was not tolerated anymore

and objects connected with the ancestral religion were thrown into the sea or burnt; some escaping this fate as they found their way into ethnographic collections put together by the missionary societies in Europe. As has been said above, often traditional practices went on in secret. Church members were also supposed to wear decent clothes, to cut their hair, and generally were given “Christian” names. It is important to observe that the converts did not protest the prescriptions regarding their outward appearance and names. For them, even more than for the missionaries, it was self-evident that joining a new community meant adopting a new life style.

The Christian communities into which the converted were gathered were not churches in the proper sense of the word. In many mission fields the Christians were assembled in one village. The resident missionary acted as spiritual and in some cases also as secular leader of the community. Sometimes he was assisted by elders, who generally had been appointed by him. In the few regions where missionary work met with success in an early stage (North Sumatra, North Sulawesi), these villages became the mother congregations. Other Christian groups were led by local teacher-preachers, and often senior Christians were appointed elders. Both teacher-preachers and elders were always closely supervised by the missionary. Throughout the century, with the exception of the RMG mission field in North Sumatra, nowhere were local and regional church councils constituted in the sense of autonomous governing bodies. In some regions regional conferences of mission workers or senior congregational members were held, but these conferences did not function as regional consistories or synods in the sense of the Presbyterian church order. Everywhere the missionary acted as a kind of superintendent; his power in his district was only limited by the supervision of the far-away mission board and—increasingly—by his colleagues. After regular consultations of the missionaries in a certain mission field had been introduced (first in North Sumatra; in the Dutch mission only after the turn of the century), the conference of missionaries, as it was called, acted as the highest authority in a mission field. It was not until the first decades of the twentieth century that Indonesian churches were given an organisation of their own; full independence was not realised until the internment of the missionaries (1940, 1942).

In the Protestant Church, the hierarchical pattern was much more conspicuous and also more formalised, as the church was organised along the lines of a government agency. At the top there was the Church Board in Batavia (until 1844, the church council of Batavia acted as the Church Board). The members were appointed by the governor general from among three candidates submitted by the Board. They were all Europeans. Only towards the end of the colonial era, when Indonesians had already entered the highest echelons of government, did the Board include a few Indonesian Christians. The Church was served by about forty ministers (*predikant*), appointed by

a joint committee of the Dutch government and the Netherlands Reformed Church. They all had the same qualifications and the same powers as their colleagues in the Netherlands. As senior government officials, they received a high salary. Most served the European and Eurasian members of the church, but those stationed in Eastern Indonesia were given the task of supervising the indigenous congregations in the regions belonging to the Protestant Church. Until 1942 no Indonesian was ever admitted to the full ministry.

To fulfil the needs of the indigenous members of the Protestant Church, in 1863 the office of assistant minister (*hulpprediker*) was created. They had usually graduated from mission seminaries and like the missionaries were authorised to administer the sacraments, but in the colony only. In 1917 for the first time an Indonesian was admitted to this office. As government officials of lower rank the assistant ministers were subordinated to the local or regional ministers. In their turn they supervised the Indonesian workers in the lower echelons of the church: *inlands leraar* (indigenous teacher-preacher), who were in charge of the major congregations, *guru jemaat* in the villages, and a host of auxiliary personnel. During the nineteenth century only the regional capitals had church councils; after the turn of the century the number of these gradually increased.

In the matter of self-support, too, the mission and the Protestant Church differed. In the latter, everything was paid for by the government: the salaries of European and indigenous workers, the construction and maintenance of church buildings and schools, administration costs etc. On the mission fields, too, the congregations did not have to pay the salaries of those serving them. However, here a beginning was made with the education of the indigenous Christians towards self-support. They were, for example, made responsible for the construction of church and school buildings. One of the factors hampering progress in this matter was that many mission fields did not yet have a money economy. Self-propagation was, paradoxically, stronger in the first years of a mission than afterwards. When the mission entered a field, or even before (East and Central Java), often indigenous or Eurasian evangelists sprang up, who explained the Gospel as they understood it, in a way their fellow-countrymen could comprehend. Among the Javanese, Tunggal Wulung (± 1803–1885) and Sadrach Suropranoto (1840–1924), both converted Muslims, were instrumental in winning thousands for the faith. However, the Protestant Church ministers and even most missionaries looked with suspicion at their activities, and with the mission taking control these charismatic leaders faded into the background or, as in the case of Sadrach, came into conflict with the foreign mission.

Indonesian mission personnel

Initially, the education of the teacher-preachers was very rudimentary. A missionary would take a number of boys and girls (mostly not yet baptised) into his family. They were given household tasks, taught discipline, and received elementary education. After a few years the boys were baptised and employed as teachers and/or evangelists, whereas the girls by their education were suitable brides for these assistants of the missionary or for Christian village chiefs. Actually, this system was not different from the way indigenous religious leaders passed on their sacred knowledge to the next generation. However, it could not fulfil the needs of an expanding mission. Sooner or later a teacher training institute had to be founded, with a qualified European teacher as its head. Because the teachers often acted as local preachers and evangelists, the curriculum had to include theological subjects. Pioneers in this field were B.N.J. Roskott (1811–1873) in the Moluccas and N. Graafland (1827–1898) in the Minahasa.

In the long term, increasing specialisation made it necessary to separate the two functions: theological education was provided in seminaries, which after 1945 developed into academic institutions. These training schools and seminaries, such as the mission Seminary of Pansur Napitu-Sipoholon in Batakland (1877), or the STOVIL founded by the Protestant Church at Tomohon (Minahasa, 1868) and Ambon (1885), were of great importance for building the regional churches. The Depok Seminary, near Jakarta, functioned on a national level and in particular served the needs of a number of small mission fields. The curriculum of these seminaries did not include Hebrew and Greek, indeed not even Dutch or German, while as yet there were hardly any theological publications in Malay. Consequently, the students were not trained and equipped to think for themselves, but depended on the lecture notes of their teachers—who throughout the nineteenth century were not academic theologians, but basically had the same educational background as their fellow missionaries. Only in 1934 was a theological institute led by professional theologians finally founded in Jakarta.

It would be unreasonable to reproach the missionaries for not establishing a different type of theological education. They themselves had received a bible-school type of education, among other things because mission leaders in the homeland were firmly convinced that academic education would extinguish their missionary urge. In this view they were confirmed by the empirical fact that in the Netherlands (and in Germany) hardly a theologian could be found who was willing to leave for the mission field. How then could the missionaries or the mission boards be expected to act differently in the mission field? Moreover, even if they would have wished to do so, there was no educational basis for such an enterprise. The Dutch government began

founding Dutch-language secondary (or even primary) schools for Indonesians only after 1900, and the first government institution for higher education was founded in 1924.

Once they had finished their studies, the seminary graduates were employed, not by a local church, which did not yet exist, but by the mission. Just as the local church councils could not govern the congregations independently of the missionary, so the teacher-preachers had to recognise the missionary as their chief, whose instructions they had to obey. Actually, their relationship with him mirrored his own relationship with his mission board, and their lack of an ecclesiastical context was in line with his extra-ecclesiastical status. The Indonesian workers were not even introduced to their office by any ordination whatsoever, and they could not administer the sacraments. The only exception was the Batak Mission (RMG), which from 1885 onwards ordained indigenous ministers (*pandita Batak*). But even there the church ministers continued to be under the supervision of the missionaries. The Protestant Church and the Dutch missions started granting Indonesians the authority to administer the sacraments only in the first decades of the twentieth century, and only to senior *gurus*. When the churches gained autonomy (beginning with the Batak Church, 1930), all leaders of at least the major congregations were ordained as fully authorised ministers. But in some mission fields, such as Central Sulawesi and New Guinea, as late as 1942 not one indigenous Christian could administer baptism.

It cannot be stressed enough that the missionary work could not have succeeded without the dedicated efforts of the Indonesian workers. In the first years of a mission field, they would be few. But once schools had been founded and congregations sprang up, their number multiplied. Some missionaries openly admitted that hardly anybody had ever converted through their personal influence. After schools and congregations had been established, most of the time of the European missionary was absorbed by administrative tasks, especially after the government had started to subsidise the mission schools and requested the mission to report on the results obtained. The rest of his time was taken up by tours of inspection, during which he also had to administer Baptism and the Lord's Supper in every congregation, as the indigenous congregation leaders were not authorised to do so. The latter were much nearer to the people. In not a few cases their social standing helped them in persuading the people to join the flock. The missionaries were aware of this and mostly chose children from the upper classes to be educated as teacher-preachers.

Missions and the colonial state

The missions have been severely reproached, by Indonesian Muslims and by modern Western historians, for adapting themselves to the colonial order and

for cooperating willingly with the colonial government. In this connection, the following observations can be made.

Nineteenth-century Christianity had renounced theocracy; it had more or less accepted the separation of church and state. Accordingly, the missions did not enlist the help of the state in christianising the population, even where the state, for reasons of its own, was willing to provide assistance. Even financial support was not accepted if directed to evangelisation work proper. That the Protestant Church was financed by the state, was one of the reasons why it was held in contempt by the missionary societies (another was the liberal theology of many of its ministers). It is interesting to note that the Indonesian Christians often expressed their disapproval of this reticence. They could not appreciate the subtleties of nineteenth-century thinking about the relationship of church and state and could not understand that a Christian government, as they saw it, did not simply use its authority to coerce its subjects into accepting the religion it allegedly professed.

However, the practice of the missionary societies was not as pure as their doctrine. In the first place, the mission took advantage of the civilising activities of the colonial government. As they followed the same western model, these activities to a large extent coincided with the ideals pursued by the mission, but they undermined traditional religion far more effectively because they were backed up by the authority and the military force of the government. When around the turn of the century the colonial government started to occupy the Outer Islands, the missionaries, who had been working there with scant result for several decades, welcomed and in some cases even invited the establishing of a regular administration because they hoped this would enable them to break out of the impasse, as indeed it did. During the first decades of the twentieth century, when the colonial government embarked on a large-scale development policy, the Dutch and in a lesser degree the German missions cooperated enthusiastically. They did so not without great profit to themselves: the government took advantage of their educational and medical activities and granted generous subsidies for their schools and hospitals. Indirectly, these subsidies were a great help in evangelisation, because the teachers of mission village schools also acted as evangelists and preachers.

During the nineteenth century, the missionaries regularly uttered severe criticisms of the colonial system. While the system of compulsory crops was still in force (until the 1860s), they reproached the government for bleeding dry the Javanese population to the benefit of the Dutch treasury. When a more liberal economic policy had been adopted, their complaints were mostly directed against the entrepreneurs who robbed the Javanese peasants of their land and converted it into plantations which produced for the world market. They also criticised the government for not sufficiently keeping in check the indigenous elite, which oppressed the people even more than did

the colonial rulers—a theme elaborated masterfully by the contemporaneous Dutch author Multatuli in his *Max Havelaar*. Phrases reminiscent of Multatuli can be found in many a letter written by missionaries. Actually, the workers on the mission field were far more critical than the members of the mission board in the mother country. This disparity can be explained by the fact that for the former the abuses and wrongs were a living reality, while the board members lived in far-away Holland. For example, the missionaries saw with their own eyes how small landholders lost their land by the machinations of European plantation owners and Javanese village chiefs, or, for that matter, how the population of Java sided with the Acehnese when independent Aceh was attacked by the Dutch (1873). These experiences made them come forward as the defenders of the people against their indigenous and foreign oppressors. Another factor is that the missionaries originated from the lower strata of society, which during the nineteenth century had not yet been given the right to vote, while their superiors sitting on the boards mostly belonged to the upper middle class and were for the greater part deeply involved in the political and economic system. Accordingly, in most cases critical remarks made by the missionaries were deleted when their letters and reports were published in the mission magazines.

The harsh criticism of the colonial government by the missionaries did not mean that they opposed the colonial system itself. Not belonging to the cultural elite, they were nevertheless, as has been said above, deeply convinced of the superiority of western, “Christian” civilisation. Their teachers for the most part belonged to a theological school which had absorbed those superiority feelings, and instilled that way of thinking in their pupils. Even if they criticised the colonial government severely, they did not criticise it for being there, but for not acting according to the lofty ideals professed by modern western society. In their view, if the colony were given independence the situation of the common people would be even worse, because they would be left to the mercy of the indigenous elite which, if left free, would again oppress them. Colonialism meant advancement of the colonised; the state had to act as their guardian in secular matters, as the mission was to do in things spiritual. Independence was to be the goal in both fields, but in both it was to be realised in a distant future, when the pupils would have reached maturity. Only once was the colonial order put under fundamental attack by a mission leader, who in 1886 aired his grievances in terms that could have been used by Karl Marx himself. But he was a minister of the then still marginal Christian Reformed Church, and even he eight years later bewailed the defeat of a Dutch military force on the island of Lombok at the hands of the “treacherous Balinese.” The attitude of the missionaries became even more positive after the turn of the century, when the government started an extensive development program for the benefit of the indigenous population, in which it involved the missions,

lavishly subsidising them. After 1915, criticisms as uttered during the nineteenth century are heard no more.

For the time being, the Indonesian Christians accepted the political stance of the missionaries as they did their religious paternalism. During the nineteenth century there was no national movement in the modern sense of the word. Resistance to the Dutch was always regional in character, and almost without exception it was instigated by the traditional elite and/or by Muslim leaders. As the Christians belonged to neither group, they were not inclined to join the opposition to the Dutch. Moreover, the men they considered as their spiritual fathers and leaders were themselves Dutch. In the Outer Islands, where most Christians were found, until the end of the century the hand of the Dutch was hardly felt. The only instance of Christians revolting against the colonial government is the rebellion of some islands in the Moluccas in 1817. Significantly one of the causes of this rebellion was the suspicion by the population that the government would cease the payment of their schoolmasters (who acted as leaders of the local congregations) and take away a number of schools. Anyhow, this event was only an isolated incident. For the time being, the Indonesian Christians accepted the presence of the Dutch government as they did the religious paternalism of the missionaries. At a later time, with the emergence of the national movement, at least a number of them would develop a more independent frame of mind, both in political and in ecclesiastical matters.

The nineteenth century as the great century of Christian mission?

For Indonesia, as for other parts of Asia and Africa, the nineteenth century was “the great century of Christian missions,” but only in a territorial sense. By 1900, with the exception of some staunchly Muslim regions such as Aceh and West Sumatra, missions were established in the entire country. However, compared to the situation at the beginning of the century, the number of Christians had hardly increased. Non-European Catholics numbered 26,464; the number of Protestants was about 250,000, as against 11,000 and 40,000 respectively a hundred years earlier. Among these, the Chinese numbered only a few hundred. In the meantime the population of the archipelago had increased more than fourfold to about thirty million. In the case of the Protestants, the growth in numbers was mainly due to the success of the mission in two regions, the Minahasa (100,000) and Tapanuli (43,000). The poor results in other parts of the archipelago should be attributed to the extremely limited personal and financial means available to the mission, but more still to the inadequacy of the method used. However, the foundations had been laid. Towards the end of the century, the mission entered upon a new policy, which reckoned with the collectivistic nature of traditional Indonesian societies. In

this way, it was able to handle the mass movements which soon after began in several mission fields. From then on, there was sustained growth.

Nineteenth-century missionaries brought Christianity to Indonesia as they understood it themselves. The Indonesians rejected or accepted their message for reasons originating in their own context. If they accepted it, they again adapted it to that context. Their faith was not just a carbon copy of that of the missionaries, but was adapted to meet their religious, cultural and even political needs. Mentally and educationally, the missionaries had not been equipped to perceive this adaptation process and to guide their converts through it. If they observed any signs of it, their judgment was invariably negative. In this way, the gap between the official structures of church and theology and the way Christians lived the faith was unnecessarily wide. Only towards the end of the colonial era did some missionaries start to rethink Western theology in Indonesian terms.

The missionaries were also slow in laying the foundations of independent Indonesian churches. This slowness can be explained from the ecclesiastical context in which they found themselves, but also from the political and cultural context. As employees of a society, without any organisational background in their home church, they could not be expected to view their relationship with their Indonesian assistants as one with fellow office bearers. Moreover, they were members of the dominating group in the colony, which as a whole was strongly convinced of its moral and cultural, if not racial, superiority over the dominated races.

Similar observations can be made regarding the fact that the missions did not provide an academic education to the leaders of the incipient Indonesian churches. Not having enjoyed an academic education themselves, the missionaries could not be expected to provide it to others or even to consider it a goal to be pursued. In addition, providing academic education to Indonesians supposed the existence of a corresponding general school-system, which was not created until after the turn of the century.

The missionaries adapted themselves to the colonial order and cooperated with the colonial government. Here, too, we should pay attention to the context of the missionaries. Many of them criticised the colonial government severely, not for being there, but for not being faithful to its professed ideals. Granting independence to the colony would mean leaving the people to their fate. Colonialism meant advancement of the colonised; the state had to act as their guardian in secular matters, as the mission was to do in things spiritual. Independence was the goal in both fields, but in both it was to be realised in a distant future, when the pupils would have reached maturity. For the time being, the Indonesian Christians accepted the political and religious paternalism of the missionaries. At a later time, with the emerging of the national movement, they would develop a more independent frame of mind.

*The last decades of the colonial era: 1900–1942**Political and economic developments*

Designating “1900” as the starting point of a new chapter in the history of mission and church in Indonesia is not just an arbitrary choice. The years around the turn of the century were indeed a watershed both in the history of the nation and in the development of Indonesian Christianity.

After 1903, when Aceh finally had been reduced, the colonial government set out on a series of military campaigns to subject those parts of the archipelago which until then had been able to remain relatively independent or which, apart from the missionaries, had hardly seen a white man before. In a few years the whole territory of what nowadays is Indonesia was brought under effective Dutch rule. At the same time a new policy towards the colony was inaugurated. After the system of compulsory crops and the exploitation of the archipelago’s resources by private enterprise there now followed what was called the ethical policy: the Dutch government recognised its responsibility for the development of the colony and the welfare of its inhabitants. The Netherlands Indies was to be led onto the road towards economic prosperity and, in a distant future, even to political independence. To be sure, on that road they would have the Dutch as their mentors. Until the end of the colonial era the colonial government did not intend to give its non-Dutch subjects a greater say in political or economic matters. Some initiatives in that direction taken in 1918–1919 were soon reversed.

At the same time, Indonesian political life underwent an even more radical change. As has been pointed out in the preceding section, during the nineteenth century opposition to the Dutch was always regional in character, even where it was inspired by a supra-regional ideology, like Islam. In contrast, during the first decades of the twentieth century several movements sprang up which aimed at establishing an independent nation. In 1913 the *Sarekat Islam* was founded, but soon afterwards secular nationalists started their own organisations. For several years communists were active, but after some bloody incidents (1926) the communist party was banned and communism went underground. Other movements were tolerated by the government as long as they did not constitute a threat to the colonial order. When they did incite to violence or were thought to do so it came down hard on them, especially in the nineteen thirties. Hundreds of political prisoners, among them several Christians, were banished to the isolated settlement of Digul Atas, situated in the marshes of southern New Guinea (now Papua), which was notorious for its bad climate and health risks.

In the meantime, the government furthered the modernisation of the colony. Measures were taken to advance agriculture, to feed the ever-increasing

population (from 30 million around 1900 to 70 million in 1940). The cultivation of export crops was expanded as well; coal mines were opened and oil fields developed. Roads and railroads were built, and to connect the many islands of the archipelago regular shipping services were started. The health service was improved and for the first time in the history of this Dutch colony a Dutch-language school system for the indigenous people was established, with a limited number of secondary schools and, from 1924 onwards, three academic institutions in the fields of law, medicine and technology, which in the course of time should coalesce into a University of the Netherlands Indies. In 1942 more than one thousand Indonesians had completed higher education, many of them in Europe. On the village level a network of three- or four-year elementary schools was set up, using the local language as the language of instruction. Where Malay was not the vernacular, it was taught as a second language.

The new enterprises and institutions were mostly staffed by Dutch personnel brought in from Europe. As a consequence, the number of Dutch inhabitants of the colony increased considerably. Between 1905 and 1930 their number trebled. At the same time, the proportion of Eurasians in the total European population decreased and their social status declined. Communications with the motherland improved with the introduction of telegraph, radio, and in the 1930s, of regular flights between Amsterdam and Batavia.

Never before had the Indies been as close to Holland. Never before, too, had the European presence been so noticeable to the indigenous population, even in the most remote regions of the archipelago.

Religion

The developments mentioned above had a great impact on religious life in Indonesia. At the beginning of the twentieth century, many Western observers were convinced that Islam would not be able to survive in the modern world, stuck as it was thought to be in all kinds of superstitions on one side and rigid canon law on the other. However, a movement arose which endeavoured to make Islam ready for the encounter with modernity. In 1912, Haji Ahmad Dahlan founded the Muhammadiyah, in opposition to both popular Islam and Western secularism, but also to Christian missions. In many regions of Java and the Outer Islands Islam presented itself as a rallying point for all those opposed to the Dutch domination of Indonesia.

Tribal religions were not equipped as well as Islam to resist the invasion of modernity. The establishment of colonial rule meant that regions which until then had been more or less isolated from the outside world were laid open to cultural and religious influences from outside. The government suppressed

customs contrary to modern Western values, like headhunting, slavery and warfare between villages. Some traditional leaders were killed while resisting the Dutch military, others were banished because the way they ruled their subjects violated Western standards. Christian and Muslim officials and teachers were sent in, and merchants and other strangers settled in the newly pacified territories. Both Muslims and Christians brought with them the self-consciousness of a worldwide community and a civilisation, which considered itself much more advanced than the supposedly primitive tribal cultures. Among these settlers were Christian missionaries. Actually, in some regions, such as Central Sulawesi, Flores, and Papua, missionaries had been active long before the colonial government came in, but (with the notable exception of the Minahasa and North Sumatra) they had met with scant result. Only the arrival of the colonial army and of the colonial administration made it desirable and possible for the population to pay attention to their message.

For Christianity, too, the twentieth century brought significant changes also in other respects. The influx of middle-class professionals from the Netherlands meant that the revitalisation of church life which occurred there between 1880 and 1940 made itself felt also in the Indies. In the first decades of the twentieth century European society in the Indies was less secularised than it had been before. The European parishes of the Catholic Church were strengthened by numbers of Catholics arriving from Holland; missionary work in Central and East Java and on the Outer Islands entered upon a period of expansion. The Protestant Church of the Indies started doing missionary work in the southern Moluccas and several other regions, and it found the strength to finally sever at least in part the ties which bound it to the government and adopt a new church order more or less Presbyterian in character, which included an autonomous status for its indigenous congregations in Eastern Indonesia. The missionary societies which had been operating in Indonesia during the nineteenth century now expanded their activities into territories not yet occupied, such as Tana Toraja. The number of Christians rose accordingly: non-European Catholics from 26,000 in 1900 to half a million in 1940; non-European Protestants from 285,000 to 1,700,000; together in 1940 they accounted for slightly over 3% of the total population. In 2003 their respective numbers tentatively can be put at 16 and 6 million, or close to 10% in a total population of 220 million. Among the Indonesians of Chinese descent, Christianity has a strong position. During the nineteenth century several thousands of Muslims entered the Christian fold, mainly but not exclusively on the island of Java. Even that was unheard-of in the Muslim world. In the twentieth century, however, the total number of Muslim converts to Christianity in Indonesia rose to maybe one million.

Missionary orders and societies

During the first decades of the twentieth century, the Catholic missions greatly expanded their activities in Indonesia. This expansion was made possible by the hundreds, if not thousands of missionaries sent from Holland by the missionary orders such as the Jesuits, the Society of the Divine Word (SVD, in the Lesser Sunda Islands) and the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart (MSC, in Sulawesi and New Guinea), to name only the most important of the 58 religious orders and congregation active in Indonesia in 1940. In 1900, 46 priests were working in the Indonesia mission, in 1940, 570, assisted by 520 lay brothers and 1,841 nuns. Nearly half of these were deployed on the island of Java.¹ At first, their deployment was hindered by the government regulation forbidding “dual missions,” that is, missionary activity by different agencies in the same territory, but gradually this regulation became a dead letter. In any case, the ban on double missions could be circumvented easily by priests visiting Catholics living in territories occupied by a Protestant mission society. In this way even during the nineteenth century Catholic parishes were established in the Minahasa. After 1900 other territories followed: Batakland, Torajaland, Timor, Sumba, and others, much to the chagrin of the Protestants who were busy founding a people’s church in these un-Islamised areas. The underlying motive for penetrating Protestant mission fields was that the Catholic Church, as keeper of the full truth, was entitled, even obligated, to convey that truth to all people, including fellow-Christians of other denominations. This attitude disappeared only in the 1970s. At that time, in all territories mentioned a vigorous Catholic Church had been established, comprising 10–15% of the total population of the territories concerned. But the Catholic mission also started work in unoccupied areas, like southern Papua, and in territories already Islamised, like Java and South Sulawesi. There the results were very limited, like those of the Protestant missions active in the same areas.

The expansion of the Catholic mission had also a qualitative aspect. Among the missionary congregations entering Indonesia several were specialised in education and medical care. They founded schools and hospitals, staffed by lay members. The Catholic schools laid the foundation of a Catholic intelligentsia. Throughout the twentieth century they were considered to be among the best schools in Indonesia. They also were instrumental in the formation of an indigenous clergy, priests with the same education as that received by their European confrères.² However, the indigenisation of the clergy made slow

¹ Boelaars 1991:70–72, 418.

² This education was given in Dutch and Latin. When after independence Dutch was abolished in education, Latin for a while retained its prominent place. No less than two large Latin-Indonesian dictionaries were published for the use of the students of theology.

progress. In 1926 for the first time an Indonesian was ordained to the priesthood (Franciscus Xaverius Satiman SJ), but in 1940, when for the first time an Indonesian was ordained as a bishop, out of 570 priests only 16 or 3% were Indonesian (including some Eurasians). Even in 1979 only 42% of the Catholic priests in Indonesia were Indonesian nationals; the turning point came in the 1980s. An important impediment to the growth of an indigenous priesthood was the life-long obligatory celibacy, which was foreign to Indonesian culture, especially outside Java. But, as in the Netherlands, even when the education to the priesthood did not attain its direct object, it furthered the development of Indonesian Catholicism, because those who did not attain priesthood joined the ranks of well-educated Catholics. The proportion of Indonesians in the numbers of lay brothers and sisters increased more rapidly. In 1940, 46 out of 520 lay brothers and 164 out of 1,841 lay sisters (9%) were Indonesian or Eurasian (1979, 77% and 63% respectively).³ Many of these were trained to become nurses in the mission hospitals or teachers in the mission schools. In this way the mission made its modest contribution to the modernisation of Indonesian society.

Among the continental Protestants, the quantitative difference between the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries was less marked. Only a few, relatively small, missionary organisations came to increase the number of missionary organisations active in Indonesia. Most conspicuous among these newcomers was the *Zending der Gereformeerde Kerken* (ZGKN), the mission of the Dutch Reformed Church founded by Kuyper in 1886–1892, which continued earlier work in Central Java and started a new mission on the island of Sumba. Other new mission fields were the northern region of South Sulawesi (occupied by two conservative Calvinist missions), Southeast Sulawesi (NZV), the interior of Timor, the southern Moluccas, and Southwest Papua (New Guinea). In some of the older and newer fields, the first decades of the twentieth century brought a spectacular growth in the number of converts (Central Sulawesi, Halmahera, Papua, Timor); in other regions the breakthrough came only after 1950 (Karoland, Tana Toraja) or not at all (regions where Islam had arrived first, such as South and Southeast Sulawesi, southern Batakland, and of course Java and most of Sumatra and Kalimantan).

In contrast with the Catholic mission, the number of Protestant missionaries did not rise significantly. The Protestants continued to work with a small European staff, assisted by numbers of Indonesian teacher-preachers. For example, the total of European missionaries working in Tana Toraja between 1913 and 1940 was nineteen, among them three medical doctors (never more than one at a time), one nurse, and a few schoolteachers; there were

³ Boelaars 1991:418.

never more than 6 missionaries proper at one time. These were assisted by more than 500 Indonesians (including more than 100 from other regions, like the Minahasa and the Moluccas) working in schools, congregations, or both. For Indonesia as a whole the following data can be given. In 1910, the number of European mission workers (including doctors and teachers) was 160, of whom one half were in the service of the Dutch missionary societies and the other half working for the RMG and the indigenous congregations of the Protestant Church. In 1940 the number of foreign personnel working among Indonesians (Pentecostals and Adventists not included) had trebled, to 460, among them 200 missionaries proper. But in the meantime the number of Indonesian Protestant Christians had increased fourfold. At that time, the foreign workers were assisted by 8,000 Indonesians in the service of the mission or the Protestant Church, of whom 1,260 exclusively served in the congregations.

A new element in Protestant missions was groups originating from North America, such as Adventists, Pentecostals, the Christian and Missionary Alliance. The Southern Baptists entered Indonesia only in 1951. Also Anglo-American in origin was the Salvation Army, but its first missionaries arrived from Holland (1894). As has been mentioned in the preceding section, these missions did not feel obliged to honour the comity principle. The two former denominations concentrated on the major population centres and on people already christianised by the traditional missions. They could enter those mission fields because their mission often was spread by Indonesian evangelists who were not subject to government regulation. Conversely, the Salvation Army, which was centred on Java, started work among the tribal people of the Palu—Donggala region (western Sulawesi, 1913), while the CAMA founded large churches among the as yet un-evangelised Kayan and Kenyah Dayak in northern East Kalimantan (starting in 1929) and among the newly “discovered” inhabitants of the Paniai region in the Central Highlands of Papua (1938, and after the war also in the Baliem Valley). As for Pentecostalism it should be added that it was first introduced around 1922, by Europeans (J. Thiessen, W. Bernard), who were soon joined by Americans of Dutch descent. A decade later, the Assemblies of God from America started work in Jakarta. After World War II, Pentecostalism became one of the largest denominations within Indonesian Protestantism; it was especially strong among people of Chinese descent. From the beginning, in Indonesia as elsewhere, the Pentecostal movement was afflicted by numerous schisms.

The missionaries

Among the Catholics, the level of education of the missionary workers varied greatly. The Jesuits were highly trained intellectuals who had completed one

or more academic courses of study before being ordained priests. In other orders, the priests had at least gone through the regular philosophical and theological training in the seminaries. Among the lay missionaries, brothers and nuns, not a few were qualified teachers on the elementary or secondary level, or nurses, but among them were also numbers of workers with only low-level education, who were employed in keeping the mission stations going from the material point of view.⁴

Among the Protestants, the situation was rather different. Nearly all missionaries received the type of education described in the preceding section. Until the end of the colonial era, only three or four trained theologians entered into the service of the missionary societies. The Dutch mission boards in particular did not exert themselves to recruit university graduates (except for medical doctors), because in their view an academic training, especially in theology, tended to extinguish the missionary spirit and made people unfit for pioneer work. Only after World War II did a degree in theology become a precondition for candidate missionaries. But by then the pioneer missionaries had become “fraternal workers,” staff members in theological seminaries, lay training centres, etc. From 1917 onwards, most Dutch missionaries were trained in the Mission House at Oegstgeest, near Leiden. This training was gradually broadened (in the 1890s ethnology was introduced as a subject-matter; in the 1930s facultative courses in Hebrew and Greek could be taken), but until 1947 basically it remained a training course for practical workers.

It should be observed that there were a few exceptions to the rule that (Protestant) missionaries did not have a theological training. Quite a few university students became interested in the mission through the Dutch Christian Student Federation (NCSV). Some of these entered into the service of the Dutch Bible Society (NBG), which from 1820 until 1970 employed a small number of language experts who assisted the missionaries on some mission fields in the study of the local language(s) and the translation of the Bible. Conservative Calvinist circles in Holland, especially the *Gereformeerde Kerken* (GKN) considered mission to be a task of the church, which should be carried out by ordained ministers of the church. As a consequence, after 1900 all missionaries proper working on the GKN mission fields in Central Java and Sumba had a university degree in theology. This did not necessarily mean that they obtained better results than their colleagues or even that they were more able than the latter to put aside prevailing prejudices as to the relationship between Europeans and Indonesians in and outside the Church,

⁴ Steenbrink 2007: chapter one.

or as to the possibility of integrating the local cultural heritage in the life of the Church and of individual Christians.

Missionary method, perspective on other cultures and religions

In the second half of the nineteenth century the Catholics in the colony were lead by Jesuit priests who dreamed of regions dominated by Catholic native rulers, as in East Flores, the Dutch section of Timor, and the Kai islands. This strategy changed drastically in the first decades of the twentieth century. The Jesuits of East Flores were, around 1900, rebuked for their practice of singing on Sunday the formal prayer for the ruler mentioning the native raja of Larantuka, Don Lorenzo II: *Domine salvum fac regem nostrum Laurentium*. They were ordered by the (Protestant) Resident of Kupang to pray instead for the Dutch King! With the deposition of Lorenzo II in 1904, as part of the colonial policy of quick expansion, the dream of a Catholic kingdom in East Indonesia came to an end. After the Jesuits concentrated on the island of Java, they willingly cooperated with the colonial government in setting up a broad network of excellent primary and secondary schools in Central Java.⁵

In the early decades of the twentieth century one region after another in the Outer Islands was handed over to the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart (MSC: Kai, Moluccas and Papua in 1903; Minahasa in 1919) the Capuchin Friars (OFMCap Kalimantan in 1905, Sumatra in 1911), the Society of the Divine Word (SVD: Flores, Sumba and Timor 1913) and other religious orders. They did not concentrate on the conversion of adult people, but attracted the youth through schools. With the increasing colonial control, travel became easier and safer and in these regions a true race with Islam had started. It was important to “occupy” territories first and create a positive relationship with the population. Real teaching of Catholic doctrine and imposition of a religious practice could wait.

It was not only a strategic priority that leads to this quick territorial expansion. There was also a change in theology on the Catholic side. Missionaries more and more were convinced of the positive value of the non-Christian religions. It was the great SVD scholar Wilhelm Schmidt who designed the theory of *Urmonotheismus* or original monotheism, and in many isolated tribes the missionaries found the idea of a High God who was easily identified as an imperfect representation of the true Christian God. Especially among the SVD and MSC several gifted researchers worked in the field of anthropology. Important names were Paul Arndt, Donatus Dunselman, Henricus Geurtjens, Jan Verschueren, Petrus Vertenten and Bernard Vroklage. They promoted the idea of an innocent, good-willing and sometimes even pious pagan, albeit in

⁵ Steenbrink 2003:84–99. Chapter seven.

an imperfect way. Therefore the emphasis changed from the wish for personal conversions to the effort to establish strong local communities. In the wording of the theologians there was a move from the effort to save individual souls towards the planting of local churches, *plantatio ecclesiae*.

The colonial government had some hesitations about the division of the mission territory amongst religious orders and hence under separate Apostolic Vicars and Prefects. It required that there should be one official negotiating with the administration about general procedures and subsidies. Under a contract between the Dutch Government and the Vatican of 1913 it was stipulated that the Apostolic Vicar of Batavia would remain the contact person in negotiations with the colonial government. In the 1920s this led to the practice of *Kerkhoofdenconferentie* or meetings of the Catholic leaders, and the *Centraal Missiebureau* or Central Mission Office, the predecessor of the later Jakarta office for the conference of Indonesian bishops, and the Catholic counterpart of the Protestant office of the *Zendingsconsulaat* (see below).

Still, there were delicate subjects in the relationship between the Catholics and the colonial government. Jesuit priest Frans van Lith (1863–1926) not only joined the strategy of the ethical policy by starting the Catholic school system in Central Java, but he was also an outspoken admirer of Javanese society and culture to the point that he considered Dutch colonialism as a temporary affair. Van Lith was so forthright in his position about independence for Indonesians that he had trouble receiving permission to return from a European furlough in 1922. In his approach to Islam, Van Lith set the standard approach that Javanese culture should be taken very seriously in a positive sense, but that Islam as a religion should be neglected. Religious meals (*slametan*) and even marriages administered by (Muslim) religious officials could be practised by Catholics as long as they considered these as Javanese cultural events.

On the Protestant side, two important changes should be noted. In the first place the mission abandoned its individualistic approach. In Central Sulawesi, the missionary Albert C. Kruyt (active 1892–1932) did not press the first individuals who felt attracted to the Christian faith to have themselves baptised. For ten years he even let them carry out traditional ceremonies. Only when the community as a whole decided to convert, was baptism administered. In Halmahera, Anton Hueting faced a different situation: too many people applied for baptism (1898). On similar occasions in the past, his colleagues had required such people to enter on a long track of religious instruction, during which they remained in a religious no man's land. Hueting gave them a document in which it was certified that the bearer belonged to the Christian community. That gave people a Christian identity even before they were baptised, which was important in their dealings with their Islamic overlords in Ternate and with the Dutch colonial government. In this way the movement towards Christianity was prevented from petering out as it had

done on several occasions in the past. Ten years later, Hueting's colleagues in Papua embarked on a similar course when after the pacification of the area by the Dutch government a mass movement started. Group baptisms were no longer considered anathema.

Not surprisingly, the missionaries who took the lead in adopting a different attitude to mass movements also became pioneers in a new approach to indigenous culture and religion. Nineteenth-century missions generally tended to link together Christian faith and western civilisation. This did not mean, of course, that converts were to eat potatoes instead of rice, but in many cases traditional dress, hairstyles, and, more importantly, traditional ceremonies, musical instruments used (like the Batak drum or *gondang*), dances performed, were banned. In Java, the GKN missionaries, themselves educated with Homer and Plato, forbade their Christians to attend *wayang* performances. Some missionaries, like Ludwig Ingwer Nommensen and Peter H. Johannsen in Batakland, August Hardeland in Kalimantan, N.Ph. Wilken in the Minahasa, had a thorough knowledge of the vernacular as well as of the adat as a system of laws and customs, and of the ceremonial aspects of religion, but they did not have a clear understanding of the religion and culture those laws, customs and ceremonies were part of, let alone respect them. Conversely, Kruyt, Hueting, Johan H. Neumann in Karoland, Pieter Middelkoop in Timor and several of their contemporaries started to study the religion and culture of the people they worked among, not in the first place to refute them, but in order to understand them and the people who adhered to them.

A similar change took place in the attitude of the mission towards Islam, but later, and on a much smaller scale. Traditionally the mission had seen Islam as the arch-enemy of Christendom, and the lack of result of mission work in Muslim regions had done little to soften this view. For a long time the mission did not endeavour to prepare workers destined for these difficult mission fields by providing a special education, with the result that missionaries felt helpless and even became frustrated. In 1925 Bernard Arps was sent to West Java, where the mission had been active since 1863. He was the first on that mission field with knowledge of Arabic and succeeded in finding ways of communicating with Muslims. He was even addressed by them as *kyai anom*, "young religious teacher." Some colleagues followed suit. Paradoxically, these missionaries succeeded where their predecessors had failed: for the first time in the history of the West Java mission young Muslims from the propertied classes and even from aristocratic families became Christians.

The activities of Hendrik Kraemer (1888–1965) can be considered as the application of the new approach on yet another area. Kraemer had studied linguistics (including Arabic) and religious studies and in 1922 was sent to the mission field by the Dutch Bible Society. However, he was not to produce a bible translation, but was given an assignment to provide the missionaries with

knowledge of Javanese culture, including modern developments. Kraemer took a broad view of his task. He provided his colleagues, often secluded within the Christian communities they had founded, with overviews of the “indigenous press.” As these were the formative years of the Indonesian national movement, his “overviews” contained much information on political developments and to a certain extent opened the eyes of at least a small section of the missionaries to the legitimacy of the Indonesian national cause. Kraemer also established relations with Javanese mystical circles and with Muslim organisations in Java. In the discussions with mystics and with Muslim leaders he developed the ideas which he would later on set forth in his *The Christian Message in a non-Christian World*, written in preparation for the World Missionary Conference in Tambaram (1938). However, Kraemer was also active within the mission. He persuaded the missions and the Protestant Church to speed up the process of church formation, and was co-founder of the Theological College (HThS, later STT Jakarta).

Religious conversion and the colonial state

In the preceding section we have elaborated on the motives of Indonesians for accepting or not accepting the Gospel. Here we add a few remarks on the relationship between religious conversion and the expansion of the colonial state. If we compare the chronology of the “pacification” of the Outer Islands to that of large movements towards Christianity, we see that only in one case the latter followed in the footsteps of the former (Papua). In some other cases mass conversions had preceded subjugation by the colonial government (Batakland, Halmahera). But mostly Christianisation was a slow and laborious process, and mass conversions, if occurring at all, only followed after years of toiling by the mission. The conclusion is that there was no direct relationship between Christianisation and colonisation. The exception of Papua can be explained by the fact that the mission had been working there for half a century (1855–1905) when the colonial government came in. During those fifty years, a reservoir had formed which emptied itself when the pacification had taken away the main obstacle which prevented the Papuans from becoming Christian. In several regions (Karo, Sumba, Torajaland, in a sense also Java) mass movements towards Christianity only started after Indonesia had become independent—which could lead us to the conclusion that, for the mission, the colonial occupation had been more of a hindrance than an advantage.

However, there is more to the relationship of colonial state and missions. The occupation of the Outer Islands more or less coincided with the implementation of the ethical policy (and in part was justified by referring to that policy). The government wished to establish an educational system and a health service in the newly occupied territories. However, the expenditure

for maintaining and staffing schools and hospitals in such a large area would be forbidding. Here the missionary societies came in. In many regions they had been present before the government arrived, they had built schools and provided elementary medical care. In the Netherlands the subsidising by the government of schools founded by religious groups had become accepted practice. Now this principle was adopted in the colony: the government offered to pay for school buildings and hospitals and to subsidise the salaries of the staff employed by the mission. In many regions the mission had a virtual monopoly on (elementary) education; in the Lesser Sunda Islands this monopoly was even stated in a formal agreement. Both sides profited from this agreement: the mission (both Protestant and Catholic) because it needed schools and medical care to help it gain the confidence of the people; the government because the mission could operate the educational and health system much more cheaply than it could do itself. Formally, the neutrality of the state was upheld, and the mission could still boast that it did not receive funds for evangelistic work. But in reality the colonial state did support missionary work proper, because not only were schools and hospitals instrumental in making converts, but in many places the school teachers were also entrusted with the task of propagating the Gospel, providing religious teaching to converts, and leading religious services. Only in large congregations were these tasks performed by specialised evangelists. In this way the government paid for literally thousands of teacher-preachers. Again an example from Torajaland: between 1922 and 1939 the subsidies received by the mission in that region amounted to 30–50% of its total revenue. However, the rapid growth on the mission field undid all efforts of the missionary societies to put the mission finances on a healthy basis. The mission “flourished to death.” In the case of the German mission, the financial base was particularly weakened by World War I and its aftermath.

It should be observed, however, that the relationship between mission and government was less smooth than it would appear. In the preceding section it has been stated that for the colonial government mission was a means, not an end. Even where the activities of the mission were evidently in the interest of the state, as was the case in non-Islamised areas, government support was never unconditional and could never be taken for granted. Many officials belonged to the secularised section of the Dutch population; some let the indigenous people know expressly that they were free not to become Christians—which in the colonial situation amounted to telling them that the government did not want them to convert. Sometimes the government took care not to appoint indigenous officials who were Muslims in areas where the mission was active, but at other times it just did not mind. Subsidising the schools meant also being in control of the school curriculum, much to the chagrin especially of missionaries advocating an educational system more adapted to local needs.

When after 1929 the economic crisis made itself felt, subsidies were reduced heavily. And of course, having a good relationship with the government did not mean that the mission was free to criticise government policy or the personal conduct of government officials. In the colonial atmosphere, “meddling with government affairs” was the greatest sin a European could commit. Missionaries committing that sin were immediately threatened with expulsion from the colony, as was the case with a missionary who at the end of 1933 in a church service on New Years Eve prayed for the conversion of the local government administrator, who was rumoured to be a drunkard and a womaniser.

Indonesian Christians: their churches. Ecumenical relations

In the preceding section, the faith and worship of the Indonesian Christians have already been discussed. Here we will consider the organisational aspects of Indonesian Christianity, and its stance between the colonial state and the national movement. It has been mentioned that initiatives by Kraemer sped up the process of church formation, which until then in most mission fields had been extremely slow. Kraemer’s sensitivity to Indonesian national aspirations made him realise that it would not do to wait until missionaries would declare the Indonesian Christians “ripe” for independence. Between 1928 and 1933 he visited a number of mission fields and in his reports charted the course towards the founding of autonomous churches. As a result of these efforts, between 1930 and 1936 a number of churches were established in Sumatra, Java, and Kalimantan, first the Batak Church (*Huria Kristen Protestan Batak*, 1930), then the Christian Church of Central Java (*Gereja Kristen Jawa*, 1931), the Christian Church of East Java (*Gereja Kristen Jawi Wetan*, 1931), and the Christian Church of Pasundan (*Gereja Kristen Pasundan*, West Java, 1934). Between 1936 and 1941, a similar step was taken on five other mission fields. In the meantime the spiritual atmosphere within the Protestant Church of the Indies had greatly changed for the better. The relationship between this church and the missions had much improved, and the church was moving towards a reorganisation, which would at least sever the administrative bond with the colonial state. The Church Board requested Kraemer’s opinion on the future of the church districts in eastern Indonesia, in particular the Minahasa and the Central Moluccas, with their large Christian populations. In conformity with Kraemer’s recommendation, these districts were upgraded to autonomous churches within the Protestant Church (1934 *Gereja Masehi Injili Minahasa*, 1935 *Gereja Protestan Maluku*). Together, the independent churches included 70% of all Indonesian Protestant Christians.

The founding of Indonesian churches on the mission field demonstrated that the mode of thought of the missionaries and their boards in Holland had changed. They took this step not by virtue of the supposed spiritual and

intellectual progress of the Indonesian Christians, but because it was recognised that, no less than Christians in the Netherlands, they were members of the Body of Christ and were being led by the Holy Spirit. However, the old leaven still worked. It was generally agreed (also by many Indonesian Christians themselves), that the young churches still needed the guidance of the European missionaries. Even Kraemer, the initiator of the new mission policy, saw the role of the missionary within the independent church as that of a *guru kadiwasan*, a guide on the road to adulthood. Accordingly, with the exception of the *Gereja Kristen Jawa*, in all churches the Church Board and Synod were chaired by a European missionary. Only the Japanese occupation radically ended the preponderance of Europeans in the Indonesian churches, at least in Java and Sumatra. In several regions of eastern Indonesia (Toraja, Papua), after the war the pre-war situation was restored; there European dominance only ended in the 1950s.

Thus, by 1940, the majority of the Indonesian Protestants were organised in regional churches. As yet, there was no forum where these churches could meet, no body that represented all Indonesian Christians in their relations with the outside world. As early as 1880, the missionaries in the Netherlands Indies had established two-yearly conferences (*Depok-Conferenties*) and had adopted the Christian magazine *De Opwekker* ("The Reviver", 1855–1942) to become their "trade journal." This journal published Kraemer's Overviews of the Indigenous Press, and it informed the workers on the far-flung mission field about methods used and problems met by their colleagues in other places and other countries. In 1906 the European missionary organisations active in Indonesia had established the *Zendingsconsulaat* (Mission Consulate) in Batavia. The missions, whose missionaries had never been of much esteem in the class-conscious colonial society, took care to appoint as Mission Consuls men belonging to the Dutch nobility and/or having a university degree. The task of this functionary was to represent the missions with respect to the government, for example in questions regarding subsidies for mission schools and hospitals, but in the course of time he became an advisor and coordinator in activities regarding missionary work in Indonesia.

In the aftermath of the International Missionary Conference (IMC) in Jerusalem (1928) an attempt was made to found a National Missionary Council in the Netherlands Indies, but this attempt foundered on the refusal of the conservative Calvinist GKN Mission (Central Java, Sumba) to have anything to do with the IMC, which it deemed tainted by liberalism. Just like other conservative missions, the GKN mission aimed at a denominational, not a national and ecumenical council. In all these activities the Indonesian Christians were not involved. Solidarity between Indonesian Christians could only grow in the Seminary at Depok, which from 1878 until 1926 provided a kind of advanced study for evangelists from all parts of the archipelago. From 1934 onwards

the Theological Seminary at Jakarta had a similar function. A more general platform was established in 1932, when Ir. C.L. van Doorn, who had been sent by the Dutch Christian Student Federation (NCSV), set up the *Christen Studenten Vereeniging op Java* (Christian Students' Association on Java, CSV). There young Indonesians who were following Dutch-language secondary and higher education found a congenial atmosphere, in which they could freely discuss political subjects. The chairman was J. Leimena, a young medical doctor in the service of the Protestant mission, who for a long time after the war headed the Health Department of the Indonesian Republic.

After the Tambaram Conference (1938), steps were taken towards the setting up of a National Christian Council, which would include the Indonesian churches, but World War II put an end to this attempt. After the war, when Indonesia had become an independent republic, Indonesian Christians founded the *Dewan Gereja-gereja di Indonesia* (Council of Churches in Indonesia), in which there was no place for the missions (May 1950, see chapter seventeen). This Council came to include all churches rooted in the European tradition; eventually it was joined by some Pentecostal and Evangelical churches that were orientated towards America.

Indonesian Christians and politics

As has been stated before, after 1900 the missionaries became less critical of the colonial order than they had been during the second half of the nineteenth century. Fundamentally they viewed colonial government as an ally. Besides, they were strictly supervised by the regional government officials; no political activity whatsoever was allowed. Thus, any inducement for the Indonesian Christians to be active in politics was not to come from their spiritual mentors, but from their fellow-countrymen professing other religions or adhering to secular nationalism. In this context, it is striking that among Christians the national movement in the proper sense of the word began at about the same time as it did among other groups, that is, between 1905 and 1915. In Batakland, H.M. Manullang became the leader of a movement that was active in both the religious and the political spheres. In East Java, the evangelist J. Mattheus Jr. was active in the association *Jong Java* (Young Java), and even became editor of their journal. However, it proved to be difficult for a Christian to hold a prominent position in an organisation whose members were mostly Muslims; in 1921 he retired.

For people like Mattheus several alternatives offered themselves. In 1918 Dutch Christians in Indonesia founded the *Christelijk Ethische Partij* (CEP, in 1929 the name was changed to *Christelijk Staatkundige Partij*, Christian Political Party). It shared the idealism of the ethical politicians but also their belief in white superiority. In the same year 1918, Catholic Dutchmen founded the

Indische Katholieke Partij (IKP), which endeavoured to implement the social doctrine of the Catholic Church. Both parties had strong ties with a Christian political party in Holland: the CEP with the increasingly conservative *Anti-Revolutionaire Partij*, which under Kuypers had supported the ethical policy, but in 1922 came under the leadership of H. Colijn; the IKP with the *Roomsche Katholieke Staatspartij*. Both CEP and IKP were open for Indonesians, but the Indonesian Christians preferred to found associations of their own. Also in 1918, the *Perserikatan Kaoem Christen* (Association of Christians) came into being, which became a rallying-point for Protestant Christians interested in politics in East and Central Java.

On the Catholic side, the Indonesian members of the IKP were more or less sent away by the reactionary elements within the party, and formed a political party of their own, *Pakempalan Politik Katolik Djawi* (Javanese Catholic Political Party, PPKD); significantly in 1930 this name was changed to *Persatuan Politik Katolik Indonesia* (Indonesian Catholic Political Party, PPKI). The founders of the PPKD took their inspiration from Father F. van Lith; the chairman was Van Lith's former student I.J. Kasimo, an agriculturalist who was brought into politics by the racial humiliation he experienced from his Dutch superiors when working in a plantation. Like many Protestant Indonesians, these Catholics were torn between their loyalty towards their spiritual fathers and brothers, and their national feelings. In his magnificent *Minorities, modernity and the emerging nation: Christians in Indonesia, a biographical approach*, Gerry van Klinken describes the more subtle but equally damaging humiliation Kasimo was to experience as a chairman of the PPKD/PPKI from the side of the ecclesiastical leadership, when it prevented his party from joining a federation of nationalist parties (1928) and forbade him to ally with M.H. Thamrin when this nationalist leader urged that Indonesia should be given independence as soon as possible (1932).

Some (Protestant) Christians ventured outside these confessional organisations. Of course they could not participate in Muslim political organisations. Some entered secular nationalist parties (Amir Sjarifoeddin). Others founded non-confessional regional organisations, like *Persatuan Minahasa* (Minahasan Association, led by Dr. G.S.S.J. Ratulangie), *Sarekat Ambon* (Ambon Union, a nationalist grouping, whose leader A.J. Patty spent long years in Digul Atas) and *Moluksch Politiek Verbond* (Moluccan Political Union, pro-Dutch). Among all pre-war Christian politicians, Amir (1907–1948) was the only one who entered the top leadership of the national movement. After the war he became a minister in several Indonesian cabinets and in 1947–1948 he was Prime Minister. His life came to a tragic ending when he was involved in a communist uprising against the Republic and was executed by the Indonesian army (December 1948). His mentor was J.M.J. Schepper, 1924–1942 a professor at the Law College in Batavia (Jakarta). Under his influence, Amir, who

came from a Muslim family, converted to Christianity. Schepper, originating from the Brethren, was a convinced Christian, a prominent jurist, and an independent thinker, who attacked the repression of the national movement by the colonial government from a juridical point of view. With Van Doorn, he belonged with the few Dutchmen who understood the mind of young Indonesian intellectuals and succeeded in keeping in contact with them. But both in the Protestant missions and in the Catholic Church, the vast majority of the European workers were not interested in politics and, in particular, had no understanding whatsoever for the radical nationalism people like Amir were representing. For them, Indonesian independence lay still in an unforeseeable future. They considered it their task to prepare their flock for it by providing education and by strengthening their “moral character” by religious training, but they did not want (and were not allowed) to have anything to do with political activities intended to hasten that independence. In 1942, the gradual development they envisaged suddenly was broken off. Dutch colonial rule and all ideals and activities connected with it were suddenly brought to an end by the Japanese invasion. Indonesian Christianity entered upon an entirely new period of its history.

Indonesian Christianity during the Japanese Occupation, 1942–1945

On 8 December 1941, one day after the attack on Pearl Harbour, the Netherlands Indies declared war on Japan. Exactly three months later, on 8 March 1942, the colonial army surrendered to the Japanese. From now on, Java and Sumatra were administrated by the Japanese Army (*Gunseibu*), Kalimantan, Sulawesi and East Indonesia by the Navy (*Minseibu*). The new rulers announced that they had come to establish the Greater Asia Co-prosperity Sphere. All existing political organisations were disbanded and remaining organisations, including the churches, were put under strict surveillance. The population was subjected to continuous indoctrination. Dutchmen and other Allied subjects were interned; all traces of Dutch presence were to be eliminated, the use of the Dutch language was forbidden, Dutch property was confiscated, including mission schools and hospitals. Certain other sections of the population were viewed with suspicion and sometimes treated badly, especially the Chinese, as China was at war with Japan, and the Ambonese, because they were known to be very loyal to the Dutch. But all suffered together from the requisitions of food and manpower by the Japanese Army and from the cruelty of the Kempeitai, the Japanese military police, which acted as a counter-intelligence service with unlimited powers.

During the transition period, in a number of places Muslims took advantage of the situation to intimidate the Christians. A number of Indonesian

Christians and several missionaries were killed. Once the Japanese had taken over, they stopped the persecution. Actually, Christianity was not a phenomenon unknown to the Japanese. In 1873 the edict prohibiting Christianity had been rescinded, and in 1940 Christians in Japan totalled about half a million. Hostility towards Christianity was never far below the surface; nevertheless it had an honourable position in the midst of the nation. In 1939 most churches had accepted the ritual of emperor worship, after the government had declared that this was only honorific in character. A small number of church members continued to reject the ritual; some of these were put to death. In 1941 the government persuaded the Protestant churches to enter a united church, the *Nippon Kirisuto Kyodan* (Church of Christ in Japan, *Kyodan*). During the war fanatical elements in the government administration attacked the Christians over the question who was greater, Christ or the emperor, but the government wished to avoid a total confrontation. It even trusted Protestant ministers and Catholic clergymen with the task of guiding the indigenous Christians in the conquered territories, including Indonesia. Among the military officers and civil servants sent to these territories some were Christians; their presence could make a difference to the Christian population.

Situation of Indonesian Christianity in 1942

At the beginning of 1942 the European missionaries still occupied key positions in the Indonesian churches. In 1940 an Indonesian, Alb. Soegijapranata SJ, had been ordained bishop of Semarang; in the same year in two Protestant churches (HKBP and GKJW) an indigenous minister had been chosen as chairman of the Synod. But all other autonomous churches, including the autonomous churches within the Protestant Church of the Indies, were still led by foreigners. Only one Indonesian sat on the *Kerkbestuur* (Central Board) of the Protestant Church. In a number of mission fields in eastern Indonesia (Torajaland, Poso, Sangir-Talaud, Halmahera, Papua and others) the leadership of the church still rested with the Conference of Missionaries, which was exclusively Dutch. Some seminaries and teacher training schools had Indonesian teachers, but the leadership was firmly in European hands, with the exception of the STOVIL (Theological Seminary) in Tomohon, Minahasa, and the STOVIL in Ambon, which were led respectively by A.Z.R. Wenas (1897–1967) and W.M. Tutuarima (1899–1990), both alumni of the Mission School at Oegstgeest. The Theological Seminary at Jakarta had delivered its first class in 1940; in 1942 the second class was released ahead of time. But their numbers were small, only 29 in all (of whom three were killed by the Japanese during the war).

In all territories occupied by the Japanese, except Java, nearly all Europeans, including mission workers, were captured immediately or only a few weeks

after the invasion. They were brought together into internment camps, where they were to stay until the end of the war. In Java, the internment process was more gradual. Some European church workers could carry on with their tasks for some time; the acting chairman of the Protestant Church of the Indies was only interned in September 1943, some members of the medical staff remained free until the end, as was the case with the Apostolic Vicar (bishop) of Jakarta, Mgr. P. Willekens SJ. Just like the other internees, the missionaries suffered increasingly from diseases and malnutrition. When the war was over, out of 150 Protestant missionaries and ministers, 50 had died. Many of their wives and children also did not survive. Among the Catholics, the loss of European lives was even greater: 74 priests, 47 lay brothers and 161 nuns died in internment camps; on the Kai Islands 13 missionaries were killed the day the Japanese landed, on a false accusation. In this connection the fate of the German missionaries deserves special mention. In May 1940, when Germany had invaded Holland, the colonial government had interned all German missionaries active in the Netherlands Indies, Catholics and Protestants. When the Japanese approached, they were sent to India by ship. A number of them died when the “Van Imhoff” was sunk by a Japanese submarine. The Protestant RMG and the Catholic *Societas Verbi Divini*, which worked in Flores, were hit hardest, because most of their personnel were Germans. Of the SVD missionaries, sixty were German, and most of these did not survive the sinking of the “Van Imhoff.”

The consequences of the Japanese occupation and of the internment of the European workers were most far-reaching on the mission fields where no autonomous church had been established, that is in many parts of Sulawesi and eastern Indonesia. With the exception of Torajaland, on these fields only a rudimentary form of church organisation had been established. There were no synods, no regional presbyteries, not even local councils in the proper sense of the word, only one or more elders in each village, who together with the teacher-preacher or evangelist ruled the congregation and maintained church discipline. In most of these mission fields (Poso, Halmahera, Papua, Sumba), until 1942 not even one Indonesian was authorised to administer the sacraments. The funds of the mission were entirely administered by the missionaries, who also paid all salaries; only some congregations that had been declared autonomous could administer their own finances. Even though people had been afraid of a Japanese invasion for some time, in most mission fields measures were taken only when it was clear that the Netherlands Indies were about to fall into their hands. Then the missionaries hurriedly ordained a few Indonesian evangelists as ministers and handed over the leadership of the local Christians to them. This did not mean the establishing of an autonomous church; the new ministers were just the substitutes of the missionaries. They also received the mission funds, which they used to pay the salaries of the

church workers; when the money had run out, the central leadership of the church simply dissolved and everybody was left to his own devices.

The problems were aggravated by the separation of church and school, which was enforced by the Japanese administration in East Indonesia as of 1 April 1943. This meant that the school buildings could not be used any more for church services, and that the teachers were forbidden to carry on any activities in the congregations. With that, the church at one stroke was deprived of numerous places of worship and a great number of unsalaried workers, as most teacher-preachers willingly obeyed the Japanese instruction. The gap was filled by the ministers and evangelists, even if in most cases they did not receive any payment after the first months, and by equally unpaid local elders. Together they saw the congregations through the war years.

In Java, North Sumatra, Minahasa and the Moluccas, where a church organisation had been set up and practiced for several years before the war, the situation remained more like normal. In several churches even synods could convene. The only organisational alteration was that the Dutch chairpersons were replaced by Indonesians. It is interesting to note that, with one exception, among those replacing them there was no one of the 29 graduates from Jakarta. Apparently in these troubled times people preferred experienced workers who had proven their worth in practice over the higher-educated alumni of the Jakarta College. Therefore the affirmation, sometimes found in books on Indonesian church history, that the founding of the Jakarta Theological College had been “just in time” is not to the point. The one exception was Simon Marantika (1909–1989), who had completed the police academy course before studying theology, had graduated in 1940, and in 1942 was chosen to be chairman of the *Gereja Protestan Maluku*. One Protestant church, the *Huria Christen Batak* (Batak Christian Church) even remained untouched by the elimination of the foreign missionaries. It had been founded in 1927 in opposition to the *Rheinische Mission*, and had always been independent of the mission both in personnel and in financial matters. The Central Board of the Protestant Church of the Indies met regularly throughout the war; until September 1943 the minutes of the meetings were even kept in Dutch. The Board could also maintain communications with the congregations. In the church archives (now in the National Archives in Jakarta) thousands of postcards (sending letters under cover was not allowed) are kept, sent by congregations in Java and even the Outer Islands, with brief notices on the local situation.⁶ Until 1944, the church even withstood Japanese pressure to abolish Dutch as the language of church services for Europeans and people of European descent. In the Catholic Church, an Indonesian had been ordained

⁶ Now in the National Archives of the Republic of Indonesia.

a bishop before the war. Besides, some Dutch bishops and priests remained outside the internment camps, in particular in Flores. But for keeping church life going the church had primarily to rely on the small number of Indonesian and Eurasian priests, together with catechists, teachers and lay people.

As the Indonesian churches and other Christian communities were recognised by the Japanese authorities, in most cases church buildings and houses belonging to the church were left in peace. Exceptions were Timor and the Kai Islands, where numbers of Catholic churches were demolished, or used as warehouses or barracks. In contrast, schools and hospitals were taken over by the government. After the war they were only in part returned to the mission. Thus, mostly the congregations could continue to convene in their church buildings. However, here they were not to be left alone. In 1943 the authorities required that during the church service the leader of the service read a message about the Greater Asia War, its causes and its aims. Moreover, emperor worship should be introduced in the church. A Japanese flag was attached inside the church building, on the wall facing Tokyo, where the emperor resided. Before the beginning of the church service the assembled congregation were to face that wall and bow. The faithful were told by the authorities that this ceremony did not mean “worship as becoming to the Lord God, but the giving of honour as indicated in Matthew 22:21 and I Peter 2:17.” Nevertheless, the Christian community had an uneasy feeling about it. As it was impossible to refuse, many people evaded the issue simply by not going to church anymore. Actually, especially in the last years of the Japanese occupation, many people did not go to church anyway, because they had no decent clothes. Children could go to school naked, as happened in Sangir towards the end of the war, but their parents did not wish to participate in the church service in such a condition.

In eastern Indonesia, the Japanese administration also interfered in the relations between the churches. In 1943 regional Councils of Churches (*Kiristokyo Rengokai*, Indonesian: *Dewan Kristen*) were formed in North and Central Sulawesi, South Sulawesi, Kalimantan, and the Moluccas. Membership was obligatory for all Protestant churches in these regions, including Pentecostals, CAMA and others. An attempt to include the Catholic Church failed. However, the *Kiristokyo Rengokai* was not a united church, like the *Kyodan* in Japan. All participating churches remained independent, and retained their own forms of organisation and worship. After the war, this top-down ecumenical organisation collapsed, but in 1947 the churches in Sulawesi and eastern Indonesia founded a new ecumenical body, the *Madjelis Oesaha Bersama Geredja-geredja Kristen* (Joint Working Council of Christian Churches, MOBGK), which three years later in its turn made way for the Council of Churches in Indonesia (DGI).

These regional councils of churches were led by ministers who in the years 1942–1944 arrived from Japan. During the last two years of the war they had

an important part in the life of the Indonesian churches. The first was the Rev. Shusho Miyahira, a quite colourful figure. Miyahira, a member of the Oriental Missionary Society (Holiness Church), completed a theological education at the Seisho Gakuin in Tokyo, and then went to Indonesia, where he worked as a Salvation Army officer from 1927 until 1934. When he heard that Kagawa was about to visit the Dutch East Indies, Miyahira started work among the Japanese in Java, and founded a Japanese congregation (Holiness Church) in Surabaya (1936). In 1939 he was ousted by the colonial government on suspicion of spying. In March 1942 he came back on a Japanese warship as a Navy officer. He was appointed head of the Office for Religious Affairs of the *Minseibu* and secretary of the Governor of Sulawesi. Among all Japanese ministers coming to Indonesia he was the only one who spoke Indonesian fluently. He travelled to the Christian regions north of Makassar, where he stopped persecution by Muslims, provided funds, and ordained several new ministers. When he noticed that the Japanese administration did not reckon with the presence of the large Christian minority in eastern Indonesia, he asked the *Minseibu* to have ministers sent from Japan. This request was forwarded to the Kyodan in Japan, which sent ten ministers. Of these, four died when their ship was torpedoed by an American submarine; the six others arrived safely in Indonesia in January 1944. Later in the year nine others followed. They were employed in Kalimantan, North Sulawesi, South Sulawesi, and the Moluccas, and remained there until the end of the war. They ordained Indonesians as ministers, organised courses for church workers, visited the congregations, and represented the Christian communities with respect to the Japanese authorities. Church ministers also arrived in the territory administered by the Army (Java and Sumatra), but their number was small (only two are mentioned in the sources) and their activities were very limited in comparison to their colleagues in East Indonesia.

The Catholic Church in Indonesia was also assisted by clergy sent from Japan. In 1943 the Japanese Catholic Church sent two bishops to Flores, Mgr. Paulus Yamaguchi, bishop of Nagasaki, and Aloysius Ogihara SJ, apostolic administrator of Hiroshima. They were accompanied by two priests. Mgr. Yamaguchi got permission to visit the European missionaries interned in Sulawesi, but he did not succeed in getting them released from internment. Three other Japanese priests are mentioned in connection with North and South Sulawesi and with West Kalimantan, but there is no such report about Java and Sumatra. In the reports on Flores the name of Tasuku Sato is also mentioned. He was a captain in the Japanese Navy and not yet a Christian, but nevertheless he did everything in his power to protect the indigenous Christians. He also prevented the seminaries on Flores, where a number of candidates to the priesthood were being educated, from being closed, so that

the education of indigenous priests could go on during the war. After the war, in Japan, he entered the Catholic Church.

The Japanese ministers in Indonesia were in a difficult position because they were distrusted by the Japanese authorities. In general they were critical of the Japanese government's policy, but it was impossible for them to express these feelings. They had to show their loyalty by passing on the Japanese view of the war in their sermons and speeches. On the other hand, they wanted to assist and fortify their Indonesian brethren. On Ambon, the Rev. Ryoichi Kato did so, among other ways, by protecting Ambonese women and girls from the attempts of the military to use them as "comfort women." More generally, Kato and his colleagues implicitly contradicted the nationalist ideology they were supposed to profess by stressing Christian brotherhood transcending differences of nationality, and the unity of all mankind before God. A fine example of this is provided by a speech Prof. Shigeharu Seya gave in May 1945, during a course for church workers held in the town of Makale, Torajaland. According to the (very extensive) report of this course, which is written in Indonesian, he first dwelt on the injustices the West had committed towards the peoples of Asia and on the noble efforts of Japan to liberate them. But then he contended that "All people, English, American, Russian, Dutch, and Japanese (!) should return to God by the cross of Golgotha." It is not astonishing to hear that several of these Japanese pastors after the war maintained strong ties with Indonesia and the Indonesian churches. Miyahira is even said to have served in the Indonesian Navy during the war of independence (1945–1949).

The attitude of the Indonesian Christians, church leaders and members of the congregations, towards the Japanese and their ideology was not the same everywhere. In the Moluccas, where Dutch influence had been strong, the people were very much opposed to the Japanese, probably mostly because they could not stand the way people were ordered around. The Japanese reacted with extreme severity. During the war, 150 church workers in the Moluccas were killed, not including the many Moluccan teacher-preachers and evangelists in other parts of the Indonesian archipelago, in particular in Papua, who were murdered. The more flexible Minahasans went along better with the new rulers. The Minahasan Church even opened a special office for maintaining relations with the Japanese authorities, headed by W.J. Rumambi, who had recently graduated from the Jakarta Theological College and later became general secretary of the Council of Churches in Indonesia. Maybe it was this better relationship that provided room for the church leadership to occasionally take a stand against the ultra-nationalist ideology of the Japanese military. In March 1943, the Japanese suggested a memorial should be erected in Manado to the soldiers fallen in battle. In the discussion with the Japanese about this proposal, A.Z.R. Wenas, chairman of the Minahasan Church, said,

“We already have said much about New Asia, New Order, New Life, connecting all that with the war. But as Christians we ought to remember the new earth and the new heaven seen by St. John in Patmos.... As Christians we should in the first place remember the memorial of Christ on Golgotha, the ground of the remission of sins, the ground of the salvation of the whole world. That is what is leading us to a new world.” The head of the Office for Religious Affairs in Manado, a Japanese Christian, immediately expressed approval of Wenas’ declaration.

The churches emerged from the war relatively unscathed. A number of leaders had been killed, in particular in the Moluccas; schools and hospitals had been taken away; large numbers of former teacher-preachers had left the service of the church; the spiritual fathers of the church had been forcibly removed; funding of church activities by the mission had ceased. But new leaders had taken over; when church buildings were confiscated or destroyed—or where the school had been used as church building—people gathered under a tree and set up a temporary building; when, as was the case in some regions in 1942, it was forbidden to hold church services, people came together to read the Bible and pray. The prohibition to touch on actual events in the sermons made no difference, because that had also been prohibited in colonial times. In some regions (for example, northern Central Java) the number of Christians decreased, in others the opposite was the case, for example in the Muslim area of Soppeng (South Sulawesi), even if there pressure was not less than in Central Java. As it was said by the chairman of the wartime Conference of Church Ministers in Torajaland, S.T. Lande’ in his report on the war years, “Congregations that grew before the war, continued to grow during the war.” Being cut off from mission funds enhanced the sense of responsibility among the church members; in several churches the proceeds of collections increased sharply. In sum, the Indonesian Christians, who until then had been guided in all things by the missions, got a crash course in autonomy. Except for Papua, the missions nowhere regained the position after the war that they had occupied until 1942.

Another result of the war was that it caused the Indonesian Christians to become acquainted with fellow-Christians from other churches, and with fellow-countrymen from other religions. As has been mentioned before, until the end of the colonial era there had hardly been any ecumenical activities. Each flock pastured on its own, guided by its own trusted shepherds. The enforced ecumene introduced by the Japanese caused at least the leaders of the churches to meet each other. The common people had a similar experience when the whirlwind of the war moved them to other places. After 1945, this development was boosted by the urbanisation process that started during the war of independence and has gone on ever since at an ever faster pace. The same is true of the contact with people from other religions. Before the

war most Christians had lived in non-Islamised regions, where they had lived together with adherents of the traditional religion, but not with Muslims. Java was an exception, but there many Christians lived in Christian villages. The displacements brought about by the Japanese occupation, the war of independence, and by urbanisation, caused people of different religions to mix. In the war of independence, Christians in Java and Sumatra fought side by side with Muslims. That took away at least partly the prejudice that they were just lackeys of the colonial oppressors, and helped them to obtain a rightful place in the Indonesian Republic. These developments also made possible the expansion of the church in Muslim Java during the years 1965–1985. However, the omnipresence and expansion of Christianity eventually aroused Muslim sensibilities and in the nineties led to violent and non-violent actions against the Christians of Java and some other regions.

Independent Indonesia (1945–2005)

In this period the picture of Church and Christianity significantly changed, from the overseas mission- and colonial-nurtured to the independent and national profile. There is no single picture regarding Christianity in this country during this period, not even a red line that shows or connects the whole range of developments and problems. There are many aspects and facets. In this section we will only see a number of striking issues and cases at national level, some of them connected with or continued from the previous period, whereas the detailed pictures in each area and concerning some subjects or themes will be provided in the following chapters of this Part Two. In terms of division of periods, we will more or less follow the common division used in the socio-political sphere which has had a close relationship and a big impact on the life and development of Christianity in this country.

Since October 1944 Japan's position in the war became more critical and its military government in Indonesia had to take a more concrete step to fulfil the promise of independence already given. On 1 March 1945 the government announced the establishment of *Dokuritsu Zyunbi Tyoosakai* (*Badan Penyelidik Usaha Persiapan Kemerdekaan [Indonesia]*, BPUPKI; Investigating Body for Preparatory Work for [Indonesian] Independence). This body (consisting of 62 and then 68 members from various streams and organisations) started to meet by the end of May 1945.⁷

The Islamic representatives (fifteen persons) expressed their aspiration that the impending state had to be an Islamic or Islam-based state. The Christians

⁷ The minutes of the BPUPKI meetings see in Saafroedin Bahar 1995³. For the draft of the Constitution, M. Yamin 1959. Some of these are summarised in Aritonang 2004:235–258.

together with the 'secular' nationalist faction (the biggest in number, including among others Soekarno, Mohammad Hatta, Mohammad Yamin and Supomo) insisted that an independent Indonesia must be a unitary, national and non-religion-based state. After much debating, there was no agreement in the first term of the sessions (29–31 May). On 1 June 1945 Soekarno delivered his speech concerning the foundation of the state that basically stated that at least temporarily the state is not to be based on any religion, including Islam, although the foundation should contain a formulation regarding *Ketuhanan* (Belief in God). Soekarno proposed the foundation of the state that he called *Pancasila* (the Five Principles, i.e. Belief in God, Humanitarianism, National Unity, People's Sovereignty, and Social Justice). By the first pillar Soekarno essentially appealed to all religious people to implement freely their respective religious teachings.

The participants in the BPUPKI meeting enthusiastically hailed this speech of Soekarno and his proposal. In the meantime, during the recess after the first sessions, the Muslim leaders continued to strive toward making Islam the foundation of the state. On 18 June Soekarno, as the chair of the Small Committee on the foundation of the state, invited all members of BPUPKI to choose from among them nine persons. This group, chaired by Soekarno, and later called "The Committee of Nine,"⁸ had as duty to formulate the foundation of the state that would be placed in the preamble of the Constitution. On 22 June 1945, through a tough debate, the committee, consisting of 'nationalist' and 'Islamic' groups, came to a mid-way formulation or a gentlemen's agreement. The formulation that was some weeks later named the *Piagam Jakarta* (Jakarta Charter) adopted Soekarno's Pancasila while also adding seven words to the first principle so that it became *Ketuhanan dengan kewajiban menjalankan syariat Islam bagi pemeluk-pemeluknya* (belief in God with the obligation for adherents [of Islam] to carry out the Islamic law).

When the second term of the BPUPKI plenary sessions was held in mid-July 1945 to discuss the Constitution, and the Committee of Nine proposed the Jakarta Charter as the preamble, some of the members, including Johannes Latuharhary from the Christian faction, expressed their objection to the seven-word clause. He warned that the clause would bring a serious danger to the other religions and would bring disorder to the people's customs in regions such as Minangkabau and Maluku; meanwhile the Islamic faction argued that it would not cause any danger or disorder. After an endless debate the sessions were closed without any clear agreement or consensus. Soekarno closed the debate by recalling that the controversial clause was a compromise between

⁸ Among those nine one was a Christian, Alex Andries Maramis, but he did not represent the Christian faction.

the Islamic and the nationalist factions. On this basis he appealed that the main points in the Preamble be accepted.

Connected with the controversial clause in the Preamble, the sessions also discussed some related articles. Wachid Hasyim as one of the Muslim leaders proposed that the president must be an autochthonous Muslim and the religion of the state be Islam. This proposal was refused by many members from the nationalist faction (including the Christians); they instead proposed an article that assured religious freedom. After another exhausting debate, Soekarno once again appealed to the nationalists and the Christians to make their sacrifice. "I know that this means an enormous sacrifice, very especially from the patriotic brothers Latuharhary and Maramis who are not Muslim. I beg with a weeping heart that you are willing to make this offer to our country and nation, a sacrifice for our desire that we can solve this quickly so that the independent Indonesia can be quickly in peace." When there was no more expressed objection, Radjiman Wediodiningrat, as the chairman of the BPUPKI, closed the sessions by affirming, "Thus this draft is accepted by all. I repeat: this Constitution we accept unanimously."

On 7 August a new body, the *Panitia Persiapan Kemerdekaan Indonesia* (PPKI, Preparatory Committee for Indonesian Independence) was announced to replace BPUPKI, chaired by Soekarno with Mohammad Hatta as deputy. One day after the Proclamation of Independence on 17 August 1945 this PPKI began its sessions and made two important decisions, to approve the 1945 Constitution as the constitution of the state and to appoint Soekarno and Hatta President and Vice-President of the Republic of Indonesia. But before this first decision there was a very important event. A few minutes before opening the session, Soekarno and Hatta called some Muslim leaders in PPKI to hold an 'instant meeting'. They explained that on the afternoon of the independence day Hatta had received information from a Japanese officer, indicating that if the seven-words were not deleted some regions in the eastern part of Indonesia would separate themselves.

In such a crucial moment those Muslim leaders accepted Hatta's suggestion to consider seriously the information and to replace the seven-words with a formula, *Ketuhanan Yang Maha Esa* (Belief in the One Supreme God). "So that we are not broken as a nation, we agreed to erase the clause that hurt the heart of the Christians and to replace it with *Ketuhanan Yang Maha Esa*," recalled Hatta in his memoirs.⁹ The Islamic faction accepted this decision for two reasons: Firstly, they were aware of the importance of the nation's unity and the significance of the *Ketuhanan Yang Maha Esa* which is not contrary to the *tauhid* (belief in the oneness of God) in Islam. Secondly they expected

⁹ Mohammad Hatta 1969:59; quoted in Aritonang 2004:255.

that six months after the proclamation of independence a general election would take place and they were confident that they would win the election considering the Muslim majority. Soekarno himself said, "Later... in a more serene atmosphere, we indeed... can make a more complete Constitution, more perfectly." The Muslims always recalled this promise and in the following periods they repeatedly dunned its realisation while insisting that the formulation of the Jakarta Charter was never cancelled.

Since 29 August 1945 the PPKI was replaced by the *Komite Nasional Indonesia Pusat* (KNIP, Central Indonesian National Committee) and one of its tasks was forming a cabinet. The first cabinet, i.e. the presidential cabinet that was composed on 31 August 1945, was soon changed to be a ministerial cabinet led by Sutan Sjahrir as the chair of KNIP, accompanied by Amir Sjarifoeddin as the vice-chair. In this *Kabinet Sjahrir I*, consisting of eleven ministers, there were four Christians, whereas ministers chosen from among the well-known Muslims were quite limited. This was felt to be unfair by the Muslims and disappointment led them to become an opposition party.

Already in the PPKI session of 19 August 1945 it had been proposed to set up a *Kementerian Agama* (Ministry of Religious Affairs), but Latuharhary objected with an argument that this might give rise to feelings of offence and dislike and he suggested that religious affairs be handled by the Ministry of Education. This suggestion was supported even by certain members from the Islamic faction, so the proposal was suspended. But when this proposal was repeated during the session of KNIP on 24–28 November 1945 it received a positive response so that on 3 January 1946 this ministry was set up, although it raised some criticisms,¹⁰ with K.H. Rasjidi (a young intellectual of *Masyumi*¹¹ and a close friend of Sjahrir) as the first minister.

In the meantime on 30 October 1945 Sutan Sjahrir, as the chair and by the approval of KNIP, issued a government announcement regarding the founding of political parties. While the Muslim side responded by founding *Masyumi* on 7–8 November 1945, the Protestant Christians responded by founding *Partai Kristen Nasional* (PKN), later *Partai Kristen Indonesia* (Parkindo; Indonesian

¹⁰ In the first or inaugurating conference of DGI in May 1950 certain participants (e.g. Probowinoto) still expressed their objection and criticism of this ministry. J. Leimena, who in that event became the speaker on "Church and State", replied: "It is not wise to abolish the Ministry of Religious Affairs; just at this moment we need it. We have to use that ministry for our intention to show 't wezen van de Kerk (the essence of the Church)." (quoted in Aritonang 2004:289).

¹¹ *Masyumi* (stands for *Majelis Syuro Muslimin Indonesia*; Consultative Council of Indonesian Muslims) was founded in October 1943 as a merger of some Islamic parties, but dissolved a few days before independence and was re-founded in November 1945. This Islamic party is well known as a very strong exponent to strive for an Islamic state and as an opponent to Christianity. Rasjidi repeatedly showed up until the 1980s as a Muslim spokesman regarding many cases against the Christians.

Christian Party) on 10–11 November 1945.¹² Meanwhile the Catholics had to wait for the approval of the Catholic Church leadership.¹³ According to Abednego¹⁴ the PKN had an important meaning, i.e. “a working communion to struggle on the calling and responsibility of the Protestant Christians to the nation and country, an organisation of the Protestant Christians from various Protestant churches, and which when necessary will strive for the common Christian interests in political, economic and cultural fields, and last but not least in the religious field, especially for religious freedom.”¹⁵

On 15 November 1945 the PKN issued an open letter to the Christians in the United Kingdom, the USA, China etc. dealing with the bombing of Surabaya by the British military. This letter, according to Abednego, proved three important things: firstly, there are Christian people in the country known by the outside world as a Muslim country; secondly, the Christians are not passive towards the surrounding events; thirdly, the Christians already have a political party that will always be involved in the struggle to maintain independence in Indonesia.¹⁶

The incident of the Surabaya bombing was one of the indicators that since the proclamation of independence political and security conditions were very fragile. The Indonesian government, led among others by Prime Minister Sjahrir, entered the Linggarjati agreement of 15 November 1946 with the Dutch and the Allies, but such an agreement, along with the meek attitude of Sjahrir, raised discontent especially in the Masyumi circle. Moreover in Masyumi's eyes the Dutch did not honour the agreement, by not withdrawing their troops from the Republic of Indonesia area. After a motion of no confidence from Masyumi, Sjahrir returned his mandate on 27 June 1947.

In early July 1947 Amir Sjarifoeddin, a Christian although not from Parkindo, was appointed prime minister to compose a new cabinet. He tried to persuade Masyumi to join his first cabinet but was unsuccessful. In his second cabinet, not long after the first, he succeeded in attracting Masyumi, but this cooperation could not long endure, since Amir agreed to sign the Renville

¹² The leading figures that gathered at the Kramat Raya 65 Building, Jakarta, were among others Dr. T.S.G. Moelia, F. Laoh, Rev. Probowinoto, W.S. Johannes and Martinus Abednego. W.S. Johannes was elected as the first chair; to be substituted by Probowinoto in the first congress of the PKN at Solo 6–7 December 1945, together with the change of the name of PKN to Parkindo.

¹³ The *Partai Katholik RI* was founded on 8 December 1945 with I.J. Kasimo as the first chair.

¹⁴ Martinus Abednego, one of the founders of PKN/Parkindo, later became the first General Director of the Protestant Christian Society Guidance section at the Department of Religious Affairs.

¹⁵ Abednego 1976:39.

¹⁶ Abednego 1976:40.

agreement¹⁷ on 17 January 1948. According to the Masyumi faction (including its paramilitary organisations: *Hizbullah* and *Sabilillah*) this agreement inflicted a big loss on the Indonesian side and even betrayed the independence already proclaimed. This was later the reason for those paramilitary groups to disobey the Indonesian government and to join a rebel movement, the *Darul Islam/Tentara Islam Indonesia* (DI/TII; World of Islam/Indonesian Islamic Army), and even more so when the Dutch broke the agreement by launching the 'Police Action' (Aggression) II of 19–31 December 1948 (see below).

Amir himself also felt betrayed, and therefore returned his mandate to Soekarno and Hatta in January 1948. Hatta was appointed prime minister while he was also Vice-President, and in his cabinet there were some Christians, Protestants as well as Catholics, who represented Parkindo and the Partai Katholik as well as the *Partai Nasional Indonesia* (PNI, Indonesian National Party, a nationalist party).¹⁸ Concerning Amir Sjarifoeddin, we want to quote John Prior's judgment:

During the war of independence 1945–1949 a few key nationalist leaders were Christians in the revolutionary army (T.B. Simatupang), air force (Adisutjipto) and the provisional government (Prime Minister Amir Sjarifoeddin). Born in a prominent Muslim family, Amir Sjarifoeddin (AS) (1907–1948) converted to Christianity, which event led his mother to commit suicide. A brilliant intellectual, AS studied law and was fluent in eight languages. He was an outstanding leader who combined fervent nationalism, romantic socialism and prophetic Christianity. Imprisoned by both the Dutch and the Japanese, he was briefly a member of various cabinets in 1946–1947. Soekarno appointed him prime minister in July 1947. However, feeling betrayed after negotiating a peace deal with the Dutch, he resigned in January 1948. Joining forces with the opposition he sided with the Madiun "revolt" in September the same year and so was executed as a communist by more moderate nationalists. Simatupang described him as "a prototypical political Christian." He accused the pietist churches' leaders of not preaching a socio-political role of the prophets. His fiery political speeches were redolent with biblical quotes. His faith was a source of personal empowerment and gave him an open, future-oriented form of social solidarity well beyond his Batak ethnic roots and personal Christian commitment. In retrospect, AS can be described as a prophetic liberationist decades before the advent of liberation theology.¹⁹

How were the churches? Generally the Catholic and the Protestant churches were in line with the Partai Katholik and Parkindo. The Christians as church

¹⁷ This agreement initiated by the Commission of Three States (USA, Australia and Belgium) that was founded by the United Nations Organisation (UNO) to resolve the conflicts between the Indonesians and the Dutch as among others seen in the '*Politionele Actie I*' ('Police Action', by the Indonesian side called 'Aggression I') of 20/21 July 1947.

¹⁸ The Christian ministers were A.A. Maramis (PNI), I.J. Kasimo (Partai Katholik) and J. Leimena (Parkindo).

¹⁹ In: John England et al. [eds.] 2003:157–158.

members were hand in hand with the other faiths in the struggle to maintain independence, even by staking their lives. The tension between Christians and Muslims during the Dutch and Japanese colonial era was at least temporarily set aside. In the conference on Church and Mission at Malino on 15 to 25 March 1947, for example, a number of Protestant leaders in eastern Indonesia expressed their standpoint to support and to strive for an independent Indonesia. The same position was also expressed in the General Synod of the Protestant Church in Indonesia (GPI) at Bogor on 30 May to 10 June 1948, although both conferences were not very distinctly critical the Dutch aggression.²⁰

A more noticeably independent standpoint was shown by the Catholic Church. Soon after the first Dutch aggression bishop A. Soegijapranata declared in a radio-speech that the Indonesian Catholics were thankful for an independent Indonesia and would give their support. “We promise to cooperate with the people from all levels to manifest the firm independence and equal prosperity.” On 17 August 1947 I.J. Kasimo issued a brochure entitled “The Foundations of Our Struggle” among other things stating that the Republic of Indonesia was *de facto* and *de jure* acknowledged. In December 1948 bishop Soegijapranata wrote an article in a magazine, *Commonwealth*, in the USA. In this article he stated among other things that the Dutch blockade on Indonesia was not only of economics but also of thought. This blockade made some of the people show sympathy for communist ideas, because the people were suffering a lack of food and clothes that were being promised by the communists. Therefore he appealed to readers in the USA to find a way to hamper the Dutch action that inflicted losses on the nation of Indonesia.

“Old Order” Era (1950–1965)²¹

In 1950 Indonesia entered a new era after the formal acknowledgement of its sovereignty by the Netherlands on 27 December 1949. On 17 August 1950 the form of the state reverted to that of a unitary state (*Negara Kesatuan Republik Indonesia*, NKRI) with a provisional Constitution (*Undang-Undang Dasar Sementara 1950*; UUDS 1950) and the whole constitutional structure of the revolutionary years, symbolised among other things by the *Republik Indonesia Serikat* (RIS, Federal Republic of Indonesia), was swept away. The Church and Christianity also entered a new phase in its presence and activities, indicated among other things by the founding of the *Dewan Gereja-gereja di*

²⁰ Ngelow 1994:192–193.

²¹ This negative-connoted term was not given by Soekarno or his followers to his regime, but by Soeharto and his followers, who call their regime the “New Order.” Later (in the so-called ‘Reformation’ era) “New Order” also acquired a negative connotation. We use these terms because they have already become *terminus technicus* in the political sphere.

Indonesia (DGI, Council of Churches in Indonesia) on 27 May 1950. We will not discuss this event in this chapter, since it will be specifically described in chapter seventeen. Only one thing we need to underline: The founding of the DGI on the one hand reflected the consciousness of the churches that they are present in a unitary state and on the other hand the churches participated in the struggle to maintain and to develop the unity of the nation and the country. In this case the role of T.S.G. Moelia (1896–1966) as the first chairman of the DGI and a layman should not be forgotten, because he had rich experience in the political sphere during the colonial and revolutionary eras (see further chapter sixteen).

We will begin our general observation on this period by noting the participation of Christians in the government and in political life. Not all people supported the Indonesian unitary state, preferring to maintain the RIS, and some of them were Christians. They suspected that the government of a unitary Indonesia would be dominated by the Javanese, by Muslims, or tend to be leftist. But there were also many Christians who became supporters of the unitary state and among them we need to mention the Swiss-educated Dr. G.S.S.J. (Sam) Ratulangie (1891–1949), although he did not represent the Christian party. He was appointed by Soekarno and Hatta as governor of Sulawesi soon after the proclamation of independence, together with Latuharhary as governor of the Moluccas. Before he died, Ratulangie as a prominent nationalist figure took a step to integrate the *Negara Indonesia Timur* (East Indonesia State, one of the states in RIS) into the impending recovered unitary state, and this step was supported by many people. There were, however, soon certain movements in eastern Indonesia who wanted to maintain the RIS or even to erect a new state as the *Republik Maluku Selatan* (RMS, South Maluku Republic) on 25 April 1950. The unitary RI government did not face many obstacles in its effort to defeat the RMS ‘separatist’ state.

In the meantime, in the transition period from RIS to NKRI, from January to August 1950, the government was led by Vice-President Hatta as prime minister. His cabinet consisted of sixteen ministers, eleven from the Republicans and five from the Federal factions. Among the Republicans, four represented Masyumi, three PNI (two of them were Christians: Herling Laoh and Arnold Mononutu) and one Parkindo (Johannes Leimena).

From the recovery of the NKRI up to 1957, according to the 1950 constitution, the government adopted a parliamentary democracy system, in which the office of prime minister could not be held by the president or the vice-president. During this first part of the “Old Order” era there were many cabinets, each averaging a lifetime of less than one year. The prime minister alternated between Masyumi and PNI, but the cabinets were generally a coalition of various political parties besides some non-partisans. Even when the prime minister was from Masyumi, there were always Christians. For example,

in the Natsir (Masyumi) Cabinet, September 1950 to March 1951, there were F.S. Harjadi (Partai Katholik) and Johannes Leimena (Parkindo) besides some others representing non-Christian parties.

We need to pay special attention to Johannes Leimena (1905–1977). Besides being repeatedly appointed a minister in various cabinets, since 1957 (when Soekarno ended the period of parliamentary democracy and instituted the so-called guided democracy and took for himself the office of prime minister) Leimena was also trusted to be one of the vice-prime ministers. He was even several times trusted as *ad interim* acting-president. Of him Soekarno once said, “Mr. Leimena, although he has a *dominee* (pastor) soul...but against the colonialism-imperialism he never ceased to combat and to strive. I know Mr. Leimena since he was young, I was young.”²² John Prior described him further:

Hailing from Ambon, Johannes Leimena (JL) was raised in the capital, Jakarta. Active in WSCEF, he helped found the Indonesian SCM. He participated at Tambaram in 1938. JL worked as a medical doctor in West Java (1930–1941; doctorate 1939). After internment by the Japanese for six months (1942), he worked in secret. He took part in the International Round Table Discussion at The Hague, which achieved constitutional acknowledgement of Indonesian independence (1949)... The main theme of his life was social justice. He threw himself into the nationalist movement, but with a clear Christian identity. The (ecumenical) churches are the place where the best could be drawn out from each cultural and national grouping. Some years before Barth (1946), JL spoke of the (creative) tension between the supra-nationalism of Christianity and nationalist aspirations. After independence he wrote against *Darul Islam*, communism and separatism (*daerahism*—literally ‘localism’). He worked for self-reliant churches that would be an activating yeast in village community development. Promoting co-operatives, he also concerned himself with local culture, especially music... While others maintained a deafening silence, JL concerned himself with the treatment of suspected communist detainees after the Soeharto coup (1965/66). If the church refused to read the signs of the times, it would be vomited out of the mouth of God.²³

The above-mentioned Darul Islam (more completely: *Darul Islam/Tentara Islam Indonesia*; DI/TII) was a rebel and separatist movement that was planned and led by S.M. Kartosuwirjo (1905–1962) with the goal to erect an Islamic state (*Negara Islam Indonesia*; NII). This state has even been proclaimed twice: on 7 August and 21 December 1949. Its manoeuvring as an armed movement started from 1948 in West Java, among other factors triggered by discontent regarding the Renville agreement (see above). It spread to some other provinces

²² Quoted from Soekarno’s speech in a commemoration of the Prophet Mohammad’s birthday at the State Palace on 22 July 1964; published in *Bung Karno dan Islam* (1990:136) and quoted in Aritonang 2004:352–353.

²³ In: John England et al. [eds.] 2003:163–164.

(Central Java, South Sulawesi, Aceh and South Kalimantan) and escalated in 1950s. In the *Qanun Asasi* (Constitution) of the NII it was stated among other things that there was no place for a non-Muslim to hold any government office. This movement was actually and mainly directed against Soekarno's regime, but its military actions in several places affected the life of the Christians and the churches (besides the Muslims, also), such as in West Java and South Sulawesi. That is why the churches in those provinces together with the DGI expressed their statement opposing any idea of founding an Islamic state in Indonesia and supporting the government in its attempts to eliminate such a revolutionary movement. Besides that, the churches also made some efforts to serve the thousands of refugees, widows and orphans who were the victims of DI/TII.²⁴

In 1962 the government succeeded in defeating this DI/TII revolt, when Kartosuwirjo was caught and sentenced to death on 5 September 1962. But its remnant or latent potentiality still endures, as shown recently by a number of publications that praise and promote the DII/TII. Also certain observers have signalled that the current *Jemaah Islamiyah* that joined to play significant roles in many riots and terror actions in the early 2000s, including attacks on the Christians, manifests the spirit and has connection with the DI/TII.²⁵

But not every movement of revolt was rejected or criticised by the Christians. The rebellion of the *Pemerintahan Revolusioner Republik Indonesia/Perjuangan Semesta* (PRRI/Permesta; Revolutionary Government of the Indonesian Republic/Universal Struggle) in 1957–1961 was supported by some Christians, civil as well as military (like Maludin Simbolon and Ventje Sumual), in Sumatra and in Sulawesi, and they cooperated with the Muslims. The main reasons for this revolt were Soekarno's tendency toward communism marked by his closer relations with the *Partai Komunis Indonesia* (PKI; Indonesian Communist Party) and the over-exploitation by the central government of regional resources. In the beginning the USA supported this revolt secretly in order to hamper the widening influence of communism in Indonesia. When the USA later stopped its support in order to keep a good relationship with Indonesia, the leader of PRRI approached the leader of DI/TII. This made it difficult for the churches' leaders to make up their minds. In one of its appeals, the DGI with its members urged the government, the parliament, society as well as the churches to ensure that, "according to the principles of religion and

²⁴ Koernia Atje Soejana 1975:51–52; and J. Sarira 1975:323.

²⁵ See Djohan Effendi, "Jamaah Islamiyah dan Abdullah Sungkar," in: *Kompas* daily, 7 November 2002; although countered in Fauzan Al-Anshari's article, "Ganasnya Fitnah—Tanggapan atas Tulisan Djohan Effendi," in: *Kompas* 9 November 2002.

the will of God: to avoid all violence that surely affects bloodshed and civil war, and to take the way of consultation to resolve all turbulences.”²⁶

In 1955 for the first time Indonesia held general elections. It consisted of two steps: to elect the Parliament and the *Konstituante* (Constituent Assembly to formulate a new Constitution). The Islamic parties (Masyumi, NU,²⁷ PSII²⁸ and some other small parties)—based on the assumption that the majority of the population is Muslim, and after providing a draft of *Dustur Islamiyah* (Pointers of Islamic State Constitution)—were very confident of winning. But in fact they failed and the winners in both steps were the non-Islamic parties (57.2% for the Nationalists against 42.8% for the Muslim parties). In this election the Protestant churches were coordinated by the DGI to vote for Parkindo,²⁹ while the Catholics were assumed to do the same for the Partai Katholik.

During the *Konstituante* sessions in 1956–1959 the old issue of the foundation of the state showed up again as the main agenda item and raised an unending debate. On the one side the Islamic faction once again proposed Islam as the foundation based on the same arguments, and strived to revive the Jakarta Charter. On the other side the so-called secular nationalists together with the Christians (Protestant as well as Catholic) counter-argued and basically maintained the Pancasila (as definitely formulated in the Preamble of the 1945 Constitution on 18 August of 1945). In this debate there was actually congruence between the Muslim and the Christian factions, regarding the importance and the position of the first principle, *Ketuhanan Yang Maha Esa*, as the ultimate and inspiring principle above the other principles. The difference and contradiction arose when the Muslim side interpreted the Pancasila, especially the first principle, from an Islamic perspective, while it also criticised Pancasila *per se* as a secular ideology, and therefore wished to reformulate Pancasila according to the Jakarta Charter.³⁰

The Christian faction, while rejecting Islam as the foundation of the state, argued that Pancasila is the meeting-point among all groups and streams and therefore assures the unity of the nation. This argument was strengthened from a more specifically Christian standpoint, as expressed by W.J. Rumambi:³¹

²⁶ *Jejak Langkah Gerakan Oikoumene di Indonesia—dokumen historis pembentukan DGI dan Sidang Lengkap DGI I–III (1950–1956)*, Jakarta: PGI, 1996:218–219; quoted in Aritonang 2004:307.

²⁷ Stands for *Nahdlatul Ulama* (literally: the Rise of the Religious Scholars).

²⁸ Stands for *Partai Sarekat Islam Indonesia* (Indonesian Islamic Union Party).

²⁹ See among others the appeal issued by DGI on 1 July 1955 to support Parkindo, followed by the appeal issued by the Extraordinary Conference of the GPI on 31 August 1955 and the similar appeals by some other churches.

³⁰ For this debate see Aritonang 2004:313–314.

³¹ Wilhelm Johannis Rumambi was one of the leaders of Parkindo and he was once General Secretary of the DGI. In 1964 he was appointed as minister by Soekarno in the cabinet Dwikora II that was also called the ‘Kabinet Seratus Menteri’ (Cabinet of A Hundred Ministers), from

We view it [Pancasila] according to our confidence as Christians. We do it because we are also responsible for the salvation and the happiness of Indonesia. That responsibility is firstly to our Lord and then to our fellows.... Our task as Christians in Indonesia in the political field is to join to attempt to secure the welfare, peace, justice and orderliness for the whole people of Indonesia and not only for the Christians, by words as well as by actions, based on the salvation plan of our Lord as evident in our Holy Scriptures; Jesus Christ is the Saviour of the world and the Saviour of Indonesia as well. That is our confidence.... Our faction cannot accept Islam as the state foundation of Indonesia, although we appreciate the ideas contained in it. Because, besides what we have already described, Islam as the state foundation surely cannot be accepted in a number of regions in Indonesia such as Minahasa, Sangir-Talaud, Poso, part of Toraja, a big part of Tapanuli, Sumba, Timor, part of Maluku, and West Papua.³²

In line with Rumambi, Oevang Oeray, a Dayak Christian, emphasised the sovereignty of every religion assured by the religious freedom that is one of the most fundamental rights, and he rejected the state's control of religious practice in any form.³³ V.B. da Costa from the Partai Katholik rejected the Islamic protagonists' argument that Islam is more perfect than Pancasila. "Just because of the presence of Pancasila Indonesia became independent. Just because of the values, ideas, aspirations that are already owned by the people of Indonesia [as inherent in Pancasila] the people of Indonesia were motivated by a 'mysterious' power to undertake revolution, to move up, from the colonised condition towards independent Indonesia."³⁴

The debate proceeded to the issue of religious freedom. The Islamic faction, especially Masyumi, proposed Islam as the religion of the state based on the fact that most of the people are Muslims and therefore, referring to the *dhimmi* concept and practise in certain Islamic countries, religious freedom for the other faiths should be limited. But the Christian faction, represented among others by Renda Sarungallo, Sihombing (Parkindo) and Kasimo (Partai Katholik) reminded members that all factions in the Konstituante already acknowledged the equal legal position of every citizen. The application of Islamic law will lead to a conflict of norms and contradictions to the equal legal position, and therefore the *dhimmi* idea must be rejected.³⁵

The discussion turned to the issues of changing or moving between religions and propagating one's religion to adherents of the other faiths. The Islamic faction recognised religious freedom as one of the human rights and declared that Islam gives a firm protection to such a spiritual freedom. But

28 March to 27 July 1966, with a special task to bridge the gap between parliament and the government.

³² Quoted in Aritonang 2004:315–317.

³³ Quoted in Aritonang 2004:317.

³⁴ Quoted in Aritonang 2004:317.

³⁵ Quoted in Aritonang 2004:318–319.

this does not mean that Islam agrees with the changing of religion, because this is contrary to Al-Qur'an. Sihombing, Kasimo and Rumambi argued that Islam and Christianity are missionary religions that propagate the words of God to the people outside their circle, too. The religious freedom includes freedom to change religion as declared in article 18 of the Declaration of Human Rights; therefore they suggested the adoption of this article in the planned new Constitution.

On 20 November 1957 the representatives of Parkindo and the Partai Katholik met and issued a joint declaration containing a firm will to maintain Pancasila as the foundation of the state and therefore to maintain religious freedom. This declaration was signed by J.C.T. Simorangkir as Vice-Chairman of Parkindo and I.J. Kasimo as Chairman of the Partai Katholik.

In the meantime, by the end of 1956 Soekarno had introduced his plan to strengthen his role as President by applying the so-called *Demokrasi Terpimpin* (Guided Democracy). Not long afterwards Hatta resigned as Vice-President, on 1 December 1956, because of his disagreement with Soekarno who, on 14 March 1957, proclaimed martial law. Parliamentary democracy, such as it had been in Indonesia, was dead.³⁶ A National Council became a reality on 11 July 1957 and was directly chaired by Soekarno. Since then Soekarno also expressed his intention to return to the 1945 Constitution. Concerning this idea the Konstituante was divided; the majority (PNI, PKI, NU, Parkindo and some other small nationalist parties) agreed, whereas the minority (Masyumi, Labour Party and some other small Islamic parties) rejected it.³⁷

This minority group also rejected the government's judgment that the Konstituante had failed to accomplish its task. Even V.B. da Costa from the Partai Katholik rejected this judgment. In his opinion this institution had already finished 90% of its task, and the current restlessness (mass meetings, demonstrations, etc.) was affected by the external disturbance orchestrated by the government in order to achieve a legitimate take-over after an absolute surrender by the Konstituante. In line with this Endang S. Anshari also noted that the two blocks: 'Islam' and 'Pancasila' had already compromised through a formation by the Formulating Committee of the Constitution that consisted of all factions, on 11 November 1957, and this committee had already submitted a series of conclusions.³⁸

Whatever the assessment of the performance and result of this institution, Soekarno's speech at the Konstituante session on 22 April 1959, where he rejected the seven-words of the Jakarta Charter although he acknowledged this

³⁶ Ricklefs 1981:243.

³⁷ Partai Katolik in the beginning supported the rejection, but later agreed after being warned by Bishop Soegijapranata: "In Indonesia the loyal opposition is not known, like in the West."

³⁸ Endang S. Anshari 1997:86–87.

charter as an historical document, roused a new controversy among the factions, and made unripe the compromise already achieved. In the 29 May 1959 session a vote was held to decide the acceptance or rejection of the Jakarta Charter: 210 accepted and 265 rejected. On the next day a vote was held to accept or to reject the idea of the government returning to the 1945 Constitution. In three sessions of balloting, 269/264/263 accepted and 199/204/203 rejected. There was no two-third majority as required in the 1950 Constitution. Therefore, when Soekarno proclaimed the President's decree of 5 July 1959 that among other things declared the dissolution of the Konstituante and a return to the 1945 Constitution, it was not the decision of the Konstituante. This decree was followed by his speech during the independence-day celebration of 17 August 1959, frequently named the *Manifesto Politik*,³⁹ which among other things contained a description of Guided Democracy.

While the Islamic group was divided on these decrees and political manifestos, the Christians generally agreed and supported them.⁴⁰ In Notohamidjojo's lecture entitled, "The Guided Democracy Viewed from Christian Understanding," in the Parkindo congress of 8–11 February 1962 at Yogyakarta, he stated, "We have to be positive and actively participate in the national development based on Pancasila and in the frame of the Guided Democracy."⁴¹ The Christians even accepted and supported the decision of the *Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat Sementara* (MPRS; Provisional People's Consultative Assembly) of 18 May 1963 to appoint Soekarno as President-for-Life, as also did the NU and *Muhammadiyah*.⁴²

The support of the Christians for that appointment also reflected the dynamics of the relations between the Christians and Soekarno. He had become acquainted with Christianity when he was several times in prison during

³⁹ The official title of that speech is "Penemuan Kembali Revolusi Kita" (Rediscovery of Our Revolution). Early in 1960 this political manifesto was elaborated by having the initials USDEK added, standing for Undang-Undang Dasar 1945, Sosialisme Indonesia, Demokrasi Terpimpin, Ekonomi Terpimpin and Kepribadian Indonesia (the 1945 Constitution, Indonesian socialism, guided democracy, guided economy and Indonesian identity); Ricklefs 1981:255. Thereafter Soekarno also promoted *NASAKOM* (*Nasionalisme, Agama dan Komunisme*; Nationalism, Religion and Communism) as a national ideology besides Pancasila. According to Cribb et al. (1995:84), "This was not entirely a product of post-war thinking; in the late 1920s and early 1930s Soekarno had been arguing for the need to unify the three major strands of the nationalist movement—Nationalism, Islam and Marxism—under his leadership." This idea was viewed by the Muslim circle as an indication of Soekarno's tendency toward communism.

⁴⁰ Rev. Simon Marantika, General Secretary of DGI, in his report to the meeting of the Central Council of DGI in September 1959 put a critical note to the 'guided' element developed by Soekarno's regime. Contained in *Jejak Langkah*:230; also quoted in Aritonang (ed.) 2001:93–94 and Aritonang 2004:337.

⁴¹ Notohamidjojo was a Christian intellectual and president of Satya Wacana Christian University, Salatiga, Central Java, in the 1950s and 1960s. Simorangkir 1989:476–479.

⁴² On NU and Muhammadiyah's support, see A.S. Maarif 1996:108–110; also referred in Aritonang 2004:332–334. Simorangkir 1989:487.

the colonial era, through reading as well as personal contacts. On the one hand he sharply criticised western-colonial Christianity, but on the other hand he showed a deep respect for Jesus Christ.⁴³ As we already saw, after he was appointed president he entrusted various positions to some Christians, especially Leimena. The Christian side showed homage and obedience to the government (frequently referring to Romans 13:1–7), especially to Soekarno as the ‘Pancasila digger.’ The experiences since the BPUPKI and PPKI up to the time of the Konstituante fostered a special closeness between Soekarno and the Christians. Many times Soekarno attended important Christian events and delivered his fascinating speeches, for example at the third general conference of the DGI in 1956 at Jakarta, at the 1957 inaugurating conference of the East Asia Christian Conference at Parapat, North Sumatra, and at the Centennial Jubilee Feast of HKBP in 1961 at Sipoholon, Tarutung.

One of the keywords very frequently used by Soekarno was ‘revolution.’ Although technically and historically speaking this word mostly applied to the ‘revolutionary era’ of 1945–1949, for Soekarno the Indonesian revolution was still running, even up to the end of his regime in the mid-1960s. He was even called *Pemimpin Besar Revolusi* (The Great Leader of Revolution). The churches, especially gathered in the DGI, also frequently used this word while also showing their critical stance toward it. “We also attempt to rediscover God’s purpose with our revolution,” said Simon Marantika, General Secretary of the DGI in 1959.

The position of Protestant leaders regarding this revolution was expressed in the decision of the fifth general conference of the DGI in 1964 under the theme, “Jesus Christ the Good Shepherd” and the sub-theme “Christian Task in the Revolution,” which said:

Especially for the Christians, the Good Shepherd guided them to live constructively, creatively, realistically and critically in this revolution.... Essentially the Christians are very glad to participate in giving content to the Indonesian revolution.... At a glance we may see a parallel between the principles, direction and goal of the current Indonesian revolution and what we find in the revolution initiated by Jesus Christ.

From this formulation we also see that the main ‘conceptor,’ not to say the brain of this formula is T.B. Simatupang (see further about him in chapter sixteen and Seventeen). It is quite interesting that these two leaders had the same interests, for example in Karl Marx’s philosophy, although in the political and military fields Simatupang was in such sharp conflict with Soekarno that he had to resign as

⁴³ Aritonang 2004:347–351.

the Chief Staff of the Army in July 1959. Soekarno repeatedly confessed that he learned the idea of revolution from Marx, and so did Simatupang.⁴⁴

Reviewing the closeness of the Christians to the “Old Order” regime generally, and to Soekarno particularly, many observers and critics asked whether this was the most responsible stand for the Christians regarding their relationship with the government or in respect to their presence and role in national life. This question can still be asked and remains relevant in the coming periods.

In terms of quantity, and in sharp contrast to the coming period, during this period there was no spectacular growth in Christian numbers. Among the total population of Indonesia (1950: 77.2 million, 1955: 85.4 million, and 1961: 97.02 million)⁴⁵ the number of Christians (Catholic and Protestant) was still less than 7%.

Indeed, a concern among certain Muslims had already arisen in this period regarding the propagation and expansion of Christianity, among other avenues through schools, health services and facilities, radio broadcasting, migration, distribution of literature, food and clothes free of charge, etc. This threat of Christianisation became more felt and anger flared up when a leaflet was spread, containing information that in 1962 there would be a conference of the Protestant churches and the Catholic Church at Malang to set up a strategy to Christianise Java in 20 years and the whole of Indonesia in 50 years, by using whatever means possible: multiplying Christian schools, constructing church buildings, encouraging Christian boys to marry Muslim girls or mixed marriages of Christian girls with a strong belief to Muslim boys with a weak belief, printing and distributing the Bible in Arabic, giving position, rank and money to political Muslims, etc. Facing this rumour the Muslim circle issued a number of polemical pamphlets.⁴⁶ Although this polemic did not develop at this time to become a physical collision, it could be seen as an ‘initial investment’ for the exploding rage in the coming periods.

The number of church organisations did not show a significant increase, either.⁴⁷ Concerning social facilities (especially educational and health institu-

⁴⁴ T.B. Simatupang 1986:1-2.

⁴⁵ Ricklefs 1981:225.

⁴⁶ Commenting on these rumours and pamphlets, Boland (1982:227-228) wrote: “Such a conference has certainly never been held. I was told that a leader of one of the many sectarian revivalist movements may have said something like it.... There is no need to pay attention to the content of all these pamphlets. They are samples of cheap polemics, suited to the semi-intellectuals and using arguments which could have been taken over mainly from Ahmadiya publications.”

⁴⁷ In *Peta Kehidupan dan Pelayanan Umat Kristen di Indonesia*. Jakarta: Ditjen Bimas (Kristen) Protestan Departemen Agama RI, 1981, we only see a small number of registered church organisations established in the period of 1950-1965; most of them were the result of maturation or schism, like ONKP, GKPS, GKPI and GKLI at North Sumatra (see chapter thirteen),

tions) there was a slow progress besides an effort to regain and recover the facilities taken over by the Japanese military or by the government during the revolutionary era. However, one important thing has to be emphasised: in this period there were three Christian universities founded, i.e. the *Universitas Kristen Indonesia* (UKI) in Jakarta in 1953, the *Universitas HKBP Nommensen* at Pematangsiantar and Medan in 1954, and the *Universitas Kristen Satya Wacana* (UKSW) at Salatiga, Central Java in 1956. These universities, and later some other Christian universities, played important roles in fostering and developing a Christian presence and contributions in this country.

“New Order” Era (1966–1998)

In this period there was a quite spectacular growth and development of Christianity especially in terms of quantity. The abortive *coup d'état* (whoever might have been the intellectual or the real actors) and the coming of so many mission agencies, especially from the Evangelical and Pentecostal clusters, had a remarkable share in this. A detailed description may be found in the following sections. But parallel with this development there were also a lot of complicated problems. We will divide this period into three stages: initial (1966–1973), mid (1973–1989) and concluding (1989–1998), and will only summarise some national-scale events, issues or problems, in the context of socio-political change and development.

Initial period (1966–1973)

The tragic clash or *coup d'état* in 1965, commonly called G-30-S/PKI or Gestapu/PKI,⁴⁸ brought enormous turbulence in the life of the nation. A new power, mainly consisting of young people and various *Kesatuan Aksi* (Action Unions), soon emerged to declare *Tri Tuntutan Rakyat* (Tritura, Three People's Claims) i.e. dissolve the PKI, reshuffle the cabinet, and depreciate the price of basic daily needs. Eventually Soeharto and the military took over the reins from Soekarno's hand through a letter of command *Supersemar*⁴⁹ that was later approved by the MPRS' General Assembly of June–July 1966 and the

PPKM/GKPM at Mentawai/West Sumatra, GKPJ at Jambi, GKI Sulsel at South Sulawesi, Gereja Masehi Musyafir at NTT, besides some churches in the Evangelical, Baptist, and Pentecostal clusters that from the beginning already had a kind of schismatic trend.

⁴⁸ Stands for *Gerakan 30 September/Partai Komunis Indonesia* (30 September Movement/Indonesian Communist Party). The PKI was usually condemned as the actor in this coup, but later there were some other opinions or theories.

⁴⁹ Stands for *Surat Perintah Sebelas Maret* (11 March [1966] Letter of Command) containing a (quasi) handing over of power from Soekarno to Soeharto. Later the legality of this letter was questioned because the actions taken by Soeharto were different from the command in the letter, and the original sheet could not be found.

Special Assembly of March 1967,⁵⁰ although the inauguration of Soeharto as the definitive President was held in the General Assembly of the MPRS on 27 March 1968. Meanwhile the process of the dissolution of the PKI was accompanied by massive killing, either by some elements in society (especially Islamic groups) or by the military.

The dissolution of the PKI and the massacre (or detention) of between hundreds thousand and a million of alleged communists were initially viewed by the Muslims as their victory against this atheist power. Therefore it was quite natural if they expected to get a big share or position in the new regime that was called *Orde Baru* (New Order). In order to make real this expectation they took some steps of consolidation, among other things to establish a new political organisation. They tried to rehabilitate Masyumi that had already dissolved soon after the *Manifesto Politik* of 1959, but the new regime did not permit this and instead sponsored a modernist and moderate Muslim party, the *Partai Muslimin Indonesia* (Parmusi; Indonesian Muslim Party). Another step was trying to bring forward the Jakarta Charter as one of the agenda items of the General Assembly of the MPRS 1968. This attempt failed and since then they tried to revive this document through various legal procedures, and this attempt was supported by the then Minister of Religious Affairs. This attempt was criticised by three Catholic youth organisations who expressed their rejection of the Jakarta Charter as did also the Protestant faction together with some other factions (including the Army faction) in the General Assembly of 1968.

In the meantime, to strengthen its political position, including its position in the impending General Election of 1971, the government chose the *Golongan Karya* (Golkar, Functional Groups) that had been established in October 1964 as its political vehicle, although Golkar was formally not a political party. This choice was among other factors based on the consideration that Golkar was supported by the army and played a significant role in destroying the power of the PKI and Soekarno. In this Golkar, besides Muslims there were also many Christian intellectuals, civilian as well as military, although they did not bring with them any religious flags and interest. Many of them occupied important and strategic positions in the government. Since the general election of 1971 all government officials and civil servants had to be members or supporters of Golkar. This 'mono-loyalty' was a heavy blow to the other political parties, especially the Islamic parties.⁵¹

⁵⁰ Parkindo joined in proposing a resolution on 9 February 1967 to terminate Soekarno's presidency.

⁵¹ In the General Election of 1971 Golkar gained 62.8% of the vote, Islamic parties 36%. Parkindo and Partai Katholik got respectively less than 1%. Since then until the general election

The large number of Christians in Golkar raised suspicion and dislike among the Muslims. They alleged that the New Order regime more readily embraced the Christians than the Muslims. They even felt and suspected that this regime had already been ‘hijacked’ and dominated by a Catholic-Chinese alliance, especially those in the Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), and among a number of anti-Islamic military officers. It was a public secret that the CSIS was a think tank of the New Order regime, especially due to its closeness to Major General Ali Murtopo, one of Soeharto’s right hand men, who was presumed to be the ‘brain’ behind the policies of the New Order.⁵²

In 1973 the government imposed a merging of political parties into two new ones (besides Golkar as the base of the government). The Islamic parties fused to become the *Partai Persatuan Pembangunan* (PPP, United Development Party), whereas the secular-nationalists together with Parkindo and the Partai Katholik fused to become the *Partai Demokrasi Indonesia* (PDI, Indonesian Democratic Party). Initially all religious parties were offered the opportunity to unite in one party, but Parkindo and the Partai Katholik refused. On the one hand this refusal could be interpreted as ignoring an opportunity to heal historical wounds and to build a healthier relationship, but on the other hand it could be understood that this refusal was based on many bitter experiences of conflict, especially in the BPUPKI/PPKI and Konstituante. Since the fusion the Christian politicians have performed more in the Golkar than in the PDI, and the votes gained by the PDI in the so-called Christian regions tended to decrease. All of these outcomes raised a serious and grievous question, as expressed by Martinus Abednego, “who are the channels of Christian political aspiration and how can its struggle move ahead?”⁵³

From the above-sketched picture we may see that from the beginning of this New Order era there was tension between Christianity and Islam, as the continuation or even the intensifying of previous experience. On 1 October 1967 this tension exploded in a riot and physical clash at Makassar, popularly called the *Peristiwa Makassar*. A big swarm of Muslim youth destroyed 14 church buildings, 3 schools (including one theological school), 1 monastery, 1 office of PMKRI (the Catholic student organisation) including the furniture, and injured a number of Christian youth. The trigger was trivial. A Christian Religion teacher (H.K. Mangumbahang, of Toraja descent) told his pupils that

of 1997 Golkar always gained a majority. But since the 1980s there was a shift of domination in Golkar, from the secular nationalists to those of Islamic background such as Akbar Tanjung.

⁵² Kees van Dijk 2001:132–134 and Aritonang 2004:374–375.

⁵³ In Weinata Sairin et al. (eds.) 1976:422–425.

the Prophet Mohammad only married nine of his wives and lived in adultery with the others.⁵⁴ But there were also some deeper causative factors.

Following the dissolution of the PKI and the prohibition of the communist ideology the government, through an announcement, required every person to embrace one of the official religions. This announcement was approved and strengthened by a decision of the MPRS in 1966. Millions of primal religion adherents as well as alleged PKI sympathisers chose the Christian religion.⁵⁵ This fact is viewed by certain Muslims as an unfair Christianisation, and this was intensified when many Christian churches and institutions provided special ministry for the alleged communists who had been arrested, even after they were released.⁵⁶

In December 1966 a small church was built in Jeneponto, South Sulawesi, and early in 1967 a small Methodist church was also built in Meulaboh, West Aceh. These churches, in so-called Muslim regions, raised protest from some Muslim leaders, among others M. Natsir, who aimed to terminate the process of construction. On the other hand Parkindo held an audience with Acting-President Soeharto on 8 June 1967 and through J.C.T. Simorangkir proposed an *interpelasi* (official question) to the government and the parliament (DPRGR) regarding this Meulaboh affair. This was soon (10 June) countered by the Islamic side (Lukman Harun from Muhammadiyah) with an *interpelasi*, too.⁵⁷ Meanwhile the DGI was preparing its sixth general conference that would be held at Makassar on 29 October to 8 November 1967.

In such a situation the humiliating utterance of the teacher in Makassar, as noted and spread by a Muslim reporter, soon fanned the rage of the Muslims. The reporter added, "The Christian activities in Sulawesi showed a provocative character because almost all Christian congresses are held in Sulawesi. A Christian church was built in front of the Jami Mosque at Makassar although practically no Christian lives there."⁵⁸ More sharp and detailed comments were expressed by the chairman of Perti, "What happened at Makassar on

⁵⁴ Quoted in Boland 1982:230 from an Islamic magazine, *Pandji Masjarakat*, October 1967–19:25 and 20:3–8.

⁵⁵ Avery T. Willis Jr. 1977:63–64 and Ebbie C. Smith 1971.

⁵⁶ Alwi Shihab (1998:174), for example, comments: "By giving opportunity to the Christian missionaries to convert those suspected ex-communists and their families, the government succeeded to shoot at once two birds with the same bullet. On the one hand the government succeeded to cut off the influence of the ex-communists, and on the other hand the government could minimise the ideas of Islam to have influence in the political platform."

⁵⁷ In his *interpelasi* Lukman Harun also questioned the overseas church financial aid and its usage in Indonesia. The complete texts of the *interpelasi* in Umar Hasyim 1979:293–308 and summarised in Aritonang 2004:382–383.

⁵⁸ Quoted in Boland 1982:230. Boland (231) also noted that afterwards there was some more destruction of church building such as in the suburbs of Jakarta, at Jatibarang/West Java, and at Purwodadi/Central Java. But he also noted that similar cases happened to Muslims in Christian regions such as Sangahe, North Sulawesi.

1 October 1967 was essentially the effect of the inner feeling of Muslims that are incessantly wounded by the Christians...” (then he described six kinds of Christian actions).⁵⁹

Some Christian organisations reacted towards the destruction of 1 October. The Partai Katholik, for example, in its circular letter of 1–7 October 1967, advanced a very sharp view that said, among other things, that this destruction, that happened precisely on the day of *Kesaktian Pancasila* (Pancasila’s Power), was already long prepared. Parkindo in its congress of 18–22 October 1967 at Bandung responded by appealing for two things: introspection and self-defence without revenge. This congress also noted that in Papua the majority of the people are Christians but there was no objection to the building of big mosques, because all religious buildings from whatever religions were to praise the greatness of God. Then Melanchton Siregar as the chairperson of Parkindo send a letter of appeal to all Indonesian Christians to entrust the resolution of this case to the government and to keep companionship, union and unity as well as keeping themselves from irresponsible conduct, as responsible Christians and citizens.⁶⁰ The already mentioned sixth general conference of DGI at Makassar did not explicitly discuss this case; it discussed it under the wider issue of religious toleration and co-existence.

Viewing the escalating tension, especially between Islam and Christianity, the government initiated a national *Musyawaharah Antar Umat Beragama* (an inter-religious consultation) in Jakarta on 30 November 1967, followed by similar meetings in some regions. On this national occasion the President, Soeharto, and the Minister of Religious Affairs, M. Dachlan, pleaded for the recovery of good relationships and reminded representatives that religious propagation should not raise conflict among adherents. For this reason the adherents of one religion should not be made the target of the propagation of other religions. Generally all participants in this consultation responded positively to the government’s appeal and some of them proposed certain ideas or concepts. M. Natsir and his Muslim colleagues proposed a draft of a Charter consisting of three points. The first, the second, and part of the third point were accepted by the Christians. But a clause in the third point, “not to make the [other] religious communities the target of the respective religious propagation,” could not be accepted because otherwise Christian mission or evangelism or Islamic *dakwah* could only be directed to deepen the faith of the respective community.

⁵⁹ Contained in *Al-Muslimun* magazine, no. 24, 2nd year, 1967:25. A similar expression can be found in M. Natsir 1988:208–210; and in M. Natsir et al. 1968:19. All referred to and quoted in Aritonang 2004:384–386.

⁶⁰ Simorangkir 1989:78–79, 112.

The argumentation of the Christians (Protestant as well as Catholic) to reject that draft was that Christianity is a missionary religion and that according to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights all people have the right to change their religion. T.B. Simatupang was one of the Christian representatives who fought very firmly to defend the Christian position. Consequently the meeting dispersed in an unpleasant atmosphere, and did not result in a formula or code of ethics on religious propagation. This failure raised a sharp reaction among the Muslims. Essentially they saw that all difficulties in inter-religious relationships so far were caused by Christian intolerance. But the Christians rejected this charge; they agreed to forbid all kinds of improper methods of propaganda such as persuading, seducing, forcing and offering gifts, but they could not accept that they were forbidden to obey the divine call to preach the gospel to all mankind.⁶¹

This consultation eventually failed and it contributed to the worsening relationship of the two religions in the future. But, according to Steenbrink, at least it encouraged the Christians and the Muslims to have deeper acquaintanceship, knowledge and understanding of each other, and it became a starting point for further consultation and dialogue.⁶²

One of the indirect impacts of the Makassar and similar affairs was the limitation on constructing church buildings. As a consequence of the rapid growth of the Christians since 1965, on the one hand they needed more churches, while on the other hand some Muslims were not pleased, particularly when the growth and the construction took place in so-called Muslim regions. To prevent the repetition of previous incidents, the government through the Minister of Religious Affairs and the Minister of Home Affairs issued on 13 September 1969 a joint decision that was popularly named the *Surat Keputusan Bersama* (SKB) no. 1/1969.⁶³ It actually did not contain any explicit formulation to prohibit the construction of church building; it rather contained the regulation and overseeing of the propaganda and the building houses of worship of any religion, including the issuing of *Izin Mendirikan Bangunan* (IMB, permission to construct a building) by the government, but in its implementation it was mostly directed at church building. Mosques were generally built without having to fulfil those regulations, as repeatedly alluded to later by President Abdurrahman Wahid, including reference in his speech at the 13th general assembly of the PGI at Palangkaraya in March 2000. Even among government officials there were some opposing comments, like those expressed by Ali Sadikin, governor of the *Daerah Khusus Ibukota* (DKI, Special Area of the Capital) Jakarta.

⁶¹ Boland 1982:237; Aritonang 2004:392.

⁶² Steenbrink 2000:84.

⁶³ The complete text is contained in Weinata Sairin 1994:3–6.

Soon after the issuing of the SKB, the DGI and the MAWI submitted a Memorandum of 10 October 1969 that stated among other things that Christians are legal citizens in this country and the 1945 Constitution assures religious freedom. Besides that they also noted a certain contradiction in the SKB: on the one hand it assured religious freedom and rights, while on the other hand there was no clear guidance regarding the regulation of permission to build places of worship.⁶⁴ The formulation of some articles in the SKB was also open to multiple interpretations particularly if the government officials that were in charge could not release themselves from personal considerations or sentiments as adherents of a particular religion. Besides proposing some questions, through the Memorandum the DGI and the MAWI also made some concrete suggestions, among others to review (more explicitly: to cancel) the SKB. But so far the SKB has never been withdrawn and has even been extended into regulations that among other things contained a prohibition on using a residential home as a permanent place of worship. Urged by the real need to have a place of worship, many Christian churches used public buildings, including restaurants and hotel auditoriums. But this is also viewed by the government as trespassing against these regulations. No wonder then that, since that time, there has been a lot of tension, friction and conflicts related to this matter.⁶⁵

One aspect of this enduring problem was and is the variety of Christian church organisations. Since 1966 there has been an enormous increase in the number of church organisations, especially among the Evangelical and Pentecostal clusters (see chapter eighteen), and every church organisation wants to build its own churches or places of worship. Consequently in certain areas, for example in housing complexes, there are more than one—even up to six or more—Christian worship houses whereas there is only one or two mosques. For certain Muslims who were accustomed to make observations from the perspective of the so-called ‘proportionate’ comparison of the population, this was felt disturbing or even threatening. They saw the variety of

⁶⁴ J.E. Sahetapy, one of the Christian prominent law experts (see below), in his article, “Unity and Integrity at Stake?” in: Paul Tahalele et al. (eds.) 1997:161, even stated that, “this joint decision clearly contradicts the 1945 Constitution and also contradicts the first paragraph of the Preamble of 1945 Constitution.”

⁶⁵ In November 2004, while inviting President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono to open the fourteenth general assembly of the PGI, the delegates also appealed to the president to review the SKB. The president asked the Minister of Religious Affairs to study the SKB, but a few weeks later the minister stated that the SKB would not be withdrawn. Previously, in his speech at the opening of the thirteenth general assembly of the PGI at Palangkaraya in March 2000, President Abdurrahman Wahid said that rather than asking for the review or withdrawal, it was better for the Christians to build a healthier communication with the Muslim communities. Since the implementation of the Regional Autonomy Law no. 22 and 25/1999 more and more regional governments made very rigid restrictions on the building of churches.

organisations as only one of the tactics for Christianisation, because Muslims are accustomed to worship in the same mosque although they have also a variety of *mazhab* or streams.

The magical jargon since the beginning of the New Order concerned *Pembangunan* (Development). Since 1969 the government composed a long-term (25 years) development program and divided it into five-year planning periods (*Rencana Pembangunan Lima Tahun; Repelita*). The churches, especially those members of the DGI, were also motivated to participate, not only in the spiritual but also in some other aspects (social, economic and cultural), referring to the comprehensive approach to the concept of development (see further in chapter seventeen). No wonder then that many churches established and developed their ministry and department of participation in development; some of them even received awards in the field of health, agriculture and environment. In the meantime the Evangelical and Pentecostal churches were mostly busy winning souls.

Middle Period (1973–1989)

As a logical consequence of a pluralistic society and as an impact of the rapid growth of the Christians since the beginning of the New Order era, there were many *perkawinan campuran* (mixed or inter-religious marriages) between Christians and Muslims; meanwhile there was no law or legal provision that clearly regulated this issue. The government itself had already, since 1950, attempted to compose a new Marriage Law to replace or to unify the various regulations inherited from the colonial period. In July and August 1973 the government proposed a draft of the Marriage Law. Some prominent Islamic leaders viewed this as contrary to Islamic law and teaching, because there were several articles that permitted mixed marriage or stated that difference of religion does not hinder a marriage. They charged that this draft was a part of the process of Christianisation and they were suspicious of “the game of the Catholics,” especially those in the CSIS who were behind this draft.

According to Alwi Shihab⁶⁶ this suspicion was logical because in 1969 the Catholic faction in the parliament (DPRGR) had already put forward its opinion regarding the necessity of a national Marriage Law while it also rejected a draft of Islamic Marriage Regulations. This issue developed into one of majority and minority since HAMKA, then the leader of Muhammadiyah, commented on this case from that perspective, as if “the minority goes up

⁶⁶ Alwi Shihab 1998:180.

and the path of the majority is narrowed.”⁶⁷ Meanwhile H.M. Rasjidi, the first Minister of Religious Affairs (see above) connected this issue with the marriage of Sylvanus, the then governor of Central Kalimantan, and B.R.A. Kus Supiah, daughter of the Solo Sultanate. Due to the protests of the Muslim leaders and some other Muslim groups, the Marriage Law was issued on 2 January 1974 as Law no. 1/1974 with revision of the protested articles so that no articles speak clearly of the possibility of mixed marriage.

With this new Marriage Law and its implementing regulation no. 9/1975 the certificate of marriage that formerly could be issued by the churches no longer had legal standing, and all church members had to register their marriage with the Civil Registration Office to get a legal certificate. But the problem of mixed marriage had not yet been solved, even into the early 2000s, whereas people of different faiths could not be prohibited from marrying. Since there was no reference to it in the Marriage Law, the churches with the DGI and MAWI tried to find a possibility by referring to the colonial regulations. They presumed that this was possible since there was a transitional article in the new implementing regulation that said that the old regulations were no longer valid in as far as the matter concerned had been regulated in this new law. If reversed: the old regulation regarding mixed marriage was still valid because that issue has not yet been regulated in the new law.

Using this interpretation and argumentation, until around 1980, the churches were still permitted to administer the marriages of couples with different or mixed faiths. But the Islamic circle again and again viewed this as a tactic of Christianisation. On 1 June 1980, and then repeated on 30 September 1986, the *Majelis Ulama Indonesia* (MUI, Indonesian Council of the [Islamic] Scholars) issued a *fatwa* (religious utterance) that a mixed marriage, or the marriage of a Muslim to a non-Muslim, is *haram* (forbidden). This significantly reduced the number of mixed marriages, all the more so when the Civil Registration Office refused to register such a marriage. But then the mixed-religion couples can go abroad to legalise their marriages, and this way has been taken up to the present, especially by the ‘haves’.

Another important *fatwa* issued by the MUI is regarding Christmas, therefore it is popularly named *Fatwa Natal*, on 7 March 1981, and then repeatedly re-issued. The main content is that it is *haram* (prohibited) for Muslims to attend and participate in the Christmas celebration because it also includes the ritual of a different religion and therefore trespasses God’s prohibition. The DGI and MAWI viewed this *fatwa* as an exaggeration and contrary to the spirit of religious harmony that was also repeatedly summoned and echoed by the MUI.

⁶⁷ HAMKA 1973:13; quoted in Aritonang 2004:406. (HAMKA is the personal name of a Muhammadiyah leader, it stands for Haji Abdul Malik Karim Amrullah.)

The government also viewed this *fatwa* as worsening Muslim-Christian relations and frustrating the government attempt to foster inter-religious harmony, and therefore asked the MUI to withdraw this *fatwa* and not to spread it. One month later this *fatwa* was withdrawn. Nevertheless, HAMKA said that although it was formally withdrawn, substantially this *fatwa* is still applied among the Muslim community. And in fact up to the moment the Muslim community is always reminded of this *fatwa* in every impending Christmas.⁶⁸

Since the early 1970s the WCC together with the DGI prepared for the fifth General Assembly of the WCC that was planned to take place in July 1975 in Jakarta. President Soeharto and the government—that so far had a quite good relationship with the Christians—supported the plan and expected that this event would exhibit and enhance religious harmony. T.B. Simatupang as one of the chairs of the DGI as well as the WCC wrote a booklet regarding the great plan. When H.M. Rasjidi read it he viewed it negatively and issued a counter-booklet accusing the Christians of preparing a Christianisation movement through an international mission movement that was parallel with the expansion of western colonialism. The choice of Jakarta as the venue of the general assembly of the WCC was seen as a summit in the rape of human rights, especially for the Muslims in Indonesia.⁶⁹

Soon after the publication of Rasjidi's booklet there was a wave of protest from the Muslims against the plan. In July 1974 an Anglican pastor in Jakarta, Eric Constable, was killed.⁷⁰ Considering this dangerous situation, the WCC eventually decided to move the venue of the general assembly to Nairobi, Kenya. According to Adian Husaini⁷¹ in his analysis 25 years later, this incident was not separated from the restlessness of the Muslims caused by the intensifying Christianisation movement, including the case of the Marriage Law.

In 1978 the Christian community was shocked by two decisions of the Minister of Religious Affairs, Alamsjah Ratu Perwiranegara,⁷² essentially connected closely with these former issues. The first decision, no. 70/1978 (dated on 1 August 1978), accommodated the proposal of the Muslim leaders in the

⁶⁸ On 19 May 1981 HAMKA resigned from the position of General Chairman of MUI and on 24 July 1981 he passed away, but we should not interpret this as having connection with the *fatwa*. Aritonang 2004:418–423.

⁶⁹ H.M. Rasjidi, *Sidang Raya DGD di Jakarta 1975—Artinya bagi Dunia Islam* (General Assembly of the WCC—Its Meaning for the Islamic World).

⁷⁰ According to Adian Husaini 2000:107–113, based on his interview with the killer, Hasyim Yahya, a merchant from Surabaya, in 1997, the reason is “I only wanted to implement the command of the Qur’an.”

⁷¹ Adian Husaini 2000:109–10.

⁷² Since 1978 Alamsjah—referring to the willingness of the Muslim figures in PPKI in 1945 to accept the current formulation of Pancasila—also repeatedly claimed that Pancasila is the biggest gift of the Muslim community to the Republic of Indonesia. This statement is also repeatedly rejected by the Christian circle because it was not in accordance with historical facts. Aritonang 2004:431.

Musyawah of 30 November 1967 (see above), i.e. that religious propaganda was not allowed to be directed at someone and/or a group that already embraced another religion. Also it was not allowed to propagate religion by (1) using persuasion or material gifts: money, clothes, food and drink, medicine and other things; (2) spreading pamphlets, bulletins, magazines, books etc. in the houses or areas inhabited by the people of another religion; (3) by door-to-door visiting of people of another religion for whatever reason. The second one was no. 77/1978 (dated on 15 August 1978) regarding overseas aid to religious institutions in Indonesia, that among other things stated: (1) the overseas aid can only be executed after the approval and through the office of the Minister of Religious Affairs; (2) Overseas workers for the propagation and development of religion should be limited; and (3) Religious education institutions have to prepare the successors of the expatriates in a maximum of two years.⁷³

Towards these decisions the DGI and the MAWI soon submitted their responses that principally appealed to the government to review the decisions based on some considerations, i.e. (1) the limitation of religious propagation is contrary to the religious freedom assured by the 1945 Constitution and many other documents; (2) classification of regions according to religion is contrary to the essence of the unitary state of R.I.; (3) the Christian churches besides being rooted in Indonesian soil also have a universal dimension; and (4) the legal foundations of those two decisions are doubtful. But the government did not respond to the objection of the Christians; it even issued a new decision, i.e. the joint decision of the Minister of Religious Affairs and the Minister of Home Affairs no. 1/1979 that was substantially an implementation of those two former decisions. The DGI and the MAWI once again responded and asked for a review, while the Muslim circle understandably hailed those decisions very positively and gladly. The government never reviewed, let alone cancelled or withdrew them, even up to the present moment, although their application was not very restrictive.

In his state speech of 16 August 1982 President Soeharto threw out an idea to make Pancasila *satu-satunya asas* (the only foundation) for all political and social organisations with the main goal of national stability. This was followed by the issuing of some new laws, among others no. 8/1985 known as the Social Organisation Law. In this law it was stated that religious organisations like churches were also categorised as social organisations. For the churches this was not an easy matter although they had already struggled and fought to maintain Pancasila as the foundation of the state together with all Christian communities and organisations.

⁷³ The complete texts of these decisions and the following joint decision of 1/1979 in Weinata Sairin (ed.) 1994:51–59, 63–66; summarised in Aritonang 2004:431–433.

Initially the DGI and the MAWI showed a hard reaction towards this issue, because it was considered contrary to the theological standpoint that only Jesus Christ is the foundation of the church. When the draft of the law was discussed in the central committee of the DGI in July 1984 the opinion of the members was divided. Some of them were of the opinion that the Pancasila could be made the foundation of the church and it was even necessary to see Pancasila as the grace of God to the church. But some others were of the opinion that it could not because the only foundation of the church is Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 3:11). Since there was no agreement, this issue was brought to the general assembly at Ambon in October 1984. Here the DGI (which there became the PGI) took a 'midway' course. In article 3 of its constitution the PGI stated that Jesus Christ is the foundation of the church and in article 5 it was stated that the PGI fully joined in the efforts of the nation to be responsible to live, to apply and to conserve the Pancasila as the only foundation in its life. In other words, the PGI and its members tried to 'Christianise', or to give a Christian content to the Pancasila before deciding to accept it as the foundation.

Evidently the government did not agree if besides an article mentioning Pancasila as the foundation there was another article that also speaks about [another] foundation. This caused a quite long and heavy theological discussion and struggle. Only in 1986 did the PGI with some other Protestant organisations (PII, DPI, PBI, GMAHK and Salvation Army, see chapter eighteen) together with their members come to a joint decision, i.e. "to put 'Pancasila as the only foundation in the life within society, state and country', into the constitution of the church." Since then Pancasila was placed in the constitution of those church organisations in the article concerning Foundation whereas "Jesus Christ as the foundation of the church" was placed in the article concerning Confession. With such a formulation those church organisations avoided using the term *asas tunggal* (the only foundation) without the additional clause.

In the meantime the MAWI on behalf of the Catholic Church—also after a long struggle—in its annual conference of November 1987 (where the name of MAWI changed to KWI) eventually accepted Pancasila as the foundation of society, state and the country. Before declaring the acceptance, in a letter of 3 January 1984 the MAWI proposed to the government that religious institutions, including the churches and their gathering organisations, should not be put on a level with the other neutral or non-religious organisations, because a "Religious Institution is not made by human will, but based on the internalisation and implementation of faith adhered according to the accepted revelation."⁷⁴

⁷⁴ Quoted from *Analekta* (Catholic magazine), no. 1, January 1986:28–30, and "Siaran Pers MAWI II", 7 January 1987 in Aritonang 2004:442.

The last important issue in this sub-period that we need to take into account concerns National Education. In May 1988 the government through the Minister of Education and Culture, Fuad Hassan, launched a draft Law of National Education. One of the main issues was whether and how far this law gave a place to Religious Education and how far the government had authority to regulate this matter. This was actually a classical issue that had already been discussed since 1970 or even earlier. The basic problem was whether the students who studied in a private school run by a religious-background institution were entitled to get Religious Education according to their religion. More concretely: Are the Muslim students entitled to get Islamic Religious Education in a Christian school? If yes, do the Christian schools have an obligation to provide Islamic Religious Education in their curriculum, during school hours, and the teachers together with the equipment, for example a special prayer room? If yes, is it not contrary to the characteristic and the goal of the Christian schools?

The answer to those questions is very important for the Muslims, because—as we have noted—they regarded the Christian schools as agencies for Christianisation by requiring the Muslim students to join the Christian Religious Education, as was already complained of by O. Hashem since the 1960s.⁷⁵ In 1973, responding to such complaints, the General Assembly of the MPR discussed this issue. The Golkar faction suggested that religious education should be taken out of the curriculum and trusted to family and society as in secular countries. But the PPP (Islamic) faction rejected that suggestion and proposed that Religious Education became a required subject from elementary school up to university. Due to this polemic, this problem was allowed to float. In the General Assembly of the MPR it was raised again by the PPP faction but then was rejected through voting.

In the meantime a plan to compose a new National Education Law was launched. In 1978 the draft was already completed by a special commission, but only after Fuad Hassan became the Minister of Education and Culture was this draft proposed to the DPR, where it was opposed by the Muslim group. Conversely, the Christian, PDI and some other 'secular' leaders accepted the proposal because they considered that religious education as a personal matter could be nurtured in the family circle. After a long debate, it was finally decided that the clause, "the Religious Education teacher must be from the same religion as the students" would be placed in a document of Explanation, although the Christian faction still objected to it. However, there was one fundamental thing agreed to and is now seen in the new Law of National

⁷⁵ O. Hashem, *Jawaban Lengkap kepada Pendeta Dr. J. Verkuyl*, Surabaya: JAPI, ± 1968:7; quoted in Aritonang 2004:444.

Education System no. 2/1989, i.e. that Religious Education became a sub-system of the national education system and that Religious Education became a required subject in all school, from elementary to university.

As a matter of fact until 2005 the Christian schools gave only Christian Religious Education to all students just as the Islamic schools only give Islamic Religious Education. In many Christian schools the parents of the students are always given a form containing a statement that they have no objection if their children receive Religious Education according to the characteristic of the school. In the new Law of the National Education System no. 20/2003 the debated clause was no longer placed in the Explanation but in one of the articles, i.e. article 12, although the Christians still protested, including to its formulation of the goal of education. The Implementing Regulation (*Peraturan Pelaksanaan*) of this new law was planned to be issued in mid-2005 but then was postponed; meanwhile the Christian schools are preparing themselves to apply this new law with all of its consequences.

In terms of quantity, although it is commonly said that during the New Order era there was a spectacular growth of Christianity in this country, it was actually not so striking if we refer to the official statistic, although we do see a significant increase. For example, according to the official census of 1980, the composition of the population was as follows:⁷⁶

Total population:	147,331,823
Muslims	128,462,176 (87.2% against 87.5 in 1971)
Catholics	4,358,575 (3% against 2.3% in 1971)
Other Christians	8,505,696 (5.8% against 5.2% in 1971)
Hindus, Buddhist, others	4,755,576 (4% against 5% in 1971)

The striking phenomenon is regarding the increase in the number of church organisations. Since the late 1960s and especially in the 1970s and the 1980s there were more than a hundred new organisations added to less than the hundred previously registered, especially in the Evangelical and Pentecostal clusters. Whether this also is an indicator of growth is open to discussion. In the meantime some mainline churches (including the Catholic Church) were more and more frequently charged by the government as promoters of the theology of liberation imported from Latin America, which in the government's eyes contained communist ideology. To respond to such a charge in the 1980s some theologians and church leaders were busy explaining what the theology

⁷⁶ Quoted in *Peta Kehidupan dan Pelayanan Umat Kristen di Indonesia*. 1981:277.

of liberation is and how Indonesian people had to assess it and might take advantage of it.⁷⁷

Concluding period (1989–1998)

From the 1980s military support for Soeharto tended to decline. He had to look for another strong companion to maintain his reign and seemingly he found this in Muslim circles. In the meantime, especially since the 1980s, Muslim power showed a steady enhancement; there were a lot of young intellectuals as the result of a systematic program to study abroad, including in western countries.

One of the very strategic steps taken by the New Order regime to accommodate this development is to found in an organisation for the Muslim intellectual, i.e. *Ikatan Cendekiawan Muslim Indonesia* (ICMI; All-Indonesia League of Muslim Intellectuals). Formally it was founded on 7 December 1990 at the campus of the Brawijaya University, Malang-East Java. But it had a long background, root and process since the 1970s,⁷⁸ until Bacharuddin Jusuf Habibie emerged as the general chairman. Habibie, the then Minister of Research and Technology, was a faithful and loyal follower of Soeharto; therefore his presence in the top position of the ICMI could be understood as part of the scenario of Soeharto's regime. In other words, the inception and development of the ICMI was sponsored and fostered by Soeharto's regime.

In its further development until the mid-1990s there were thousands—not to say millions—of the so-called Muslim intellectuals who applied for membership and many of them already obtained or will get a position in the bureaucracy, including in the legislative branch, in the headquarters in Jakarta as well as at provincial and regency levels, although in its constitution it was stated that the ICMI is not a political organisation. Briefly speaking, the Indonesian political arena since 1990 was dominated by the Muslims, especially those in the ICMI. The ICMI was enthusiastically hailed as the flag and identity carrier of Islam that formerly seemed vague and fading away. Meanwhile the bureaucrats from the other religions, especially Christian, rapidly or slowly but surely were eliminated. Their glorious era must be put behind as a memory, particularly when the ICMI tended to become sectarian and Habibie and his faction spoke about majority-minority.

This sectarian tendency was sharply criticised by Abdurrahman Wahid (Gus Dur) and he signalled that because of this sectarian character some of

⁷⁷ See for example J.B. Banawiratma 1985:18–24 (reproduced from *Kompas* daily).

⁷⁸ Among the Christians there was a presumption that the inception of the ICMI was motivated or inspired by the resurgence of the *Persatuan Intelligensia Kristen Indonesia* (PIKI, Indonesian Christian Intellectual Union) in 1988, founded in 1963, after it had faded since the late 1960s. But this was rather more a speculation than a fact.

the ICMI's leaders stood behind the various riots in 1996 (see below) or at least joined to create the provocative atmosphere. However, the ICMI together with its Centre for Information and Development Studies (CIDES) and its newspaper *Republika* in this concluding period was successful in replacing the CSIS as the 'think-tank' of the New Order. It also played a significant role in the success at the general election of 1997, which was followed by the re-establishment of Soeharto as the President for the sixth time and the election of Habibie as the Vice-President.

In the peak of the ICMI's performance, but also the decline of the New Order's power, a series of incidents and riots burst out. Many of them were directed at Christian facilities (church buildings, schools, etc.) and even took lives, such as at Surabaya-East Java on 9 June 1996, at Situbondo-East Java on 10 October 1996, at Tasikmalaya on 26 December 1996, at Rengasdengklok-West Java on 30 January 1997 and at Banjarmasin-South Kalimantan on 23 May 1997.⁷⁹

In the Sidotopo-Surabaya case, the incident happened when the churches were observing Sunday morning worship. Besides ten church buildings destroyed by a mass of around 3,000 unknown people, there was also robbery and sexual abuse of the worship participants and the church ministers.

In the Situbondo case the incident broke out after Sholeh, a Moslem, accused by his fellow Muslims, spread false teaching and showed hostility against certain Muslim leaders and circles, and sought their humiliation. When this case was brought to the court, the prosecutor proposed a five-year prison-penalty for him. But the angry mass that wanted a death penalty was dissatisfied and started an *amok*. Someone shouted that Sholeh was hidden in a Bethel Church building. The church was attacked, and Pastor Ishak Christian and four of his family were killed, followed by the destruction of some other church buildings, schools and an orphanage.

In the Tasikmalaya case the incident broke out during the Christmas celebration. The trigger was also trivial, a personal matter between a policeman and an *ustadz* (Islamic religious teacher), but it abruptly exploded into a mass riot covering a wide area surrounding the town of Tasikmalaya. There were 15 church buildings besides Christian schools, *viharas* (Buddhist shrines), shops, factories, hotels, banks, destroyed and burnt.

In the Rengasdengklok case the trigger was again quite trivial. A Chinese lady, Mrs. Kim Tjai alias Encik Giok, was harshly angry toward a group of Muslim youth that too loudly beat a mosque drum at dawn during *Ramadhan* (the Muslim fasting month). This incidental conflict could have been calmed down by the police together with community elders. But suddenly a mass of thousands of unknown persons attacked Kim Tjai's house, followed by the destruction of

⁷⁹ The detailed data, description and analysis in Tahalele et al. (eds.) 1997 and Aritonang 2004:463-479.

motor vehicles, hundreds of buildings, including five church buildings, two viharas and one school commonly owned by the Chinese community.

The riot at Banjarmasin was triggered by an inter-party conflict (Golkar vs PPP) during the general election campaign, soon after *salat Jumat* (the Islamic Friday prayer in the mosques). Initiated by the torture and sexual abuse of some Golkar supporters, the crowd set fire to some buildings, including some church buildings and Christian schools. In a department store hundreds of people were trapped and burnt to death.

There was a lot of theory, analysis and interpretation to explain the causal factors of these incidents, but none of them could disclose or discern the real cause and the brain behind them. There might be a number of factors intermingled: social-economic jealousy, shallow and narrow understanding of religious teaching, ethnic sentiments, etc. However, a common opinion was that a hidden power engineered and planned the scenarios with a certain aim and goal. What the aim and the goal were are not clear enough even up to the present.

For the churches and the Christians this series of attack and destruction became a very bitter and heavy hit. But they also tried to face these realistically. They pleaded to the whole nation and society as well as to the government that Christians, as legal and not second-class citizens in this country, should not be treated as objects of blackmailing and intimidation. Adding to the previously established institutions (like PGI, PII, DPI, etc.) they also built a new networking to face these cases and to anticipate impending similar cases. Started at Surabaya soon after the Surabaya case, *Forum Komunikasi Kristen Surabaya* (FKKS; Surabaya Christian Communication Forum) was established on 15 June 1996, followed by *Forum Komunikasi Kristen Indonesia* (FKKI; Indonesia Christian Communication Forum) on 26 January 1997. These are not formal church or Christian organisational forums but rather networks of Christian individuals concerned about the destiny of Christianity in this country and attempting advocacy for the tortured Christians and churches.

Among them there were some prominent and well-known lawyers and law experts such as J.E. Sahetapy (b. 1933).⁸⁰ Their presence and activities sustained a quite long engagement by many Christian leaders in the legal and advocacy fields during the New Order era, initiated among others by Yap Thiam Hien (1913–1989). Some of these leaders were also active in national institutions and not only for Christian interests, such as Albert Hasibuan (b. 1939) and Asmara Nababan (b. 1946) in the National Committee of Human Rights. There were some also active as lawyers for the suspected big corruptors, including Soeharto and his family, like O.C. Kaligis (b. 1943), Felix Tampubolon

⁸⁰ About him see among others Herry Setyo Adi (ed.), 1998; and P. Tahalele et al. (eds.) 1997.

(b. 1956) and Ruhut Sitompul (b. 1954), while also active in church-related legal advocacy institutions.

Besides giving advocacy for victimised Christians and churches, the FKKS and FKKI also organised some meetings among the Christians and through these meetings they also honestly confessed some mistakes and weakness of the Christians:

As the body of Christ, the Christians in Indonesia are divided into several denominations and not united in the same vision and mission. Living in society, the country and as a nation the Christians are sometimes exclusive, arrogant and self-centred, unwilling to sacrifice and to give the best for others who are still poor. Living with others of different religions, the Christians in Indonesia are sometimes not sensitive and not open.

Based on this introspection they encouraged the Christians to realise and continue learning from their weaknesses and to be willing to improve it.⁸¹

'Reformation' Era (1998–2005)

On Thursday morning 21 May 1998, coinciding with the Ascension Day of Jesus Christ,⁸² Soeharto stepped aside.⁸³ This was the culmination of a wave of protests and demonstrations beginning a few years before, and especially since 1996. In July 1996 thousands of people gathered in the headquarters of the PDI at Jakarta to protest the too-distinct interference of the government in the congress of the PDI in an effort to defeat Megawati Soekarnoputri being elected general chairperson. On 27 July in the early morning a military attack dismissed the crowding supporters of Megawati killing 26 of them. This brutal action inflamed the anger of the people and soon raised a mass riot. Hundreds of buildings were destroyed and burnt accompanied by robbery. But Soeharto's regime stood obstinately and even won the bloody general election of 1997.

In July 1997 a monetary crisis started in Southeast Asia. The *Rupiah* (Indonesian currency) dropped drastically and inflation was not controllable. Still Soeharto was elected president by the MPR for the sixth time on 10 March 1998, by acclamation, followed by the announcement of a new cabinet where some of Soeharto's cronies and his daughter were appointed ministers. Since

⁸¹ Tahalele et al. (eds.) 1997:32–33.

⁸² This made some Christians say: "Jesus ascends Soeharto descends." But this is just a coincidence. Any attempt to look for a connection between these two events is merely a theological speculation.

⁸³ Soeharto himself used an idiom that later became very popular: *lengser keprabon madheg pandhito* (step down from the throne to become a spiritual advisor). But in fact he still had a very strong influence on the following regime or bureaucracy, so that eventually he was released from all prosecution and many of the bureaucrats were still Golkar figures for whom he was *pembina* (the patron).

17 March a series of big waves of demonstration flooded over the whole country, sponsored by the students from various universities, demanding political reformation and a change of regime. In the midst of turbulence and escalating tension, on 9 May, Soeharto left Indonesia to attend the G-15 summit meeting in Cairo. On 12 May four students of Trisakti University, Jakarta, were shot dead by military or police bullets and on 13–15 May a horrible riot exploded in Jakarta. Thousands of buildings were destroyed and burnt, including some church buildings and *viharas*, and around 1,200 people died. A lot of women, including little girls, mainly of Chinese descent, became victims of sexual abuse (around 90 were raped). Some of the perpetrators shouted the cries of a certain religion. When Soeharto returned on 15 May he simply declared that he would not resign; on 19 May he still offered to establish a Reformation Committee before he stepped down. This offer just enflamed the burning anger so that Soeharto had no choice other than to *lengser keprabon*, and he submitted the presidency to the Vice President B.J. Habibie.

The *lengser* of Soeharto and the beginning of the so-called ‘Reformation’ era gave a big expectation to the Christians that the nightmare and torture would end. Three months later some of the Evangelical and Pentecostal leaders visited President Habibie, prayed for him and gave him anointing oil (something commonly done by Christians to the ruler) while also expressing their hope that the previous incidents, during the New Order era, would not happen again. But they were to be disappointed or at least they had to wait for some more years.

On 22 November 1998 another riot burst out at Ketapang area, West Jakarta, and, like many previously, it was triggered by a trivial cause: inter-gang rivalry and quarrels. But it contained religious and ethnic sentiments and the effect fell on 22 church buildings, especially *Gereja Kristus Ketapang* that was destroyed, besides three schools, tens of other buildings and a number of motor vehicles. Sixteen people were brutally killed and around 500 wounded. Around 160 of those involved and accused were Ambonese gang members, who were then deported back to Ambon. There was later a strong suspicion that they became part of the provokers of the Ambon conflict (see below). The ‘intellectual actor’ and the main causing factor of the Ketapang incident, however, could not be discovered even up to the present time.⁸⁴

This incident seriously hit the Christians. Their disappointment was also expressed in a riot at Kupang-NTT on 30 November 1998. On that day many Christians gathered to pray and to commemorate so many previous incidents. After the prayer meeting they made a procession around the city. During the procession a rumour spread that the Muslims were ready to burn the cathedral,

⁸⁴ Aritonang 2004:533–535.

and this caused wild conduct directed against a number of Muslim buildings such as mosques, houses, shops, Muhammadiyah University and the *haji* (Islamic pilgrim) dormitory. Some Christians suspected well-trained infiltrating outsiders as the organisers and provokers of this incident. But the Muslim side, like Ahmad Sumargono through the *Abadi* tabloid of 24 December 1998, accused retired Major General Theo Syafei, a Buginese Christian, as the provoker through his speech at Kupang in November 1998. But Syafei responded by bringing the tabloid before the court for its slandering article, "Theo Syafei and Kupang Riot."⁸⁵

While the Ketapang and Kupang issues were still burning, at the end of December 1998 a long-enduring conflict at Poso, Central Sulawesi, started to flare up. The trigger was also trivial, i.e. youth quarrels and delinquency, mixed with competition in local politics regarding the election of a *bupati* (head of district or regency). Since the conflicting groups were from different religions, Islam and Christianity, it soon developed into an inter-religious conflict, manifested in the destruction of residential and worship houses as well as in threatening and killing each other.

Tracing back to find the roots of the conflict, Lorraine Aragon noted that up to the beginning of the New Order era most of the inhabitants of Poso regency were Christians, either the autochthonous people (who called themselves the Pamona tribe) or migrants from Minahasa who had come since the Dutch colonial era. Since the 1970s Central Sulawesi was made a migration area, together with the construction of the Trans-Sulawesi road. Then new migrants arrived, mainly Muslim Buginese and Makassarese from South Sulawesi. They were successful in agriculture and trade (especially cacao) that was flourishing during the crisis of 1997–1998. Meanwhile the Christian Pamona felt more marginalised, all the more so when the traditional leaders were displaced by civil and military bureaucrats who were mostly Muslims. Since December 1998 a local campaign for the election of the *bupati* began. The incumbent *bupati*, Arief Patanga, a Muslim, was still campaigning, whereas the Christians, referring to an unwritten consensus, argued that it was their turn and promoted Yahya Patiro, the Regency Secretary, as their candidate.⁸⁶

During a week of conflict and rioting, known as the *Konflik Poso Babak I* (Poso Conflict Round I), there were around 200 wounded and 400 houses burnt. The disorder spread outside the Poso regency and one church building in Palu was burnt down. Herman Parimo, the campaign leader from the Christian side, was caught, arrested and tortured brutally, whereas from the

⁸⁵ According to Theo Syafei, he never went to Kupang in November 1998. He confessed that it was his speech that was recorded, put into transcript and spread by the editor of *Abadi*, but he refused to say when and where he had given the disputed speech. Kees van Dijk 2001:381.

⁸⁶ Lorraine Aragon 2002; cited in Aritonang 2004:638–639.

Muslim side nobody was caught. This made the Christians more convinced that the government took sides. This first round was followed by many more rounds, until 2004–2005.

The second round started in April 2000, also appearing as if triggered by the local Muslim-Christian youth quarrel, but the main cause was that the appointed *bupati* was a Muslim (although not the former holder of the office). The Christians were made angrier because the Muslims wanted to take the office of Regency Secretary, too. Until early May more than 700 houses were burnt, mostly owned by Christians, and also some church buildings and a police dormitory. Thousands of people fled, mostly Christians.

The third and more brutal round started by the end of May 2000 and lasted until July 2000, most of the victims being Muslims. Three of the plotters, of Florenese descent, were sentenced to death in April 2001 but the Muslims felt discontent because they argued that more should be punished.

The fourth round started from the first months of 2001 and lasted up to the end of the year. The Christians were angrier now to see that only those from their side were punished. Thousands of GKST members (see chapter fourteen) attacked the Muslims in Poso and burnt their mosque and houses. Meanwhile the GKST also established its crisis centre led by the then General Secretary, Rev. Renaldy Damanik. The Muslims charged that the establishment of this crisis centre was an attempt to consolidate the Christian position in order to attack the Muslims. They even accused Damanik as the provoker of the Poso conflict. In the midst of the conflict the *Laskar Jihad* (Muslim paramilitary troops)⁸⁷ arrived from Yogyakarta and instigated some violence arguing they were acting to protect the Muslims. Mgr. Josephus Suwatan MSC, bishop of Manado, appealed to the government to apply the emergency act because the situation had already developed to the point of human assassination. Meanwhile the military troops also conducted an operation that was regarded as clumsy.

The fifth round lasted until the end of 2001 when thousands of armed *Laskar Jihad* fighters arrived. More than a hundred people were killed. Thousands of houses in 30 villages burnt together with a number of church buildings. The Muslim militia occupied the roads and gas stations, which were decorated with the poster of Osama bin Laden. When the news of assassinations reached overseas countries their governments put pressure on the Indonesian government to control the radical Muslims. Meanwhile the number of refugees increased to 80,000 and the victims who died were more than 1,000. Each side claimed that it was the worst victim and accused the other side of being the trigger.

In such a situation the Megawati government through two coordinating ministers, Yusuf Kalla and Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (since October 2004 the former has been Vice President and the latter President) formed a reconciliation team that involved the parties in conflict, the local government, and also the MUI and the PGI. The reconciliation meeting took place at Malino, South Sulawesi, on 19–20 December 2001 and produced the Malino Declaration I, in a touching and cheerful atmosphere. But in the new year of 2002 four church buildings in Palu, the capital of Central Sulawesi, were blasted by bombs.

⁸⁷ For a detailed inquiry see Noorhaidi 2006.

The peak of all these conflicts that could also be called the sixth round was in June-August 2002, and once again the government sponsored a reconciliation meeting on 11–12 August, among other tasks, to evaluate the Malino Declaration I. But the next big attack happened just a few hours after the meeting closed. A few days later, on 17 August 2002, Rev. Damanik was arrested based on an accusation that in the van he used the police had found a number of weapons and ammunition.⁸⁸

In 2004 and 2005 there were further incidents, among others a shot that killed Rev. Susianti Tinulele on Sunday 18 July 2004 while she was preaching in Efatha Church (one of the GKST churches at Palu), a bomb blast on a church at Palu on 12 December 2004, and a series of bomb blasts at the market of Tentena-Poso on 28 May 2005 that killed at least 22 people, one of them a pastor of the GKST, and wounded around 40 people. In October 2005 three student girls of a Christian Senior High School were beheaded in Poso and their heads were scattered.

As in the previous cases, there are a lot of writings seeking to describe, analyse and interpret these series of conflicts, from domestic and overseas sources, and there have been some attempts already made to resolve the situation, but nobody knows when these conflicts will truly and fully end.

While the series of conflicts was still burning at Poso, since 19 January 1999 a bigger conflict had burst out at Ambon and then in the whole of the Moluccas. The trigger, again, was very trivial: a quarrel between Yopie Saiya (a Christian Ambonese man) and Usman (a Muslim Buginese) in a bus terminal at Batumerah, regarding something that remains vague even up to the present moment, just on the first day of *Lebaran* (the Islamic feast after one month of fasting). In only a few hours a mass riot with religious dimensions poured out and within only five days 52 people were killed, 13 church and mosque buildings and around 500 houses were burnt and tens of thousand of people were evacuated.

The indication of trouble had already been evident since November 1998 when some Christians in a village near Ambon fought against their Muslim neighbours and on the walls of some buildings was written '*usir BBM*' (expel BBM).⁸⁹ On 14 January there was also an incident at Dobo, a small town on Aru island that killed eight people. The return of the Ambonese gang after the Ketapang incident also heated up the situation. But the approaching incident that lasted for years was unimaginable, all the more so if we remember a traditional socio-cultural institution called *pela* or *pela gandong* and a common religious inheritance, *agama Nunusaku*. The general election of 1999 that resulted in victory for the PDI-P and brought Gus Dur to the presidency

⁸⁸ Damanik was arrested and sentenced to three years of prison on 16 July 2004. During his arrest he was elected as the synod chairperson of the GKST and by the end of 2004 he was released.

⁸⁹ BBM stands for *Bugis Buton Makassar*, the Muslim tribes from Sulawesi that dominated market and trade at Ambon.

accompanied by Megawati as Vice-President did not bring a better situation, just the reverse!

What happened will be described in chapter nine. Two things remain to be noted. The first one is the PGI's letter of January 2000 to Amien Rais. According to the PGI, Amien Rais in his capacity as the chairperson of the MPR did not attempt to calm down and pacify the hostile people but instead made some statements that enflamed the emotions of the Muslim people, as he did in a *Tabligh Akbar* (Great Gathering) at the National Monument, Jakarta, on 7 January 2000.⁹⁰ It was not clear how Amien Rais and the Muslim community responded; but as a matter of fact the conflict endured and widened.

The second thing is the Malino Declaration II of 12 February 2002. As in Poso, this meeting and declaration of reconciliation was sponsored by the government, and involved both conflicting sides with the participation of some national religious institutions like the MUI and the PGI. But also, like the first declaration, not long after this declaration was signed the conflict burst out again on 25 April 2002, and this time it was connected by a certain group to the celebration of the anniversary of the RMS. The Muslim side made use of this incident to charge that the Christians were supporters of the RMS separatist movement in order to found a Christian-coloured state.

This Ambon or Moluccas conflict still showed its effects until 2003 but thankfully since 2004 the situation has gradually recovered. It is the task of the churches there to catalyse the process of recovery—a difficult task since the churches were more or less involved in the conflict.

While the conflicts in Poso and the Moluccas were still burning another enormous conflict burst out in Kalimantan, in 2000–2001. Although this was more an ethnic conflict, with the Dayak and Melayu (Malay) on one side against the Maduranese on another side, it also contained religious sentiment since most of the Dayak were Christians whereas the Maduranese were Muslim, and this sentiment deepened when some of the prominent leaders of the GKE became involved (see chapter twelve).

The involvement of the churches in conflicts, both horizontal (inter-communal) as well as vertical (against the government) were also seen in some other regions: in Flores (chapter seven), in Papua (chapter eight), in Kalimantan (chapter twelve), and in North Sumatra (chapter thirteen), and this leads the churches to a fundamental question: how far, for what reason and in what way can the churches be involved? During these conflicts there were a lot of questions and assessments thrown at the churches. On the one hand there were opinions that the churches should not be involved unless it

⁹⁰ The complete text in: Weinata Sairin (ed.) 2002:337–342; also quoted in Aritonang (ed.) 2000:136–137 and Aritonang 2004:551.

was to bring peace and reconciliation, and therefore the involvement of the churches on one side of a conflict was regretted. On the other hand there were also criticisms that the role and the involvement of the churches, including the ecumenical institutions like the PGI, the KWI, the PII etc., were too small and limited; the leaders of the churches were satisfied when they had made beautiful and touching statements regarding the conflicts or the various faults in the life of this nation.⁹¹ No wonder then if there was a number of writings that pointed to the mistakes of the churches, and if S.A.E. Nababan said that the churches shared in the guilt and the responsibility for the condition of this country.⁹² Therefore if the churches want to contribute and to play their role more significantly, the Reformation should start from within.

When PDI-P won the general election in 1999 and Gus Dur was appointed president, a special relief was experienced among the Christians because he was known to be a moderate and pluralist Muslim. When Megawati was appointed in 2001 that feeling was still there, although somewhat decreased. When Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono was elected president in October 2004, there was a blooming expectation among the churches that the conflict and hostility will end, although there was also a concern about the Vice-President, Yusuf Kalla, concerning his allegedly partisan stance in some of the conflicts. There is an expectation that like Gus Dur, this new president also shows and adheres to a broad-minded pluralism that enables the churches and the Christians to feel more secure and treated equally and justly. But the experience in this 'Reformation' era, and in all of the periods of the presence of Christianity in this country, also teaches that the Christians should not only develop a good relationship with the government but move on to build a closer involvement and commitment with the people in their struggling for a better life, and that the churches and the Christians should not rely for their life and destiny on the reigning power that comes and goes but rely more on their Lord, who commissions them to the world.

Th. van den End (1800–1945), Jan S. Aritonang (1945–2005)

⁹¹ Eka Darmaputera in: Victor Silaen (ed.) 1999:3–15.

⁹² S.A.E. Nababan in: Victor Silaen (ed.). 1999:214–233.

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CHAPTER SEVEN

OLD AND NEW CHRISTIANITY IN THE SOUTHEASTERN ISLANDS

In chapters four and five we have discussed the beginning of Christian communities in the southeastern islands that nowadays are called *Nusa Tenggara Timur*, NTT. These are the three larger islands of Flores, Sumba and Timor, with a number of smaller ones, especially the group of Solor, Adonara, Lomblen (or Lembata), and Alor, east of Flores, and the islands of Rote and Sawu to the Southwest of Timor. With a population of 3,823,154 in 2000, it was the province with the highest percentage of Christians, 87,7%. Out of the three other provinces with a majority of Christians it was in absolute numbers and in percentage by far the most 'Christian' (Papua with 75,5%, North Sulawesi with 69,3% and the Moluccas, not including North Moluccas, with 50,2%). In this chapter we will see the local variations on a renewed race with Islam in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, the very slow transition from sixteenth and seventeenth century Portuguese and Dutch Christianity towards a modernising Christianity that accepted schools, hospitals and other aspects of modernity as part of a new culture and religion in the twentieth century. More than in Java or in Sumatra, even than in Sulawesi, in this part of Indonesia traditional religion could survive. In Flores and Timor it survived partly as a hidden tradition under the cover of formal or nominal Christianity. In Sumba traditional religion could quite strongly survive as the major religious tradition of an important, however dwindling minority. Catholicism in Flores has been given here much more attention than the developments in the two other islands that have stronger Protestant communities, because of its exceptional situation as a Catholic majority. Besides, many issues for the whole of NTT are discussed in the longer first section on Flores.

Flores as a Catholic stronghold

The difficult transition from old Portuguese to new Dutch Catholicism in Flores and Timor, 1859–1904

The political status of East Flores and of the islands from Adonara until Alor was until the mid-nineteenth century still uncertain. The Portuguese from Dili, East Timor, claimed sovereignty over this region and from time to time a Catholic priest was sent to look after the flock in Larantuka, Sikka and

Maumere. Due to financial problems, the governor of Dili had to borrow money from the Dutch in Batavia and when it proved impossible to pay back this amount of 80,000 guilders, negotiations started to give some territory to the Dutch for an additional sum of money instead of paying back the loan. In the 1850s these negotiations discussed also the religious status of the 'new Dutch territories.' The Portuguese wanted to include a remark that Catholicism would continue to be protected by the new overlord, but Dutch parliament wanted also to include the religious freedom of Protestants. In the final agreement it was stated that "the freedom of religion is mutually guaranteed to the citizens of the areas which are ceded by the present treaty." Notwithstanding this position, the Batavia administration deemed it necessary to send a Catholic priest to Larantuka. By decision of the governor general on 12 September 1859 a request was sent to the Apostolic Vicar P. Vrancken in Batavia:

While still waiting for approval by Parliament, this government wants to prepare now already the possibility of the execution of this special requirement, by providing the residents of the most important location of our new possession, Larantuka, with the convenience to practice the Roman Catholic worship, which seems to be practised in that area and for which the presence of a Roman Catholic clergyman is required.¹

In 1851 the Dutch army had already taken possession of the fortifications of Larantuka and Wureh, on the island of Adonara, just some 6 km from Larantuka on the other side of Strait Solor. This was done as guarantee for the first loan of 80,000 given to the Portuguese governor of Dili. The Portuguese priest Gregorio Maria Barreta is said to have told his former parish, "You may change your flag, but you should never change your religion." He had told his flock that there were *sorani tua* and *sorani muda*, old and new Christians. As Protestants the Dutch were considered as representatives of new Christians. In order to correct this image the governor general had deemed it necessary to make an exception to a ruling that was defined only a few months earlier. Answering the requests of a small group of Chinese Catholics in the island of Bangka to send a priest, it was stipulated that Catholic priests would be paid by the colonial government only for the pastoral care of European Catholics, but not for native people. For strategic and political reasons, however, an exception should be made for these new citizens of the colony in East Flores.

There had been only occasional contacts between the Catholics of East Flores and Adonara with the Portuguese centre in Dili. There were in the first half of the nineteenth century only one or two priests in the neglected Portuguese colony, which had become part of the diocese of Macao in China. The first

¹ Government Secretary to Vicar Apostolic P. Vrancken, Batavia, 12-9-1859, see Steenbrink 2003-I:73.

Dutch priest, Jan Sanders, arrived in mid-1860. He had many problems in organising the building of a parish house. He was very much surprised at the contradiction between the pride of being a Catholic and the resistance against clergy. During a visit in mid-1861 to Sikka, more westward on the south coast of Flores, people were not willing to receive him in their houses,

The Portuguese *Padris* had the practice of asking for some remuneration for all their services, demanding rice, oil or wax; it was even said that Victorinus a Doloribus, the last Padri who administered this area, returned with a full shipment. If this would have been the case with the services of the Padri only, it still could be accepted, but everybody of his company followed the same practice for his own pocket and perhaps even worse. In such a way a pastoral visit could become a robbery (*rampaspartij*), where everybody tried to acquire as much as possible.²

The Dutch priests were salaried as high-ranking colonial officials and did not have the material problems of the Portuguese clergy. But they also had many problems in finding their place in the Catholic tradition of East Flores.

Already since the early eighteenth century there had been very few Catholic clergy in Flores. Catholicism had been continued as the practice of the Brotherhood of the Rosary, the *Confreria da Rosario*. The local social and political elite provided the leadership of this *Confreria*. The raja was its president. There were every three years elections for functions like *Procurador*, *Maestri*, *Scrivan*, *Thesorero*, *Tjumador* (from the Greek-Latin *thymiama* or incense for the person who held the thurible) and *Capellao*. The *Procurador* had to look after the buildings and the other objects, which were required for the public exercise of religion. The *Maestri* was the leader of religious music and public prayers. He gave religious instruction to children and baptised them during the absence of priests. The *Scrivan* or *Escriváo* was secretary and bookkeeper. He kept a register of deaths. The *Thesorero* was the guardian of the sacred objects, kept in the Capella Maria of Larantuka. He therefore had to live in a house neighbouring the chapel. After keeping this position for three years, he had to show all the sacred objects to the *Confreria* and the crowd. It was one of the major ceremonies during the change of leadership of the Brotherhood.

In the small town of Larantuka alone there were three churches and several chapels that were used for the major ceremonies that were organised by the *Confreria*. The greatest ceremonies were at Christmas, the procession of Good Friday, and the Feast of the Rosary (7 October). At these occasions the rosary was prayed in broken Portuguese formulas, and there was a great preparation with people bearing thousands of candles. At Christmas the statue of the baby Jesus was brought in procession to one of the churches. At this procession all the dignitaries of the brotherhood used their *opa* or long white robes like the

² Steenbrink 2003-I:132.

Dominican Friars who had brought Christianity here from the mid seventeenth century. At the Good Friday procession the crowd halted at temporary altars, *armida*, like the way of the cross. The first priest, Jan Sanders, only behaved as a spectator at this celebration where the people of Larantuka did not use the service of the priest:

The boy is put on a bench. And there he sings with a clear voice: *O vos omnes qui transitis per viam* [All you who pass by] and he opens the scroll, showing a life-sized *Ecce Homo* and continues: *et videte si est dolor sicut dolor meus*.³ There is deadly silence, people are watching and listening, as if they are responding to this invitation. As soon as he finishes, all fall upon the earth, singing *Misericordia Senhor, Misericordia*. This part of the ceremony is so simple and beautiful, so impressive, that I am not able to give a good description. One must see and hear this, this beautiful act of faith of these simple Christians in the silent night, illuminated by the clear moon of the tropical lands, in a wilderness, surrounded by thousands of unbelievers and heathen.⁴

As the first priest, Sanders did not much interfere with the local Christian traditions. He left Flores in late 1861 due to health problems. His successor Caspar Franssen who worked in Larantuka from December 1861 until late 1863, proposed a quick reform of this priestless Portuguese remnant of Christianity, but could find no support with the local elite. Franssen preached against polygamous practices of the elite and wanted a prominent role for himself in the liturgy. He also wanted to re-introduce proper Latin for the official liturgy and Malay for hymns and the praying of the rosary. He failed like many of his successors and until this day Catholicism in East Flores still cherishes the special practices of great processions, a rosary prayed in broken Portuguese, and the quite spectacular outfit of prominent people during the great processions. The most extravagant are four men called Nicodemus, who in the procession of Good Friday carry the dead Christ. In the description of Caspar Franssen, “rabbis, disguised in a ridiculous way with a white nightcap, supposed to be Jewish, a mask before their face as if it was Carnival, a long beard of goat hair. [...] These people in disguise are a derision of the religion and really made my blood boil.”⁵

It was quite a long process: the conversion from lay-dominated ex-Portuguese Catholic tradition to nineteenth century clergy-dominated and Dutch-style Catholicism. In fact, some practices never were fully deleted. For the rest, it took the Dutch missionaries more than fifty years before they could more or less impose their style of Catholicism on the Larantuka Catholics. The major

³ “Is any suffering like my suffering?” from Lamentations 1:12, read as the third lesson of the matins on Maundy Thursday.

⁴ Steenbrink 2003–I:78.

⁵ Steenbrink 2003–I:79.

reason for this was the position of the Catholic raja who was president of the Brotherhood. Under formal Portuguese rule from Dili the raja of Larantuka could behave more or less as an independent ruler. The boundaries of his realm were not clearly fixed, but he claimed sovereignty over a territory that extended to Sikka and Maumere to the west and also over a number of villages in the island of Adonara, divided between this Catholic ruler of Larantuka and the Muslim raja of Adonara, as has been stated above. Under Dutch colonial rule, exercised in fact by the Resident of Kupang, the raja saw the Dutch Catholic missionaries as both supporters and opponents. The resident of Kupang was for most of this period a Protestant. In 1862–1864 it was Isaac Esser who wanted to promote Protestantism whenever possible. The Catholic missionaries considered the raja of Larantuka as a semi-independent ruler. This was most clear in the case of Don Lorenzo Diaz Viera Gondinho who took the dignity in 1887. Lorenzo was educated at the mission school and therefore it was hoped that he would transform East Flores into a truly Catholic region. The clergy adapted the traditional anthem for the king at Sunday Mass and sang, *Domine salvum fac regem nostrum Laurentium*, Lord bless our King Lorenzo, until they were rebuked by the colonial officials that they were obliged to sing for the Dutch king, not for one of the lower Indonesian rulers.

Already in the mid-1860s the first Jesuit missionary Metz had had his dreams about a close cooperation between the clergy and the Catholic raja, if only the latter would leave polygamy and show more true Catholicism:

These abuses [polygamy and heavy drinking] are most deeply rooted within the royal family, and I consider them as the greatest power of the devil in this area to defeat the work of God. If we succeed in truly winning the Raja for God's affairs, then it will not be difficult, with God's Grace, to establish here a new Paraguay.⁶

Metz was referring here to the theocratic settlements established in Latin America by the Jesuits in the eighteenth century to defend the native population against the evil influence of Portuguese and Spanish colonial rule. It was a missionary dream that could not be realised.

Colonial rule became stronger after the turn of the century and Raja Lorenzo was deposed in 1904 because he had levied heavy taxes and applied death penalties as if he were an independent ruler. In fact he was the last of the rajas who could enjoy still the privileges of indirect rule. His successor was put under severe direct control. The deposition of Lorenzo in 1904 caused much trouble, because several missionaries defended his case, protested against the measures taken against him, and therefore were blamed also for the liberties he had taken. The matter could be settled rather quickly, because in the first

⁶ Steenbrink 2003–I:98.

decades of the twentieth century the missionaries of East Flores no longer depended on a Catholic local ruler, but could base their influence on the system of education that became the backbone for the spread of Catholicism.

The Larantuqueiros, the coastal people of the realm of Larantuka, were found, besides in Larantuka itself, in some other coastal places like Konga and Sikka on the south coast of Flores, in Maumere on the north coast, in Nita, located in the mountainous region between Sikka and Maumere, in Wureh on the island of Adonara. They had never tried to convert the mountain people. There was a kind of symbiosis between the coastal and the mountain traditions. This was already experienced during his first period by Jan Sanders who had troubles in buying wood for his parish house and therefore had to stay in the house of the military commander H. Demmeni who *nota bene* lived with his 'housemaid', a former orphan of the truly Catholic orphanage in Semarang. After waiting for several months, on one day Sanders heard a crowd of several mountain people arriving with a large quantity of wood,

But what a disappointment! They went straight past my house, to the hamlet of Lawonama. My disappointment turned into a real insult for me with the sober message from Don Mingo [a brother of Raja André] that the logs were needed to reconstruct the *rumah pemali* of the *orang gunung* [mountain people] in the village.⁷

The Catholic rulers of Larantuka not only respected the tribal religion of the people in the mountainous inland regions of the island, they also provided a sacred place (*pemali*) for them to be used on the occasion of their visits to the coast. At the inauguration of the new ruler, not only the secular ceremonies were to be used in front of the Resident of Kupang: some Catholic rituals were allowed as well, but pagan rituals were also quite common. In 1887 this was a cause of conflict between the clergy and the colonial officials. The pious Raja Lorenzo had made a grand ceremony of his inauguration. The *pemali* house of Larantuka was no longer used for the occasion but the church was used. The raja took the royal oath before the altar of the Holy Virgin Mary and then laid the sceptre, which had been taken from the coffin of his predecessor the day before, on the altar of the Virgin. The ritual slaughtering of a chicken or goat and the drinking of its blood was abolished. As a compromise to the old traditions in the vicinity of the old temple only the ritual drinking of a glass filled with gunpowder and arak, stirred by a sword, still had to be performed by the chiefs, who took the oath. The old formula of swearing to the Lord of Heaven and the Lord of the Earth caused some problems. Under 'Lord of the Earth' the devil was understood, but the formula could not be changed,

⁷ Sanders to Bishop Vrancken, 8 May 1861, see Steenbrink 2003–I:100.

because this could have influenced its validity. On this occasion Raja Lorenzo persuaded the chiefs of the mountain villages to embrace Christianity.

From many similar facts it can be seen that Catholicism and traditional religion lived side by side in East Flores, not only as the religion of the coastal people versus mountain people, but even within the personal life of many people. It would take a long time, perhaps even it would never really happen in full, that old traditions would be abolished. But sometimes wonderful conversions took place. Besides the chief and rulers, there was a high official for traditional religion, with the name of *Tuan Tanah* or 'Lord of the Land', called 'high priest' by the missionaries. In 1873, after ten years of patient toil by Father Metz the first priest who stayed for a longer period, this most important official of the traditional religion in Larantuka with the Portuguese name of Don André, miraculously repudiated his old practices. The immediate reason for this repudiation was the extraordinary experience of a common woman, who three times received a divine command to return to God. She obeyed, dressed herself in a shroud and lay down with a blessed candle and a rosary in her hands. It seemed as if she was dying and would thus literally 'return to God,' because she remained silent and everybody who saw her was convinced that she had passed away. After more than 24 hours she regained consciousness, was very weak and said that she had experienced heaven. She said that she received orders that the *rumah pemali* should be demolished. She called the *Tuan Tanah* Don André and told him everything. This man, more than 80 years old, believed her and consulted the priest in order to do things properly. But he was concerned to prevent the mountain people from causing trouble. It was decided that the *rumah pemali* would remain intact, but in front of it a new chapel in honour of the Saints Philip and Jacob, patrons of Larantuka, would be built as a sign of the power of Christianity. All chiefs openly repudiated the 'service to the devil'. The *Tuan Tanah* continued in his repudiation, consented that the ceremonial drum be sent to Holland in 1875, and died as a respected Christian on 24 January 1880, at the reputed age of 98 years.⁸

A quite peculiar theme in this period of transition from older Portuguese Catholicism, mixed with many tribal traditions, towards nineteenth and twentieth century Dutch Catholicism, is the practice of marriage. There were incidental cases of polygamy most of them with the local elite. Virtually all rajas of Larantuka in this period had several spouses, mostly at different places, as sign of their power over a vast area and in order to strengthen the ties within the elite. Catholic tradition in Larantuka did not give a prominent role to the clergy: not at the great Catholic holidays like Christmas or Easter,

⁸ Steenbrink 2003-I:102.

even less at Sunday mass that was quite uncommon for them to attend. They also seldom celebrated their marriages in church. Because the elite did not give the clergy a role in marriage, the common people were even less accustomed to go to a priest for marriage celebration. The Jesuits who served this region after two diocesan priests had worked here between 1860 and 1863, found a quite ingenious method to accommodate to the reluctance of their flock to have a church marriage. They knew that a priest was not necessary for the validity of a marriage until the Council of Trent (1545–63). They estimated that at that time the Portuguese did not yet rule over this region. Therefore the decisions of Trent never were officially promulgated in these territories, and this made these regulations not applicable for this region. Therefore they considered *kawin kampung* (lit. marriage in the village) according to traditional rules as valid, also for Catholic Canon Law. During the few contacts the priests of Larantuka had with the few priests of Dili, this was a point of debate. The Portuguese and their colonies considered it a matter of fact that the Portuguese had ruled the Moluccas and also southern territories of Indonesia during the later sixteenth century and therefore marriages should be blessed by the parish priest.

The case of marriage shows a crucial theme in the spread of Christianity. Not the number of baptisms, even less the statistics of people going to a Christian school or the weekly church service alone, but the field of marriage is a quite important factor that may show the influence of a new religious tradition on society. Marriage, a central and decisive factor in social and public life, could not easily be brought under the rules of Catholicism. It remained more or less outside the domain of the new religion, not only in the nineteenth but also in the twentieth century. Traditional discussions, the division of wealth between families, the different view on sexuality and on the upbringing of children: it proved that a new religion could be accepted but certainly not in full.⁹

Around 1900 the Catholics in Indonesia counted 50,000 baptised (of a total population of some 40 million). Of these slightly less than half were of European descent. Out of the 26,000 indigenous Catholics two thirds or 18,000 lived in East Flores and West Timor, while there were about 7,000 in Kai and most of all Minahasa, with not yet 1000 in Sumatera (Tanjung Sakti). There were at that time sixteen Dutch sisters (Franciscan Order of Heijthuisen, now called of Semarang) working in boarding schools in Larantuka and Maumere. Ten Jesuit priests worked in NTT, six of them in Larantuka, from where trips to stations like Wureh, Konga and other places were made. Two stayed in Maumere, one in Koting, and one or two in Timor (alternatively in Atapupu and Lahurus).

⁹ Prior 1988.

At the turn of the century about one quarter of the coast line of Flores had come under Dutch colonial rule and was also served by the Catholic mission. The inland villages were not yet missionised, except from some expeditions led by the crown prince Lorenzo in the early 1880s. These missions had led to the sending of some children of inland chiefs to the mission school in Larantuka. The only true inland station was in Koting. This village was close to the village of Nita, one of the remnants of the Portuguese, Malay-speaking cultural communities that also fostered a memory of the Catholic past. The raja of Nita, however, had not much authority in his own region and was not only seen as a weak but also not always a consistent ally of the clergy. Therefore missionary Jesuit A. IJsseldijk took nearby Koting as the location for the only mountain station of the region. Missionary activities were in Malay while only in the early twentieth century some interest started for Lamaholot, the language of the more populous inland regions of East Flores.

Another race between Islam and Christianity: Flores and other parts of NTT 1900–1930s

Until 1650 there was an expansion of the Muslim trading network from Ternate and Makassar towards the southeastern islands, NTT. The Dutch conquest of Malaka in 1641 and of Makassar in 1660 brought a last wave of Portuguese and Muslim traders to this region that was, until that time, not yet dominated by one of the three contending networks: Dutch, Portuguese and Muslim. Between 1650 and 1900 the Dutch managed to control society in this region in a more effective way. There was not much profit to be gained for the Dutch and therefore it took some time before the containment of the Portuguese was completed. For East Flores it was in 1859 that the Dutch flag could be raised. The boundaries in Timor were only fixed in the 1910s. Independent Muslim networks, either of Arab traders or of Buginese and Ternatean captains, survived also until the last decades of the colonial period. On sections of the island of Adonara, much of Solor and Alor, the island of Ende, off the coast of Flores, various coastal settlements in West and North Flores, Waingapu in Sumba, Tual in Kai there was a Muslim trading network that survived the rather incomplete and often very weak Dutch expansion until the beginning of the twentieth century.

With the development of steamers the trade could be intensified. In many places in East Indonesia it was the Arabs who could first buy steamships. They did not spread Islam through great missionary activities, but quite a few local people who did business with them, sooner or later embraced Islam. This caused the expansion of small trading points and the start of some others.

NTT was like most of insular East Indonesia a region of many petty rulers. The Muslim Sultan of Bima claimed sovereignty over West Flores (Manggarai),

but could only maintain some trading posts on the coast. Until the first decades of the twentieth century inland people feared that they would be taken away as slaves. In East Flores the Catholic raja of Larantuka was certainly the most powerful ruler, but he also needed many coalitions, with the inland tribes that only embraced Catholicism in the early decades of the twentieth century and with the Muslim raja of Adonara.

The major harbour of Sumba was Waingapu where the colonial official, the *controleur*, had his office. There lived very few true Sumbanese in this place. According to the statistics of 1880 there were only 35 Sumbanese, besides 70 Buginese, 70 Endenese and 17 Arabs (to be considered as Muslims) and 300 Sawunese (under Protestant influence since the mid-eighteenth century, more intensively since 1870). The majority of the population in all these islands were still adherents of tribal religion in 1900. This condition could have resulted in another race between Islam and Christianity as had occurred between 1450 and 1650. Especially in this region we can see a strong support of the colonial government for the spread of Christianity. Notwithstanding the military campaigns that imposed effective rule in the first decades of the twentieth century, the *corvée* labour and the heavy taxes that were imposed by the colonial government, Christianity became the religion of modern life, of progress and prosperity.

Although the number of Muslims in this region was very minimal, they very often were established in the harbour regions, at the best locations for the inter-island trade. Although a small community (in 1905 there were 303 people of Arab descent in the Kupang residency; they grew to 2,688 in 1930), they held a quite prominent social position. In 1927 under colonial rule a *hoofd der Arabieren* or representative of the Arabs was nominated in Ende (Said Abdoelqadir bin Djadid al-Habsji) and in Sumba (Said Oemar bin Abdoelqadir al-Djoefri). Around 1900 there was a saying in Sumba that “the Endenese have more authority than the Dutch.”¹⁰

With the growing frequency of boats and with the increasing safety in inland territories after the so-called ‘war of pacification’ (*perang pasifikasi* even became the common word in Flores for the bloody show of force by Captain H. Christoffel, 1907), Muslim traders also could expand their activity to the population of the more mountainous regions off the coast. Because trade was often related to money-lending, they could influence social life to some extent and make converts in this way. Muslim expansion, however, had two great enemies in this period: the nearly unanimous opinion among colonial officials that Christianity should be promoted and the well-organised, relatively rich Christian missionary organisations with dedicated and qualified personnel.

¹⁰ Needham 1983:22–30. See also Clarence-Smith 2002:143–163.

As to the first factor, the colonial government: until the rule of Governor General Idenburg (1909–1916) there was very seldom an outspoken Christian as the highest ruler in Indonesia. Official policy of the colonial government always had remained religiously neutral. Some missionaries even complained that the colonial expansion had resulted in a quick spread of Islam, because European missionaries needed special permits to spread their faith, while Muslims could go anywhere. It was the German missionary for Sumatra G.K. Simons who most forcefully propagated this idea. There were indeed colonial officials who feared that Christian subjects would no longer feel inferior to the Western colonisers and claim an equal place. But a majority of colonial officials, even when they did not have much sympathy for Christianity in person, saw a political gain in support given to the Christian mission. The first official after the ‘Pacification’ of Central Flores, A. Couvreur, wrote on 12 February 1908 to Bishop Luypen in Batavia concerning this region, comparing Central and West Flores to the older Catholic regions of East Flores:

[...] If we do not act fast, Islam will occupy the interior and we will have lost this case forever. This is the more regrettable because until now the mission settled in the economically and also spiritually most backward part of Flores. That is a region with some promise, but it will never be able to keep pace with Manggarai and the region north of Ende. Also the density of the population in these regions is much higher than in Maumere and Larantuka. If we act fast, Flores, with the exception of a few coastal places, can be secured for the Catholic Church, *including* the fertile Manggarai, until now under the influence of the Muslim Bima, *including* the whole interior of Ende.¹¹

The colonial government took concrete steps to promote Christianity in NTT in three ways. Firstly, it surrendered the total task of education to the Protestant and Catholic missionary organisations. Secondly, it arranged a total restructuring of society by the constructions of roads and destroying the traditional villages (often not much more than just one long house), while urging people to live in new villages in small family houses. Thirdly, it created larger native political structures, to be surrendered to Catholic or Protestant chiefs. There was in this region not much more than a loose federation of rather independent villages and no common structure for larger communities. The colonial government sent few European officials, and created new structures for larger regions. Below we will give some examples of how this policy also was executed in a way to strengthen the newly converted Christian leaders.

On 23 August 1906 Hendrik Colijn, special advisor for the Outer Islands, arrived in Larantuka as part of his great trip through East Indonesia. Much to the surprise of the missionaries, he communicated the plans of the Dutch

¹¹ For references Steenbrink 2007-II:Document 5.

minister of Colonial Affairs, A.W.F. Idenburg, regarding the development of education in the Indies: a broad network of village schools, supported and largely financed by local social networks. In East Indonesia, this system was to be organised by Catholic and Protestant missions. Colijn was enthusiastic about the school and more specifically about the vocational training in Larantuka and praised its carpenters. Father Hoeberechts defended the first goal of the mission schools, the religious education. On this point, Colijn was positive, saying, "Of course, that is your honest aspiration, to make them confident and obedient Christians. You may continue to build Catholic schools, but it should not be an ecclesiastical school."¹²

This was just the beginning of a grand plan. Colijn elaborated this idea and made another trip to NTT in 1909 to discuss details of the programme with local workers. The Protestant missionaries in Sumba were somewhat hesitant to accept the generous offer of the colonial administration, because the financial obligations would exceed the possibilities of the missionary budget. They were happy to guarantee the availability of the teachers and to control the content of the education, but preferred a direct payment by the local government. On the Catholic side the missionaries were quite keen to show that they were the organisers and supervisors of education. They therefore liked to pay the teachers themselves and receive the money later from the government cashier. Only on 31 March 1913 was a decision published about the subsidies for education to be given under responsibility of the Protestant and Catholic mission in the region of *Timor en Onderhoorigheden*, or the island of Timor and related districts. The ruling was adapted several times but basically was continued until the end of the colonial period and even somewhat later as well.¹³

Education became the major effort of Protestant and Catholic missions alike. In mid-1941 the Catholics counted 87 priests in NTT, but there were 572 teachers working in 247 Catholic schools with 33,522 pupils. In Sumba there were 69 Protestant schools with some 6,000 pupils. In Timor, Rote, Sawu and Alor there were similar developments. The system worked: there was no rivalry between government schools and mission schools because the latter were the sole players in the whole of NTT. The measure to hand over all responsibility for education to the Christian mission was an important stimulus for the advance of Christianity in this region.¹⁴

Another major effort to create a society where Christianity would be the dominant religion, was the relocation of people who lived in large family houses (Flores) or in small fortified villages (Sumba), in most cases on the tops of hills or in areas that were difficult to approach, for reasons of safety.

¹² Steenbrink 2007-II:Document 4.

¹³ Van den End 1987:153–155; 160–170.

¹⁴ Steenbrink 2007-II:Appendix 3; Van den End 1987–700.

In the island of Flores, a trans-Flores highway was built between 1908 and 1927 from Larantuka to Reo. New villages should be built along this road and people should move from the high mountains to locations close to this village. The traditional houses were considered very unhealthy, with many people in one location, and the animals staying amidst the excrements under the houses where they could not be touched by the sun. Colonial officials urged people to move to new villages. But this also had religious implications. Leaving the large houses would mean that there would be no proper place to keep the drum. In that case the drum would become powerless and the spirits could no longer be invoked. Despite these arguments, people were ordered to start the construction of small houses. Willem Coolhaas, who was the *controleur* in Ruteng between June 1926 and May 1927, observed the move in his region. Under strict military surveillance people had to plant their new gardens. Although no offerings were made to the spirits, the harvest was better than usual. Coolhaas concluded:

This was, according to Manggarai people, something extraordinary. Apparently the spirits had no power. At least they had to bow for the authority of the Europeans. This was the right moment for the missionaries to continue their work with more success than before. They were able to fill in the empty place caused by the weakness of the spirits. This happened just one year before my arrival. Since then the victory of Christianity has become absolute.¹⁵

Manggarai, the utmost western part of Flores, was traditionally ruled by the Sultan of Bima. In 1931 the colonial government created a realm for the new raja of Manggarai and instituted Alexander Baroek, educated at the Catholic mission, as the new ruler of this territory, at the same time cutting the last bonds between Bima and Flores. The missionaries joined the effort to re-write Flores history. The SVD priest Willem van Bekkum (later the Bishop of Ruteng 1951–1972) wrote a series of articles on the history of Manggarai that concentrated not on the foreign influences of Bima and Gowa, but on the inland policies. Although acknowledging the permanent relations with other areas of Indonesia in his historical studies, Van Bekkum emphasised the district of Todo (where Alexander Baroek originated) as the major area of the 38 districts of Manggarai.¹⁶

Also in Central Flores the colonial government created larger territories. Here it was the authority of Muslim Ende that was reduced in favour of the new Christians of the interior. The centre of Catholic mission started in Ndona, only some ten kilometres inland. In 1911 the Jesuit priest Henricus Looijmans motivated this move as follows,

¹⁵ Coolhaas 1985:98.

¹⁶ W. van Bekkum 1944. Also Maribeth Erb 1987.

My objection is that Ende is only inhabited by Muslims, Arabs and Chinese, and is not fitted to educate sons of pagan chiefs, who could eventually become Catholic teachers. But the government really has decided that a school must be built in Ende. This can only be realised by placing a priest in Ende, who founds his house and a dormitory for sons of chiefs somewhat outside Ende, or at least separated from the school.¹⁷

In a later stage the town of Ende, the location of the best harbour for Central Flores, still gained prominence but through a continuing process of fusion of districts with native rulers the Lio region was constructed under Pius Rassi Wangge as the most prominent official. Pius Rassi Wangge was born 1892 and baptised in Lela in 1909. He was the son of the pagan chief of Wololele but was sent to the Catholic school in East Flores at the advice of the colonial officials. He stayed in Lela for six years, became a Catholic, and in 1914 he married Johanna Boko a new convert as well. He was installed as raja of the self-governing territory Tanah Kunu V in that same year and his territory was again and again increased to the detriment of the Muslim rulers of the south coast.

Raja Pius showed himself a staunch defender of Catholic interests on several occasions. In March 1922 there was a rapid movement towards Islam in Nggela, inland Central Flores. In one week 24 girls of the school of Nggela converted to Islam, and at the same time stayed out of school. Raja Pius visited the area to inquire about the event and found that one Wawi, a committed Muslim, had suggested to these girls, that they would be freed from the obligation to go to school if they only embraced Islam. The 24 girls followed the advice of Wawi and even went to Ende where they remained in the house of one Haji Ali for some time. Raja Pius returned the girls to their parents and to the Catholic school.

For a long time Raja Pius remained the great supporter of Catholic mission in Central Flores. However, not always could his behaviour be condoned. As a ruler, educated in a feudal family, he was nominated as chief for a much larger territory by the colonial power. He definitely was not a politician of a democratic country. Missionaries also complained that he could easily 'borrow' or take away mission property, like building materials from the ever-building Catholic church, without taking the trouble of paying for the things he took.

In mission history Raja Pius Rassi Wangge of Ende-Lio sometimes is compared to that other great figure of hope and disappointment, Lorenzo II of Larantuka. Similarly the rule of Raja Pius ended in a dramatic way. After a long series of minor incidents in the 1920s and 1930s, more serious complaints

¹⁷ Steenbrink 2007-II:100.

against Raja Pius, including accusation of several murders, started in the late 1930s. In 1940 he was called to Kupang, where he was put on trial. He was deposited as raja of Lio in early 1941 and condemned to exile in Kupang for a period of ten years. A large number of *Kapitan* from the Lio region were punished in a similar way. At the start of the Japanese occupation Raja Pius managed to come back to Flores and gained a position close to the Japanese administration. This made it possible for him (in the words of a European priest) “to resume his old method to extort the population.” On 14 April 1947 he was condemned to death and executed in Kupang.¹⁸

Another colourful figure in this development was Mbaki Mbani, raja of Ndona, the place, still pagan in the 1910s, where the Catholic mission would build its great compound. After some hesitations, Mbaki Mbani embraced Islam in 1918. The missionaries blamed the Dutch official military commander or *Gezaghebber* B.van Suchtelen for this move. They related this development also to a rivalry between Van Suchtelen and his superior, the outspoken Catholic A. Hens, *controleur*, 1910–1913, and assistant-resident of Ende 1913–1916. Van Suchtelen had for several years directed the son of Mbaki Mbani in a somewhat disperse, but definitely not Catholic direction. *Gezaghebber* Van Suchtelen sent Mbaki Bani’s son, later known as Petrus Ngadji (also Ngatji), to the neutral government school of Kupang. Later, *controleur* Hens sent him to the Catholic school of Lela, where he was baptised on 27 August 1914. Mbaki Bani, still hesitating between the Christian and Muslim influences, did not agree to send him to Woloan for further education because he did not like to push him closer to Catholicism. Thereupon Petrus Ngadji returned to Ndona before completing his course in Lela, in 1915. In December 1916 his fiancé Tipoe was sent to the sisters in Larantuka (where she only met one girl who could speak Lionese, Malay and Lamaholot being the common languages in Larantuka). The sisters praised her for her piety, but there was never to be blessed a Catholic marriage between the two. Van Suchtelen took Petrus Ngadji with him on a trip to Java in 1916.¹⁹ In January 1918 Mbaki Bani, after toying for some time with the idea of becoming a Protestant (because the Dutch Queen Wilhelmina was a Protestant),²⁰ opted for Islam, and in 1919 his son was circumcised, although there is no clear evidence that Petrus Ngadji ever fully converted to Islam. In the later political development his position was overruled by the extension of power given to Pius Rassi Wange in Central Flores.

¹⁸ Steenbrink 2007–II:107–109.

¹⁹ Van Suchtelen 1921:85. For this section Steenbrink 2007–II:102–103.

²⁰ Piet Noyen, letter to Luypen, 22 July 1915, in Steenbrink 2007–II:103. Noyen characterises here Mbaki Bani as “shrewd, clever but stubborn.”

In the 1930s the colonial government had to cut its expenses. In the double move of saving money and implementing the ideal of self-governing regions, the native ruler of Sikka, Raja Don Thomas da Silva, installed in his function in 1921, became a fully independent ruler and colonial official in June 1932 as a rare example of *ontvoogding* or 'manumission'. This implied that he had no longer a European superior but was nominated as the highest official in his district. In 1929 the realm of Don Thomas had already been extended to include the former district of KangaE after its childless Muslim ruler had died. This was again a move towards a containment of the spread of Muslim influence, this time from the north coast because KangaE was a northern district, east of Maumere.

For the islands of Sumba and Timor the threat of Islam was much less urgently felt. For the islands of Solor, Adonara, Lomblen and Alor, there was already a more or less fixed differentiation of religions. Islam was firmly settled in many villages. Most of the pagan villages in this region, however, accepted Christianity. As in the case of the Moluccas there are theories about an ancient duality of society. The island of Adonara, to give just one example, was divided in a patchwork style between the Muslim raja of Adonara and the Catholic raja of Larantuka. Until 1900 the Larantuka villages were all pagan and they only later embraced Catholicism. They did not opt for Islam in a period when the global religions established their hegemony in this region.

The Catholic mission as a partner in the development of Flores as a modernizing late colonial society: 1900–1942

The quick colonial expansion in Flores culminating in the War of Pacification of 1907 opened unexpected possibilities for the Catholic Mission, especially through the total offer of education in 1913. The Dutch Jesuits who had provided mission personnel to the whole of Indonesia since 1859, did not feel capable of offering enough people for a true expansion. Therefore they discussed the transfer of sections of the great mission territory to other missionary orders that were blossoming in Europe in the early decades of the 20th century. After the relocation of Kai, Tanimbar and Papua to the MSC in 1902, Kalimantan (1905) and Sumatra (1911 both to the Capuchin Friars), in 1913 the islands of NTT were designated to the SVD (Societas Verbi Divini or Society of the Divine Word), a missionary society of German origin with its headquarters in Steijl, the Netherlands. Initially it was only Timor that was handed over, but soon the whole of the NTT, or the Lesser Sunda Islands were included in the new apostolic vicariate. The SVD could take over responsibility in Timor in 1913 and started in Ende in 1914. Ende and not Larantuka was taken as the centre of the mission because here the government also took its major seat. Besides, there was the threat of the expansion of Islam.

In 1914, the Prefect of the Flores mission, Piet Noyen wrote bluntly to retired missionary Maria Joseph Claessens in the Netherlands, “The construction of the roads has been finished now, and the conditions in the interior are quite safe. The *hajis* (returned pilgrims from Mecca) will spare no costs or energy to plant the poison of their doctrine on the mountains. Therefore Ende has to become the main station of the mission.” In other correspondence, military terminology was used and it was stated that Ende would be ‘occupied’ (*besetzen*) in 1915.²¹

Due to lack of money and personnel during the World War I in Europe (1914–1918), the SVD could not execute their ambitious plans in the 1910s. Initially only Indonesian teachers were sent to Central and West Flores. They opened for the first time in history schools where Malay was the language of simple instruction. Most of these school teachers were graduates from the school of Larantuka, who had to learn the local languages. These must have been very daring and enterprising people, who could establish a new tradition, keep a first generation of children in schools, teach them the new language of Malay and lead many of them to the new religious tradition of Catholicism. With the strong encouragement of the colonial officers, schools were established very quickly at Bajawa and Boawae in 1911 and 1912 respectively, followed by Kotta in 1914, Sawu and Mbai in 1916 and Raja in 1917.²² This number had grown to 13 in 1920 and some 50 in 1942 for the new region of Central Flores alone.²³

The transfer of the mission from the Jesuits to the SVD order had to be postponed until the period after World War I. This last phase turned into a great tragedy. In December 1918 East Flores was struck by the Spanish influenza, which cost the lives of four missionaries, three teachers, twenty pupils of the boarding school of Larantuka, besides many common people. Among the priests was the last Jesuit priest of Larantuka, Arnold van der Velden, who died on 18 December 1918, soon followed by SVD brother Vincentius Meekes and two SVD priests Simon Karsten and Wilhelm Baack. The last Jesuits, four priests and two lay brothers who served the parish of Maumere and Sikka, left in early 1920.

The first SVD leader of the NTT mission was Piet Noyen, a former missionary in China (1893–1909). He was a very ambitious and dynamic person who wrote hundreds of letters to Europe, asking for more personnel and money. Noyen broke away from the affection for the Portuguese heritage in East Flores as the basis for the expansion of Catholicism. He wanted a mission concentrating on the youth, educated in mission schools. Therefore he

²¹ Steenbrink 2007–II:87.

²² L. Lame Uran 1984:126.

²³ P. Laan in: Muskens 1974–IIIb:1173 and 1180.

established his main office in Ndona, close to Ende. He died on 24 February 1921 in Steijl, the Netherlands, while on sick-leave and just before his ordination as bishop.

His successor was Arnold Verstraelen, born 1882 in the Netherlands and between 1907 and 1912 a missionary in the German colonial territory of Togo, West Africa. From 1913 until 1922 he was the leader (and for several years the only priest) in the Timor mission. He was the first to see the results of the great financial subsidies for education from the side of the colonial government. He died in 1932 because of a car accident on the new Flores 'highway'. A horse, not yet accustomed to the sound of cars, panicked and the bishop's driver could not control the car either. In the decade of the pastoral leadership of Verstraelen the number of schools rose from 137 to 287 and the number of baptised from 60,000 to more than 200,000. The number of chapels and churches for Flores increased from 96 to 333. Therefore we may consider this as the decisive decade for the future character of Flores society and culture.

Verstraelen was succeeded by Henricus Leven born in Lank, Germany, in 1883. He worked between 1911 and 1914 in Togo. After the death of Verstraelen, the Vatican wanted to nominate Leven, but the colonial government asked that he should accept Dutch citizenship, before being formally nominated and ordained: the administration accepted German missionaries in Protestant and Catholic missions, but in this period preferred Dutch citizens as their leaders. Henricus Leven was considered somewhat rigid and bureaucratic after his lively and dynamic predecessors and sometimes even labelled as 'Prussian', a term, which implied impersonal dedication and discipline. He guided the mission through the period of economic decline in the 1930s. In the field of marriage where Flores customs were so different from the basic Catholic rules, while many newly baptised were not prepared to follow the formal rules of their new religion he formulated a strategy at the 1935 Ndona synod of recognizing customary marriages as legal. This gave room for a development of the church without the danger of frequent excommunications and estrangement.

In 1926 a first minor seminary, at high school level, was started that soon developed into a grand compound in Todabelu, in the cool highlands of Ngada. Its pupils were mostly young teachers with several years of experience in schools. The first candidates for the priesthood continued their study at the major seminary that was opened in Ledalero, south of Maumere, in 1937. The harvest was still small: out of the 176 students at the minor seminary who started their studies in 1926, only 29 or 16% were ordained to priesthood. Until the 1950s the seminary was the only educational institution after primary school. About one fourth of the ex-seminarians opted for a position as school-teacher, about the same number found a position in the civil administration. When in 1946 the Parliament of East Indonesia was convened in Makassar,

one of the three deputies from Flores was a Catholic priest, educated at the Todabelu-Ledaleo seminaries. One of the deputies of Timor had the same background. In 1950 three Flores students were enrolled in academic studies, all three graduates from the minor seminary. They were the first Florenese to finish academic studies, only some ten years after the first priests finished their study of theology.²⁴ On 28 January 1941 the first two priests were ordained, followed by two more on 15 August 1942. During the Japanese occupation the buildings of Ledaleo were confiscated by the Japanese army, but education continued in Todabelu, where on 16 September 1945 seven priests were ordained. Most of them had not yet finished their studies, but the clergy considered it necessary to use them in this period of turmoil and shortage of priests. They were all members of the SVD order and as such the equals of the European priests.

Education for nuns started on a much more modest scale. The first initiatives in the 1920s were halted because the clergy deemed it not yet suitable to open the possibility for Flores girls to become religious sisters. In 1933 a first proper training started for seven sisters in the parish house of Jopu, East Lio. It was seen as improper to mix the Indonesian and European sisters in one order. Besides, it was official Vatican policy at that time that local orders should be established. A new order was therefore created for them, the Congregation of the Sisters of the Imitation of Jesus (CIJ, *Serikat Suster-suster Pengikut Yesus*). In 1937 the first five sisters took the vow. In 1940 the young congregation had already 16 members. In 2001 they counted 344 sisters. Most of them worked in the archdiocese of Ende, but quite a few in East Timor, some in Jakarta and Kupang.²⁵

During the Japanese occupation the bishop and a small number of priests and nuns were allowed to continue their work. From 30 August 1943 the Bishop of Nagasaki, Paulus Yamaguchi, the Apostolic Administrator of Hiroshima, Aloysius Ogihara, and two Japanese diocesan priests arrived in Ende to work in NTT. They learned Malay and were very helpful in the continuation of pastoral work and of the organisation of the Catholic mission. They could not annihilate the effects of the Japanese occupation but in Flores and Timor the situation was, at least for clergy and Catholic activities, much better than in other regions. Ogihara returned to Japan in early 1945, the two diocesan priests after the capitulation on 15 August 1945, while Bishop Yamaguchi stayed until 8 September 1945. Their presence was also a proof of the important role of Catholicism in Flores society since the beginning of the twentieth century.

²⁴ A very detailed history of the seminaries in Frans Cornelissen 1978; also Cornelissen 1951:203–212.

²⁵ *Buku Petunjuk* 2001:49–72.

Flores Catholicism in the period 1950–2000

During the final fifty years of the twentieth century Flores made a rapid transition from an outlying island of little economic or political consequence to become an integral part of a national and regional market through mass migration, a globalising economy and, since the 1960s, the impact of telecommunications. Within this fast-moving drama lies the story of the transition from a mission receiving to a mission sending church; the transformation of a foreign-run SVD mission to a complex local church complete with indigenous clergy, active laity and numerous pastoral institutions of consultation and apostolic outreach. But, however grand the narrative, there is no single story; there are many streams and they do not all run in the same direction. There are tales of success and its concomitant dangers, of prophecy and compromise. Perhaps the defining narrative is that of the rarely mentioned massacre of February–May 1966.

In 1950 over 60% of all Indonesian Catholics lived in East Nusa Tenggara (NTT), a majority of them on Flores. This had slipped to 53% by 1961 and to 36.7% by 1994. The church was expanding elsewhere and there was little left to baptise on Flores but children of the baptised. By 1967 some 68.5% of the Florenese were Catholic, 705,819 out of a population of 1,027,602; another 20% were Muslim, leaving just 11.5% ‘others’, a scattering of non-Florenese Protestants and a few pockets of traditional religion.²⁶

This was a dramatic increase from the 292,650 baptised of 1940 to 1,420,000 fifty years later. Between 1940 and 1990 the Catholics of Ende diocese increased fourfold, those of Larantuka threefold and those of Ruteng sevenfold, while the average increase nation-wide was tenfold.²⁷ In 1985 some 31.8% of Indonesian Catholics were ethnic Florenese.

In 1950 the effects of the Japanese occupation and war in Europe were still felt for only 115 of the SVD priests and 31 of the brothers working in Nusa Tenggara in 1940 could continue after the occupation.²⁸ As a consequence many of the extensive parishes on Flores were without a resident priest in the early 1950s. For example in the Larantuka deanery five of its 14 parishes and in Lembata two of its 8 parishes were *vacat*.²⁹ However, the *guru agama*

²⁶ If we compare these statistics and those below, all of which come from church sources, with those of the governmental *Badan Pusat Statistik* (BPS), which uses projections based on the 10-yearly national census, we find certain discrepancies; however, basic trends remain unaltered. Apart from difficulties in collecting data, political and religious sensitivity also influence the figures. These statistics should, therefore, be taken as indicative rather than as strictly factual.

²⁷ Boelaars 2005:198.

²⁸ Möhlmann 1969:22–23.

²⁹ Jebarus 2002.

(village catechists) and *guru sekolah* (school-teachers) who had led the church during the Japanese occupation soon reverted to their subsidiary role.

Meanwhile SVD numbers grew rapidly from 195 missionaries in 1950 to 252 in 1960 and 323 in 1966. Since the 1970s the numbers of missionaries decreased as pastoral work was gradually taken over by the diocesan clergy who came to more than 250 by the end of the century. In the year 2000 there were still 308 SVD priests and brothers on Flores of whom 265 were Indonesian and just 43 expatriates coming from eight countries of which only 12 were under the age of 65. These figures do not include the 250 SVD Indonesians (including Timorese, Javanese and Balinese) working overseas.

In the mid-1960s there were already 94 Florenese and Timorese-born priests on Flores out of a total of 239 (39%). There were also some 240 Indonesian religious brothers and sisters out of 416 (57%). Meanwhile there were 150 seminarians at Ledalero and Ritapiret major seminaries and 668 students in the minor seminaries of Todabelu, Hokeng and Kisol. One hundred and nine parishes were found throughout the island with 1,003 churches and chapels. These were being run by 2,607 village catechists and 3,348 schoolteachers. Parishes had established 88 centres of Catholic action, 147 branches of Our Lady's Sodality (*Kongregasi Maria*) and 54 presidia of the *Legio Mariae*. If in 1950 no Florenese had yet obtained a university degree apart from clergy, by 1967 more than 50 were studying at universities overseas, sponsored by the SVD.³⁰

Indonesianisation

After the nationalisation of Dutch interests by Soekarno in 1957 and the prohibition of foreigners teaching, there was uncertainty regarding the presence of expatriates, in particular the Dutch. Florenese seminarians and clergy were sent to study overseas in order to take over teaching and the running of the school foundations. In 1948 Donatus Djagom (b. 1919, archbishop of Ende 1969–1996), Paul Sani (1924–1972, bishop of Denpasar 1961–1972) and Stefanus Kopong Keda (1924–2001)³¹ were the first seminarians to complete their theological studies in the Netherlands; Piet Muda (1914–1990) and Lambert Lame Uran (1917–2004) were the first priests sent to Europe to qualify in teaching and education.

While no more Dutch missionaries were allowed into the country, most expatriates were permitted to stay. Twenty-five years later, in 1978, two decisions of the Minister of Religious Affairs (Nos. 70 & 77) laid down a strict

³⁰ Maku 1967:5–6.

³¹ Kopong Keda, an ardent nationalist, was expelled from the SVD for being *kepala batu* (pig-headed) who took inculturation way beyond canonical norms.

timetable for the handing over of all work being undertaken by foreign personnel and for all overseas finance to be channelled through the Department. Emergency meetings were held between the bishops of Nusa Tenggara and the governor in Kupang and the instruction was put on hold. However, its impact was immense: an all-out effort was made to increase numbers of local clergy, religious brothers and sisters as well as catechists and other pastoral workers (*awamisasi*). Numbers of seminarians climbed from annual intakes of 20 SVDs, and a similar number of diocesan seminarians, to peaks of well over a hundred. Ledalero became one of the largest seminaries in the world. By 1990 some 92% of priests and religious working in Flores were Indonesians.³² By the year 2000 church personnel from Flores, men and women, were working in 40 countries overseas.

Not everyone might concur that the speedy baptism of Flores was ‘spectacular’. The ethnic groups of Flores held little resistance towards a centrally organised, global religion. Islam was embedded in parts of East Flores and Ende, but although the Muslim Sultanates of Bima and Gowa controlled much of West Flores until the twentieth century, Islam was not propagated in that area; in any event Islam in Manggarai was associated with slavery. The Islamic strongholds in East and Central Flores are precisely where there was Portuguese influence and the presence of Catholic communities over the centuries. Given the numbers of church personnel (one missionary per 2,190 parishioners in 1967), the times (national awakening to the outside world) and the strategy (schools, clinics, *guru agama*), perhaps the baptism of the island could be seen as ‘inevitable.’

In the sixteenth century Portuguese Dominicans claimed the Florenese were *gens candida sed ruda*—pious but backward. Early in the twentieth century Dutch Divine Word Missionary Arnold Verstraelen (1882–1932) declared they were *naturaliter christiana*. As the century drew to an end what type of church were they creating?

Church, state and politics: A slow transition to independence and democracy, 1949–1955

Half way through the twentieth century Java was still a long way from Flores. The proclamation of independence in Jakarta in August 1945 found little resonance on this largely Catholic isle. No word of the 1945–1949 nationalists’ struggle in Java gains an entry in the Catholic bi-weekly *Bentara* (1948–1959) edited by the moderate nationalist SVD Adrianus Conterius (1913–1984). Issue by issue the federalist policy of the Dutch authorities and their *Negara Indonesia Timur* (NIT) was quietly expounded. The entire edition of 1st September

³² Boelaars 2005:283.

1948 celebrated the golden jubilee (1898–1948) of ‘our queen Wilhelmina.’ Political talk was prohibited at Ledalero major seminary until the Round Table Conference in Den Hague made independence inevitable in late 1949.

Nonetheless, *de facto*, the Catholic Church remained an important player in political manoeuvring. In December 1945 the Dutch reoccupied Nusa Tenggara and the following year Dr. H.J. van Mook of the Netherlands Indies Civil Administration (NICA) began organising the establishment of the *Negara Indonesia Timur* (NIT) with Makassar as its capital. The rajas of Eastern Indonesia (*Groote Oost*) were invited to the 15 July 1946 Malino (South Sulawesi) Constitutional Conference. In November of the same year the nine rajas of Flores (six Catholic, three Muslim)³³ agreed to form a council (*Flores Federasi*) with Don J. Thomas Ximenes da Silva of Sikka (1895–1954) as chairman. When Flores became a single administrative unit, Don Thomas was chosen by the NIT prime minister as the first District Head (May 1949–December 1951).

Also in November 1946 representatives were chosen to attend the *Muktamar Denpasar* in December, which set up the *Negara Indonesia Timur* (the State of East Indonesia). Delegates had to have graduated from secondary school, which made it inevitable that only teachers and clergy from Flores could be included; delegates were chosen only by those who had graduated from three years primary school (*Vervolgschool*, VVS) which effectively disenfranchised a majority of Florenese, especially women. Dr. Jan Raats SVD (1912–1984) represented the council of rajas while the two elected delegates were Adrianus Conterius SVD and an alumnus from the teacher training school, Louis E. Monteiro.³⁴ Gabriel Manek SVD (1913–1989) represented Timor. Ide Anak Agung Gde Agung of Bali and canon lawyer Jan Raats of Ledalero drew up the NIT constitution.³⁵

Adrianus Conterius SVD maintained a federalist standpoint until his death in 1984. Florenese politicians were not simply toeing the Dutch line; they were convinced that a federation, rather than a unitary state, would be economically more advantageous to Flores. Concern with the Muslim majority in Java and Sumatra and uncertainty about the Protestant majority in Timor and Sumba also played a part in their calculations.

³³ The *Sinar Sembilan* (nine lights) were the princes of Adonara, Larantuka, Sikka, Lio, Ende, Nagekeo, Ngada, Riung and Manggarai. The Dutch authorities, with active collusion by the church, manipulated Sikka into a prominence, which did not exist in the more original, dispersed system of Florenese governance.

³⁴ Monteiro in: Liliweri 1984:122–124.

³⁵ Jan Raats SVD proposed “een regionale en landencoalitie in plaats van een partijenstelsel.” (*SVD Nieuws*, Teteringen, No. 13, December 1946). When the unitary state was proclaimed on 17th August 1950, Raats was no longer welcome in Indonesia. For many years he taught history at San Carlos University in Cebu, Philippines before retiring to Teteringen in the Netherlands.

Most Florenese Catholics felt safe under the leadership of Soekarno who visited Flores twice (Maumere 1950; Ende 1954);³⁶ the president was received like a favourite son returning home (*pulang kampung*). While many Dutch clergy had their misgivings with Soekarno's nationalistic and leftwing rhetoric, the people were convinced that as he had been exiled in Ende by the Dutch (1935–1938), Soekarno would never challenge the position of the Catholic Church.

Flores produced a crop of young Catholic politicians who later played their part on the national stage. In 1955 V.B. da Costa (Pak Sentis) was appointed to the *Konstituante*, which was tasked (unsuccessfully) to write a definitive national constitution. He was a member of the national parliament since 1964 and was continuously re-elected until the *reformasi* election of 1999, bowing out in 2004. Frans Seda, an economist of note sponsored for higher studies in Tilburg, the Netherlands, by the SVD, was a cabinet minister under both Soekarno and Soeharto: minister of plantations (1964–1966), agriculture (1966), finance (1966–1968) and communications (1968–1973). Ben Mang Reng Say crowned a political career in *Partai Katolik* and parliament as a diplomat overseas.

Swept along by the momentum of nation-building inspired by Soekarno and the organic model of church proposed by Pius XII, the 1950s and early 1960s were the heyday of Catholic mass organisations such as *Partai Katolik* (political party), PMKRI (student association), *Wanita Katolik* (Catholic women's association), *Ikatan Petani Pancasila* (farmers' association), *Ikatan Buruh Pancasila* (blue-collar worker association) and *Persatuan Guru Katolik* (PGK, teachers association). These organisations were promoted in the parishes, each with its clerical moderator; they ensured that the church was organisationally present in every public and professional sector.

The election of 1955 and its aftermath

The first elections, both district and national, in the independent republic were held in 1955. Local elections were for a District Representative Council (DPD); Flores was a single administrative district until 1958. Although six political parties took part—*Masyumi* (Islamic party), PNI (Soekarno's nationalist party), PKI (communist), PS (socialist) and the Protestant *Parkindo* party, in fact there was negligible competition for the *Partai Katolik*. There was no political campaign as such for few knew what 'politics' was. Politics was the concern of the intelligentsia and a few politicians who were dependant on the

³⁶ Raja Thomas da Silva died of a heart attack while in Ende for the visit of Soekarno in May 1954.

church hierarchy. Under the command of the clergy³⁷ the *Partai Katolik* won overwhelmingly. Only those close to the clergy had any chance of being chosen as a candidate. Large pictures of *kontas* (Marian rosaries) were displayed in front of some churches such as in Nele, Maumere, where a slogan announced in the local tongue, “Mother’s rosary is my rosary.”

As political developments in Java heated up leading to the proclamation of guided democracy by Soekarno in August 1959, so clergy and their lay politicians, who came from the ranks of teachers and ex-seminarians, galvanised support under the slogans *pro ecclesia et patria* (Latin: ‘for church and nation’) and *100% orang Katolik, 100% orang Indonesia*. Catholic social teaching was summed up in the words *salus populi suprema lex* (again Latin: ‘the well-being of all people is the highest law’) although, in practice, Catholic politicians were expected to represent their constituents, namely the Catholics of Flores. Religiously based political parties were inherently sectarian.

Mass adherence to the *Partai Katolik* consolidated the hegemony of those who were brought into prominence by the Dutch and the colonial church; in Flores this inevitably favoured a particular ethnic group. Those outside the establishment were at a considerable political disadvantage and had trouble finding an alternative political home without being ostracised by the clergy; such ostracism had serious socio-economic consequences. These ‘dissidents’ joined Soekarno’s PNI, calling it *PNI Katolik*, or joined the communist PKI. This was not an ideological choice but rather a political option and an economic preference by those marginalised by the political/ecclesial/ethnic establishment. This helps to explain, but not excuse, the massacre of 1966.

The tragic betrayal of 1966

There is almost total silence about the massacre of ‘suspected communists’ in early 1966, and yet this brutal tragedy is emblematic of the Florenese church and the society in which it is embedded. In February 1966 the army cut off communications between the five *kabupaten* of Flores and then called on a few willing civil servants and teachers, as well as the services of Catholic youth, to ‘clean up the island.’ One of the very few written records to date is that of Paul Webb,³⁸ although he misses the most brutal massacre of them all that in Maumere where between 800 and 2,000 people, almost all baptised Catholics, lost their lives.³⁹ The root problem was ethnic politics. The *Partai*

³⁷ The largest circulation daily, *Kompas*, was jokingly known as ‘komando pastor.’ See chapter twenty-one for this Catholic newspaper.

³⁸ Paul Webb 1986b.

³⁹ A fairly detailed account of the massacre in Maumere, complete with political and ethnic background, is found in an anonymous manuscript dated 1974. The author was probably one of the Catholic youth co-opted by the military. The narrative begins in 1950 and ends in 1968.

Katolik continued the pre-independence hegemony of the raja-dom of Sikka while those from the centre and east of the *kabupaten* joined the only available alternatives, PNI and PKI. To counter this development, in early 1963 Hendrik Djawa (1928–1996), parish priest of Maumere, formed Catholic youth groups in each parish, some 25 branches in all. For the next two years the youth demonstrated and counter-demonstrated on every available issue such as the confrontation with Malaysia (*ganyang Malaysia*). Following on the 30 September 1965 incident in Jakarta, local army commanders launched KOMOP, *Operational Command for the Restoration of Peace and Security*. This organised slaughter took place in Flores between February and May 1966. In Maumere Catholic youth leaders, intimidated and terrified of being slaughtered themselves, took part in the mass murder. Some villages, like that of Keut, were almost totally wiped out; men, women and children were brought into town by truck, hacked down and dumped in mass graves near Wairklau in the mission coconut plantation.

During the crucial months of February to May there was no ruling from church authorities. Only one young diocesan priest, Yosef Frederikus Pede da Lopez (b. 1936), had the courage to protest the arrest and imminent slaughter of 45 villagers from Wolokoli. Only two priests in Maumere, Clemens Pareira (1926–1970) and Frans Cornelissen SVD (1894–1983), were brave enough to administer the sacraments to those condemned by the kangaroo courts. After the local army commander threatened Pede da Lopez in writing, the young Sikkanese priest was whisked away to Ritapiret seminary and then to the bishop's house in Ndona. Bishop Gabriel Manek, on 28 April 1966, sent a letter to the Dean of Maumere in which he defended the stand of the three priests.⁴⁰

Ende also saw open brutality. Hundreds of people were herded onto the town green, including religious sisters and brothers, and forced to watch the killings; anyone who wept, or showed any other sign of 'weakness,' was accused of being a 'fellow traveller.' In Bajawa killings were few; the diocesan youth moderator, Isaak Dura (later bishop of Sintang, Kalimantan, 1977–1996) forbade Catholic youth to take part.⁴¹ This, and a few similar incidents, indicates that a strong stand by the church might well have halted, or at least

Elsewhere Laurens Say speaks of the massacre in Maumere as 'genocide' (Da Gomez 2003:139), presumably by the Sikkanese ruling group.

⁴⁰ Da Cunha 1999:34–38, 90–92, 94–98, 206–216.

⁴¹ The then dean of Bajawa, Adriaan Wetzer SVD (b. 1924), notes in his memoir, "Everywhere terrible things occurred. Many were killed without due process based on suspicion alone without the intervention of the district government who themselves were afraid. We could only give the sacraments to those held awaiting a decision on their fate. Everything was in the hands of the army in Ende." (Wetzer 2000:32–33). He writes more as an onlooker rather than the one responsible for the deanery.

diminished, the slaughter. Minority groups such as Protestants (*Parkindo*) and Muslims (NU) were recruited into digging graves; every faction was allocated a task; nobody was left free to report. Nevertheless, many lives were saved by the quick distribution of *Partai Katolik* membership cards used as 'material proof' that one was not a communist.

This ethnically fired political massacre involved the Catholic youth organisation while most clergy stood aside as silent bystanders. The population was cowered for over twenty years; voices for justice remained mute. A tamed church was later co-opted as 'partner in development.' This tragedy, erased from the recorded memory of both church and state, defined more than any other incident the character the church would maintain for the rest of the century. Over thirty years later in 1999, after the fall of Soeharto, a Nusa Tenggara pastoral consultation at Ledalero seminary called for the recording of a *memoria passionis*, public repentance and the reburial of the dead.⁴² When the resolutions of the consultation reached the international press, church leaders in Jakarta and Ende voiced immediate apprehension. And so, as the century closed the church was not yet ready to admit the story of the tragic betrayal of its own defenceless members, or face the truth with remorse.

Soeharto's New Order: partners in development

From 1973 onwards all civil servants and teachers were obliged to join Soeharto's Golkar party. These were the very people running the Catholic schools and parish councils. It was very apparent that there was a comfortable fit between the hierarchical, hegemonic church of Flores and the authoritarian regime of Soeharto. Restrictions on liberty already commonplace in church organisations were readily accepted in the institutions of the New Order. In practice parish policy dovetailed into government planning. Not infrequently the priest visited outlying villages together with local government officials, proclaiming unity between the development of the spiritual and material dimensions of life. Tensions between bishops and *bupatis* were over power and influence not ideology or direction, let alone human rights. Not a murmur was heard as the tragedy unfolded in Timor Leste from the invasion of December 1975 until the brutal withdrawal in September 1999. The Catholic mass organisations of the 1950s and 1960s were disbanded; Catholic youth now concentrated upon choirs, sport and picnics.

The first general election of Soeharto was held in 1971. The Golkar party won in West and East Flores through the use of government employees (teachers and petty civil servants) as well as police and army intervention. Church leaders were intimidated. One example, "the tyres of the jeep being used by

⁴² Prior 2003:125–151.

bishop Anton Thijssen were slashed with a razor, another jeep used by leaders of the *Partai Katolik* was stoned.”⁴³ The youth group was led by Hendrik Fernandez, later Governor of the Province (1988–1993). In Maumere the *Partai Katolik* still came out on top although the Kanga'e area, worst hit by the 1966 massacre, voted 100% Golkar. National politicians like Frans Seda came for the campaign; Seda walked through an enormous paper rosary, thus piercing it (*tusuk*) with his body as the people were expected to pierce their voting cards. However, within two years the Catholic Party was absorbed into the Democratic Party (PDI) with hardly a murmur and became a permanently junior partner to the regime. The elections of 1977, 1982, 1987, 1992 and 1997 went off as planned. Only after the monetary crisis of 1997 and the student agitation of 1997–1998 leading to the resignation of Soeharto on 21st May 1998, were alternative voices listened to. Of the 'generation of '66,' only Chris Siner Key Timu consistently spoke with a social conscience. He was the only Florenese member of the high level *Petisi 50 Working Group* sponsored by retired generals Ali Sadikin and Azis Saleh which, from May 1980 onwards, regularly called on the national parliament to return to the original ideals of the New Order and democratise the regime (KKPL 1991–1995). Quietly the public rights of this group were withdrawn: they were not quoted in the press or invited to public functions or allowed to travel overseas: *burgerlijk dood*—dead in the eyes of the law.

A Friday to be remembered

Very occasionally cracks in the church-government partnership became visible. One example is the church reaction to the beating up of a section of Maumere town by the army on 27th March 1993; one died (a Muslim visitor from Adonara), over 40 were wounded. Local officials colluded with the army to silence the media. Tensions ran high as rumour fed on rumour and men began to sharpen their machetes to defend their families. Ten days later Good Friday services in Maumere town were cancelled and replaced by a single 'Stations of the Cross, Stations of Justice.' Over five thousand processed through town in this updated four hundred year old Portuguese tradition. John's passion narrative was divided into 12 stations and proclaimed as a word of truth and forgiveness to banish fear and reassert dignity. Jesus was condemned to death outside the army barracks, Pilate washed his hands outside the *bupati's* residence and Jesus fell outside the police station. Despite the presence of armed troops newly arrived from atrocities in Timor Leste, and despite the impossibility of asserting justice through the courts, tensions eased as the facts were openly stated in the concluding homily when a massive

⁴³ Jebarus 2001:10.

cross was erected at the spot where the Muslim had been beaten to death. For five hours Maumere glimpsed a *gaudium et spes* church of human rights wedded to popular Catholicism, a contrast to the devotional-institutional church willingly co-opted into supporting an authoritarian state.⁴⁴

The rise of social unrest with religious and ethnic implications

From April 1990 until November 1995 a series of 25 incidents of host desecration took place on feast days at major churches in East Nusa Tenggara.⁴⁵ Although the most sacred symbol of the Catholic tradition was being defiled, in subsequent court cases judges handed down minimal sentences. These cases were witnessed by up to a thousand onlookers singing rousing hymns such as 'Onward Christian Soldiers.' As the desecrations continued so emotions boiled. In 1994–1995 three of the five courthouses and one prosecutor's office were ransacked after unsatisfactory trials: Ruteng in 1994, Ende on 25th April 1994 and Maumere on 28th April 1995; two of the five market places were burnt down. Politically silenced, culturally marginalised, economically stagnant, the Florenese had only the church to support their dignity and identity. Ethnic-religious sentiments came to the fore and finally suspected perpetrators were simply murdered on the spot as happened in the cathedral parishes of Ende (Easter Season, 25th April 1994), Larantuka (Corpus Christi, 11th June 1995) and Atambua, West Timor (Advent, 26th November 1995). Agent provocateurs attempting to sway emotional crowds into ransacking mosques in Flores never succeeded, but the crowds did wreck and burn symbols of economic hegemony (shops of the non-Florenese and markets dominated by outsiders) and symbols of unjust law enforcement (three courthouses and the Maumere police station). Two weeks after the murder at Ende Cathedral the six bishops of Flores, Timor and Sumba published a letter urging restraint and called on the government to enforce the rule of law.⁴⁶ In Ende prominent laity threatened to withdraw support for any priest who called for a non-violent response and an alternative analysis. Nevertheless, by the end of the decade a growing number had concluded that 'horizontal' conflicts had been instigated in order

⁴⁴ Prior 1997:239–242.

⁴⁵ Isaak 1995:7–8.

⁴⁶ Entitled "Pernyataan Umat Katolik Nusa Tenggara Timur tentang Pencemaran Hostia Kudus dan Sakral..." dated 10–05–1994 and published in the daily *Pos Kupang* and the weekly *SKM Dian* (3 Juni 1994). The letter was drafted by the provincial government and then given to the individual bishops to sign. The primordialism of the hierarchy coincided with the panic of the government. A week after the murder at Larantuka Cathedral a meeting was held in Ledalero (19–20 June 1995) between the bishops, top provincial officials and a few clergy. They produced "Refleksi dan Rekomendasi para Pimpinan Gereja dan Tokoh Umat Katolik Nusa Tenggara tentang Masalah Penodaan dan Penyelesaiannya," which was drafted by the office of NTT governor and edited by Servulus Isaak SVD (b. 1944) and Domi Nong (b. 1957), diocesan secretary in Ndona (Ende). This document had limited circulation only.

to avoid a 'vertical' conflict by a repressed people confronting the political/economic/military establishment.⁴⁷ As awareness grew of the *divide et impera* political background to the desecrations, so violent reactions ceased and the army lost credibility. A mass campaign in late 1999, in which church leaders were actively involved along with the SVD daily *Flores Pos*, and which was 'crowned' with a decisive 'no' from the district parliament of Ende, succeeded in preventing the transfer of the *Korem 64 Wira Dharma* army command from Dili to Flores.

As the new century opened, Flores witnessed a renaissance of local culture coupled with a reassertion of rights over traditional land.⁴⁸ Meanwhile two of the three bishops of Flores had 'twinning' themselves (*saudara kembar*) to their local *bupati*. The colonial partnership of church and state, *mutatis mutandis*, was still intact, at least in elements of the church hierarchy, even as a grassroots social movement was gaining pace.

Church and socio-economic development: church-centred agriculture

As the second half of the century opened the concern of the church was still with the economic viability of church institutions: the upkeep of the priests, religious communities, the seminaries, the schools and student boarding. Thus each far-flung parish had its field for annual crops as well as banana, coconut and coffee trees. Larger institutions like the seminaries at Ledalero, Todabelu, Hokeng and Kisol developed farms with chickens, pigs and cattle. Large plantations from colonial times were run by the dioceses in Nangahale and Maumere (coconut) and Hokeng (coffee). Workshops run by SVD brothers were established beside the cathedrals in Ende, Larantuka and Ruteng to see to the building requirements of the mission and the maintenance of vehicles. These were the training ground for skilled workers and practical mechanics, including drivers, who are now commonplace in every village on the island. The first agricultural officials at *kabupaten* level in the 1950s were those who had followed courses in Java sponsored by the SVD.

In 1933 Bernard Lucas (1907–1934) had raised the issue of socio-economic development for the people; twenty years later the SVD sociologist Anton van den Ende again urged the church to become involved systematically in the socio-economic development of the island. The SVD agriculturalist Jan C. van Doormaal (1911–1996) became agricultural advisor (*Landbouwconsulent*) to the Dutch authorities and then to the independent government, first in Ende, afterwards in Kupang. In 1953 Van den Ende wrote up the *Flores Welvaartsplan* at the request of the Vicar Apostolic of Ruteng, Willem van

⁴⁷ Prior in Malipurathu 2002:80.

⁴⁸ Prior 2004a and 2004b.

Bekum (1911–1998). The plan aimed to make each farming family more or less self-sufficient.⁴⁹ Together with Theodorus Thoolen, Van Bekum set up a cooperative in Ruteng and opened up a branch of *Ikatan Petani Pancasila* (IPP). On the other side of the island, the 1950s saw Nicolaas Beijer (1910–1994) in Maumere and Jan Krol in Larantuka establishing *Kontas Gabungan* (neighbourhood rosary groups) which also had *arisan*—regular collections for each family in turn, an early form of credit union. Beijer also established an agricultural school at lower secondary level in Koting.

In the early 1960s at the initiative of the German government, the Flores-Timor Plan was drawn up by German specialists (1962–1963) and Van Doormaal was asked to run the office that implemented it (1967–1973). Van Doormaal was thus involved in the first government agricultural planning during the 1940s and 1950s and that of the church ten years later.

The Flores-Timor Plan carried out some 357 projects in seven sectors, namely 97 projects in agriculture and fisheries, 88 in health care, 75 in formal and non-formal education, 37 in cottage industries, 24 in organisation and personnel, 22 in housing and 14 projects in transport and communication. As the sponsors wrote, “The development should be conducted, if it wants to succeed, according to large scale economic planning and procedures. . . . The church has to allow herself to be guided by strictly economic considerations if she wishes to fulfil her duty effectively in bringing the people towards a well-balanced socio-economic condition.”

The sociologist Jos Peters came from the Netherlands to survey the reaction of the clergy to the plan, in particular the relationship between pastoral and development work in a church he classified as a *Volkskirche*.⁵⁰ A permanent social delegate (*delegatus sosial*) was appointed for each diocese in 1963 and a coordinating office established in Nita for the whole of East Nusa Tenggara (*Lembaga Penelitian dan Pembangunan Sosial*—LPPS-NTT). In 1974 an evaluation was held in Ledalero seminary with representatives of the provincial government; this was immediately followed by an ecumenical consultation, the first of its kind.⁵¹ For the first time the three main churches of NTT, namely, the Evangelical Protestant Church of Timor (GMIT), the Protestant Church of Sumba (GKS) and the Catholics of Nusa Tenggara, explained their involvement in development to each other. They sought for ways to avoid the massive socio-economic projects of the Catholic Church becoming a means of bolstering its position vis-à-vis the others. This meeting also marked a change in the relationship between government and church; from here onwards the government would be the leading partner; if the government was hardly mentioned

⁴⁹ Peters 1971–4:9–12.

⁵⁰ Peters 1971–3 & 1971–4.

⁵¹ Lang 1974.

in the Flores-Timor Plan, from here onwards they were calling the tune. Notwithstanding this crucial shift, throughout the 1970s the socio-economic commissions of the dioceses, still run largely by expatriate clergy, continued to seek and receive considerable funds from both Germany (Misereor) and the Netherlands (CEBEMO). Constitutions and detailed working guidelines were drawn up, corresponding to the organisational thinking of the New Order.

Aside from the numerous and large projects financed through church and government grants, mainly from Germany and the Netherlands, more grass-roots collaboration between social delegates and local government was taking place. Prime examples come from Maumere and Ende. Between 1974–1982 the social delegate of Maumere Deanery, Heinrich Bollen (b. 1929) and Viator Parera, head of the local agricultural ministry, terraced 20,000 hectares of hillsides with the *lamtoro* plant and planted more than two million *lamtorogung* (Hawaian Giant species); rice yields increased by 40% and the maize harvest doubled.⁵² Many *kelompok usaha bersama* (KUB, cooperatives) and *kelompok swadaya* (KS, self-reliant groups) were established throughout the island. Ende deanery set up the *Ikatan Petani Pancasila* (IPP). In the Ende and Ngada *Kabupaten* alone IPP was involved in developing two hundred KUB and over a thousand KS by 1988. While government cooperatives have been plagued by bureaucracy and corruption, locally-initiated credit unions and work-groups when linked to the church, and in particular when run by women, have enabled their members to see to school and medical bills or obtain the necessary capital to start small businesses.

In the 1980s the emphasis shifted from 'projects' to training. For instance, from 1980 until 1987 IPP Ende ran 196 courses. In Larantuka, East Flores, there were by the end of the century some 52 credit unions apart from 16 self-reliant women's groups and 700 families networking to develop small home-based businesses.⁵³

The Soeharto regime had come into power in 1966–1967 and after the general elections of 1971 began implementing five-year plans. In Flores, socio-economic development between 1967 and 1975 was a virtual monopoly of the church. While the church was losing its control of education it briefly attained pre-eminence in development work. The aim was said to be to combat the danger of communism (although the PKI had been annihilated in 1965–1966) and make up for the negligence of the government. It also assured a central role for the church in Flores as 'partner in nation-building.' Wilhelm Djulei Conterius (b. 1956) is nothing but positive about the Catholic Church's involvement in development work: many villages obtained water; cash crops

⁵² Parera in Kang 1989:146.

⁵³ Raring 2001:42.

became more general; paddy fields became common where feasible; transport became more regular.⁵⁴ This is change but not the spectacular 'green revolution' envisioned by the planners.

But economic improvement humble as it might have been, brought with it cultural change. Beginning with the Jos Peters survey in 1969 right through to the diocesan pastoral assemblies of the late 1980s, a 'split' was observed between 'socio-economic development' with its underlying values of progress, thrift and competition, and pastoral work which promoted the traditional values of collaboration, generosity and sharing. There was never any real integration between the ritual Catholicism of the Florenese and development work that was loosening its social base.⁵⁵ Two unintended results of this immense financial investment in Flores in the mid-1960s and early 1970s were a brain drain and the rise of an articulate laity demanding a more participatory church (see below).

Another unintended result was the spread of sleaze. Large-scale development by church and government brought systemic corruption to Flores involving Catholics, both lay and ordained, ecclesial and governmental. Few diocesan social delegates finished their term as honest men. Beginning in the late 1960s dioceses and larger deaconates such as Maumere and Ende established their own legal bodies (*yayasan*) to channel funds from overseas. With the exception of *Yaspensel* in Larantuka, which has remained with the diocese, other social foundations became the personal property of those running them. With the involvement of an increasing number of clergy in business, the church in Flores divided between an institution following the ethical standards of the governing and business elite, and a marginalised membership, some of whom were working to give voice to the silenced victims.

From development to advocacy

By the 1980s, and for the first time, most socio-economic development in Flores was in the hands of the government. After the monetary crisis of 1997, and the collapse of the Soeharto regime the following year, hundreds of independent NGOs have mushroomed. In 1970 Maumere had two church-owned NGOs (*Yayasan Karya Sosial* (YKS) and *Yayasan Pembangunan Masyarakat* (Yaspem); thirty years later there were over 20, all outside church control. Perhaps this shift, as much as biblical conviction, has turned the attention of the church to the area of justice, peace, the integrity of creation and human rights. As faith-inspired NGOs and some committed clergy investigated corruption, so the contradiction became more glaring between a hierarchy in partnership

⁵⁴ Conterius 1999.

⁵⁵ Riwu 1991:200–223.

with a morally-ambiguous elite while dedicated laity, with some clergy, furthered human rights.⁵⁶

Schooling: from the centre to the sidelines

The Flores-Timor-Sumba Contract of 1913 gave the Catholic Church a monopoly on schooling on Flores while the Protestant church held the same in Sumba and West Timor. In practice Catholics virtually monopolised schooling in Flores until 1952. Such a monopoly by a minority religion, still largely in the hands of foreign personnel, became untenable in the newly independent country. At a meeting in the Department of Education in Jakarta on 5th July 1952, the mission, represented by Vicar Apostolic Anton Thijssen and P.J.B. Schouten, acquiesced in its abolition. The following year an arrangement was made at provincial level that allowed all extant schools with more than 50% Catholic intake to remain under the church, run by a single foundation. And so, *Vedapura* school foundation was established on 25th January 1955 under its first chairperson, a layman Petrus Nyo; almost all the other members were clergy. However, without a government subsidy that paid salaries, *Vedapura* never held much authority in the eyes of the teachers for whom their paymaster was the government.

During the 1950s and 1960s schooling was a pastoral priority. Clergy regularly visited primary schools during their pastoral rounds; many sisters and clergy taught religion; secondary schools had both sisters and clergy on their staff as well as running school *asrama* (boarding establishments). Pastoral guidelines for clergy involvement were laid down in the renewed *Manuale Pastorale* of 1957 (pp. 165–184). As the role of the church in schooling decreased from the 1980s onwards, so the pastoral supervision of schools declined.

Until the early 1970s schoolteachers retained their pre-eminence as key players not only in school, but as the priest's closest assistant in the village. Many took over the leadership of Sunday worship from the '*guru agama*' (village catechist). Clergy maintained close contact with teachers through regular liturgies, recollections and meetings. Teachers were also key figures in the *Partai Katolik* as both functionaries and members of the district parliament. However the teacher was never simply putty in the hands of the clergy. Back in 1957 SVD sociologist Van den Ende was already writing, "A teacher nowadays is becoming an increasingly independent leader whose influence reaches beyond the walls of the school. He is a member of many organisations and attends meetings and gatherings of this and that which inform him

⁵⁶ Embu 2003; 2004.

of a thousand and one problems.⁵⁷ The primary school teacher was the local 'intellectual' who backed-up both village-level government and traditional adat leadership; teachers saw to the implementation of both church and government policy while also explaining the local adat to both church and government. Thus they played a complex and creative role voicing the policies of the institutional church while articulating the ongoing relevance of the adat in an ever-changing society, and also increasingly identifying themselves as government employees.⁵⁸ The post-independence generation was imbued with national awareness and self-respect. They could no longer be dictated to; many became critical of the institutional church and indifferent to church work; these latter were seen by some clergy as anti-clerical.

When in the 1970s the New Order ordered all teachers and the entire government administration to enter *Golkar*, teachers became the mouthpiece of the regime and helped engineer *Golkar* victories. Tensions with the clergy were inevitable.

The sidelining of the Catholic network

In 1949 there were 371 three-year primary schools with 53,445 pupils and around 600 teachers in a population of 600,000. Twenty years later (1971) there were just over a thousand six-year Catholic primary schools in Flores with 4,886 teachers and 154,770 pupils.⁵⁹ This number has not increased, as in 1973 the government commenced a massive building programme opening 6,000 new schools (*sekolah inpres*) throughout Indonesia in the first year alone including areas already supplied by a Catholic school.⁶⁰ The dropout rate from first to sixth class hovered around 50%; only around 17% of those who entered primary school left with a certificate. Pupils dropped out for economic reasons, but also due to the irregular appearance of teachers and the irrelevance of much of the curriculum. With a total population of 1,043,183 in 1970, some 14.5% of Florenese were in primary school.⁶¹

In 1971 *Vedapura*, the lone Catholic school foundation was split into five, one for each *kabupaten*. A vision of *sekolah umat* (schools of the people of God) was explained in detail during an Orientation Week for Educators (1973), to heads of government, education departments and school inspectors as well as the five Catholic foundations.⁶² Catholic schools were no longer to be the preserve of the priest. However, this 'Vatican II' vision never really caught on.

⁵⁷ Van den Ende 1957:186.

⁵⁸ Prior 2004: 62–66.

⁵⁹ Cornelissen 1972:5–6.

⁶⁰ Jebarus 2002:48.

⁶¹ Cornelissen 1972.

⁶² Background in Djawa 1972.

In the mid-1990s the Archdiocese of Ende established a Catholic school fund sponsored by an annual collection; but the money needed was far beyond the ability of the people. The failure of the collection symbolises the inability, or unwillingness, of an agrarian people to support a church school arrangement that they perceive as virtually identical with the state system.⁶³

In 1947 a lower secondary school was opened in Ndao (Ende) (since 1954 run by the teaching brothers of Utrecht (BHK), and another in Maumere, *Yapenthom*, run by Catholic laity, initially with SSpS sisters and SVDs on the staff. By 1970 there were over 150 lower secondary schools in Flores.

In 1953 the senior high school 'SMA Syuradikara' was opened in Ende, the 'flagship' school of the SVD through which the first generation of educated *bupati* and other officials passed. Not until the mid-1960s were other senior high schools opened in the other towns: Maumere (1963), Bajawa (1964) and Ruteng (1965) and finally Larantuka (1974); these were opened and run by Catholic laity.

To staff the burgeoning primary schooling the first teacher training school (SGA, lower secondary plus three years) was opened in Mataloko in 1951; the following year it moved to Ndao, near Ende. In 1957 a similar SGA was opened in Larantuka and the following year was handed over to the BHK who had arrived in Podor (to the west of Larantuka) the previous year. By 1971 there were some 1,206 students in 10 teacher training schools throughout Flores. While almost all the senior high school students were the children of townfolk—petty civil servants, teachers and traders—the student teachers inevitably came from farming families in the countryside.⁶⁴

In 1968, with a grant from CEBEMO, the *Ikatan Petani Pancasila* run by Willi Doi from Ende, opened a farming school at high school level (SPMA) in Boawae directed by Vitalis Djuang who obtained his degree in Germany. For long the only school of its kind in the Nusa Tenggara Province, SPMA Boawae has supplied staff for the agricultural departments of the various *kabupaten*. For years SPMA had a resident clerical chaplain. The SSpS-run hospital in Lela opened a nursing course in 1957. In 1972 the Ursulines (OSF) opened a course in development management (PTPM) which ten years later became an academy for community development (APM 1982; later upgraded to AAP in 1986 and finally to STPM in 2001). A technical school was started at Ndonga in 1959 later upgraded to a STM (senior high school level). An STM was opened by the diocese in Larantuka (1976) and later handed over to the SVD; the local government opened an STM in Maumere in 1978.

⁶³ The introduction of school fees in the state sector in 2004 has made schooling at the primary level as expensive as in Catholic schools.

⁶⁴ Cornelissen 1972.

In the 1950s Lambert Lame Uran took over the school foundation and edited a school journal *Pandu Pendidikan*. In 1956 he developed a syllabus for practical farming at primary school level, filling the slot allowed for *mata pelajaran kedaerahan* (local input).⁶⁵ A proposed faculty of arts and agriculture planned by Anton van den Ende for 1958 was vetoed by the military. In 1956, with Frans Cornelissen, Lambert Lame ran a tertiary course to train teachers (PGSLP). Its status was enhanced in 1959 and in 1962 it was absorbed into *Nusa Cendana* University, Kupang, as a faculty of education. In 1980 the five *bupati* of Flores with support from the three bishops of Flores opened *Universitas Flores*, also in Ende. By the end of the decade it had an enrolment of over 1,000 students. While these institutions have helped to cater for students who could not get into more established universities, they have run on a minimal staff and negligible facilities.

Loosing the key role of the school

Since 1920 the church had used schools effectively to spread and implant Catholicism in Flores. In the 1950s the first government primary schools had made their appearance. Certain tensions arose during the democratic and intensely nationalistic period under the presidency of Soekarno, however tensions really came to the fore under the Soeharto regime, which had an ideological stake in controlling schools and their curriculum. Understandably, during this and the following decade, struggles between the hierarchy and the government were frequent and duly recorded in the SVD-run biweekly regional paper *Dian* (published since 1973 from Ende). On a number of occasions the bishops of Nusa Tenggara sat with the governor and the education department to iron out difficulties. While officially the church was recognised as 'partner in education' the influence of the church was gradually cut back as government schools increased in both numbers and importance. In the mid-1970s the Diocese of Ruteng threatened to hand over its primary schools to the local government *en bloc*; a few years later the Archdiocese of Ende seriously considered doing the same though in an orderly manner. Neither came to pass; the church hung on to its heritage, the government footing the bill.

In the 1990s the church lost its pivotal role in training teachers, although the Holy Spirit Sisters (SSpS) in Maumere, after having to close their SPG in 1990, opened a teacher training college (SGSD) in 1991 albeit without government accreditation. Without the necessary financial backing and increasingly without the loyalty of the teachers, the church found it inevitably lost the skirmishes: *Yayasan tidak punya gigi*—the school foundation had no teeth! If in 1950 schooling was more or less identical with Christianity, by 2000 the church's

⁶⁵ Lame Uran 1984:256–257.

role in Flores was still significant though noticeably subsidiary to that of the government, just one of an increasing number in the private sector.

Without a shadow of doubt, schools opened up the isolation of the Flores interior; *bahasa Indonesia* fast became the second language of the whole island and the Florenese soon identified themselves as Indonesian citizens linked to both the nation and, initially through the church, to the wider world. Church schools enabled the Florenese to become a bi-cultural people, rooted in their adat while belonging to a wider community. Indeed Flores was one of the most educated islands in Indonesia during the first years of independence (1950–1965). This story is recorded in the pages of the biweekly *Bentara* (1948–1959) and argued out by its protagonists in the pages of *Pastoralia* (1947–1963).

As a result of the ongoing struggle with the government, almost all the energy, personnel and facilities by the end of the century were spent on maintaining the existence of the Catholic school network. As recorded above, under the democracy of the 1950s and early 60s the church still had the freedom to develop professional schools in line with the needs of this agricultural island. However, throughout the Soeharto regime (1967–1998) curricula were no different from those in the non-paying government schools. Little time was given to considering what type of education would be most appropriate. And so schools became a conduit for migration: from mountain to coast, from village to town, from district to centre, from Flores to Java and beyond. Those with a certificate, ability and financial backing continued their schooling; the majority dropped-out and went to find work in the cities of Java or on the plantations of Kalimantan, Papua or Malaysia. Until the 1970s all students who obtained a certificate from a senior high school in Flores found immediate employment or had little difficulty entering a university. By the 1980s an increasing number had difficulty to obtain a job in the towns and were too embarrassed to return to the village. As the population increased and hereditary land was subdivided between male siblings, so Flores began to experience the meaning of under-employment and unemployment for the first time in its history.

Educating clergy, religious and a lay elite

The minor seminary (high school) of Todabelu (Mataloko), which traces its origins to the veranda of Sikka presbytery (1926–1929), was augmented in 1950 by a new seminary at Hokeng (Larantuka Diocese) and five years later at Kisol (Ruteng Diocese). In 1967 a three-year minor seminary was opened in Lela (Maumere Deanery) but closed in 1984; boarding for minor seminarians was opened in Maumere town in 2002. The SVD opened its own minor seminary in Labuan Bajo (Ruteng Province) in 1987. As numbers expanded so the SVD moved its novitiate from Ledalero to Nenuk (Timor) in 1986

and opened a second one in Kuwu (1993, Ruteng). By 1980 some 21.6% of all clergy and the religious in Indonesia came from East Nusa Tenggara,⁶⁶ just half of what one might expect given that around 40% of all Indonesian Catholics then lived in Nusa Tenggara.

In 1992 some 52.8% of the seminarians of Ritapiret and Ledalero major seminaries came from farming families; 26.2% from those of teachers and 11.2% from the families of government employees. The parents of the teachers and government workers would be from leading families in the villages. Compared to the intake of the 1920s-1950s there has been a gradual social 'dumbing down' of candidates. At the same time the more academically minded seminarians no longer continued to ordination.⁶⁷

St. Conrad's house of brother formation was opened in Ende in 1955. Forty years later Indonesia was the one remaining area in the SVD world with a significant number of brother candidates. Their traditional professions on the farm, in the workshops and the printing press were augmented by expertise in other fields such as bookkeeping, computer programming, nursing and catechetics. The brothers run the senior technical school (STM) in Larantuka. St. Conrad's has provided over 20 cross-cultural missionaries in many countries in the southern hemisphere.

The first two cross-cultural SVD missionaries left Flores for Papua in 1982. By 2000 there were well over 100 Florenese SVDs working in 40 countries on all continents. In 1996 of the 13 religious congregations of men and women sending members for cross-cultural mission overseas 65.9% were SVDs, and of these 77.8% came from Flores.⁶⁸ The cultural values of friendliness, hospitality, togetherness and acceptance of everyone without any hint of superiority, has made them a welcome presence in each country, although the characteristic of merging with the crowd and not being noticed has not provided adequately for personal initiative or creative leadership.

In 1955 a separate community was formed within the SVD major seminary of Ledalero (1937) for diocesan candidates whose only 'seen-difference' from the SVD was permission to smoke! Then in 1959 the inter-diocesan seminary of Ritapiret was opened less than two kilometres away. Beginning with barely a dozen seminarians, Ritapiret grew so large that a second inter-diocesan seminary was opened in 1991 in Kupang for the dioceses of Atambua, Kupang and Weetebula. Carmelites (OCD) and Clarists also study there.

The students of Ritapiret and Ledalero study at the same SVD school, that received government accreditation in 1971 (STFK Ledalero). A masters' course

⁶⁶ Boelaars 2005:264.

⁶⁷ Braun 1992.

⁶⁸ Sensi 1997:73-77.

in contextual theology was approved at the turn of the century. Carmelites (O.Carm) opened a house of studies in 1995. A few sisters have also completed the first-degree course. At the turn of the century there were over 600 students at first and second-degree levels. Most parishes, pastoral centres and institutions were in the hands of diocesan clergy. The three dioceses of Flores have also supplied a few of their priests for work in Sumatra, Papua and Timor Leste.

At the initiative of Henry Heekeren (1931–2005), a one-time scripture scholar at STFK Ledalero (1975–1977), Ledalero has exchanged both staff and students with the Protestant faculty of theology at Artha Wacana University, Kupang (*Akademi Teologi Kristen* as it was then). That a mere two-week exchange had such a marked positive effect on inter-personal relationships over the past thirty years, makes one wonder what would have happened if the original dream of Heekeren had been realised, namely that the two faculties and student bodies collaborate and gradually integrate over the years.

Just 8% of the minor seminarians and less than 50% of the major seminarians go forward for ordination. Todabelu alone has produced over 4,300 alumni aside from the 368 who have been ordained. The biggest export of Flores has always been its people, in particular to Batavia/Jakarta: as slaves in the nineteenth century, as soldiers and police in the early twentieth century, as guards of storerooms and shops in the 1950s, known for their honesty and loyalty, and as ‘ready-to-hire’ gangs (*preman*) during times of unrest. From the 1960s onwards Flores has exported prospective politicians and businessmen, journalists and academics who have risen to the top of their professions.⁶⁹ In particular Florenese in Jakarta and Yogyakarta have helped create a ‘national culture’ in the arts, philosophy and science. Jos Daniel Parera (linguist), Stefanus Djawanai (linguist), Robert Lawang (sociologist), Ignas Kleden (sociologist), Daniel Dhakidae (political scientist) and Frans Meak Parera (philosopher, book publisher) are among the more outstanding academics. The seminaries have never been limited to supplying priests, catechists and teachers.

Paul Arndt continued his linguistic and ethnographic research in Ngada until his death in 1962 as did Jilis Verheijen in Manggarai until 1997. Physical anthropologist Józef Glinka (b. 1932) arrived in 1965 and has researched and published for the past fifty years. This ‘*anthropos tradition*’ was re-birthed in the 1980s when a batch of Indonesian SVDs was trained in missiology and the social sciences. Ledalero seminary set up *Candraditya* research centre in 1987; within ten years there were four sociologists, three anthropologists and four missiologists on the Ledalero staff. In contrast to the lonely linguistic and ethnological studies of the pioneers, research became inter-disciplinary.

⁶⁹ Parera 2004:26–27.

The *Candraditya* centre has translated works of the pioneers as well as the results of its own research in pastoral and human rights areas. Publications of both cultural and theological research increased dramatically as the century closed and the seminary launched its own university press. Thus, the church not only brought westernisation via the school system; it has also recorded local cultures and so contributed to their revival at the end of the century. Ledalero has been an active node in national and continental SVD research networks.⁷⁰

Pastoral strategies: ecclesiastical expansion

In 1950 the islands of Bali and Lombok were divided from the rest of Nusa Tenggara to become a separate apostolic prefecture. The following year Flores was divided into three apostolic vicariates. The Timorese Gabriel Manek SVD, one of the first two indigenes of Nusa Tenggara to be priested in 1941, was ordained bishop of Larantuka in 1951. He was the second Indonesian-born bishop after A. Soegijapranata of Semarang. Anton Thijssen became bishop of Ende and Willem van Bekkum of Ruteng. In 1959 the Redemptorists (CSsR) took over the pastoral care of Sumba, which became an apostolic prefecture; the SVD missionaries working there transferred to Flores and Timor. Ten years later Sumba was raised to the status of a diocese. In 1961 and in preparation for the Johannine Council (Vatican II), which opened the following year, the hierarchy of Indonesia was established with Nusa Tenggara one of the seven provinces. Gabriel Manek transferred from Larantuka to Ende to become its first archbishop (1961–1968). With the establishment of Kupang as a diocese separate from Atambua in 1967 and Maumere Diocese taken from Ende in 2005, there was a total of eight dioceses in the Nusa Tenggara Province including three of the largest in Indonesia—Ruteng, Ende and Atambua. In 1989 the three dioceses in West Timor and Sumba formed their own ecclesial province with Kupang as the archdiocese.

In 1951 just one bishop in Flores was Indonesian (Timorese), the others were Dutch. The first Florenese to be ordained bishop was Paul Sani (Denpasar 1961); he was followed by Gregorius Monteiro (1924–1997) in Kupang (1967); then Donatus Djagom (Ende 1969), Vitalis Djebarus (1929–1998 in Ruteng 1973), Darius Nggawa (1929–2008 in Larantuka 1974), Anton Pain Ratu (b. 1929 in Atambua 1982), Eduardus Sangsun (b. 1943 in Ruteng 1985) and G. Cherubim Pereira (b. 1941 in Weetebula 1986, transferred to Maumere in 2008). They were all members of the SVD.

The first diocesan priest to be appointed bishop was Abdon Longginus da Cunha (Ende, 1996); subsequent Episcopal appointments in Nusa Tenggara

⁷⁰ Prior 2005.

have been diocesan clergy (Kupang in 1997, Denpasar in 1999, Larantuka in 2004, Vincent Sensi in Maumere in 2006 and transferred to archdiocese Ende in 2007). Flores has also supplied bishops for dioceses in Kalimantan (Sintang), Sumatra (Pangkalpinang), Java (Bogor) and Papua (Jayapura and Sorong).

The SVD hold on Flores was loosening. In 1953 Bishop W. van Bekkum invited the OFM to take care of two parishes in his diocese. Archbishop Gabriel Manek invited the Carmelites (O.Carm) to Ende in 1969 and Donatus Djagom the OCD (the discalced Carm.) in 1982; they have since been joined by the Passionists (CP) in 2000. Larantuka invited the Missionaries of the Holy Family (MSF) in 1993, and the Redemptorists (CSsR) in 2001.

Inter-island transportation

Mission and pastoral work among the smaller isles off Flores and transport between Flores, Timor and Java was carried out through the acquisition of mission boats. *St. Theresia* was a 27 ton ship piloted from Australia by Br. Thomas, Br. Victor, M. van Stiphout and the future bishop Anton Thijssen; leaving Darwin at the end of August 1946 they made Kupang in two days. Bishop Gabriel Manek obtained *Siti Nirmala* for Larantuka in 1956. Three years later a 138 ton ship *Stella Maris* was donated by subscribers of the mission monthly *Stadt Gottes* in Germany and Austria. The same benefactors provided a 250 ton *Ratu Rosari*, built in Hamburg in 1964, which carried out uninterrupted service between Java and Nusa Tenggara until almost the end of the century. By the 1990s the government had finally instituted regular shipping and the slow-moving mission boats were decommissioned one by one.

Sacramental ministry

In an important, though neglected study Fritz Braun (1918–1997)⁷¹ analysed the frequency and patterns of the sacramental ministry in the archdiocese of Ende. He shows that for much of the time most of the laity could not celebrate the sacraments regularly. The Eucharist was rarely celebrated on Sundays except at the main church, but rather on a weekday whenever the priest managed to call in the village on his extensive pastoral rounds. Baptisms and marriages also depended upon the availability of the priest rather than on the needs of the people. Often when there was a change of pastor, the new man would 'tidy up' his new parish by seeing to the backlog of baptisms and marriages. Confessions were largely confined to Advent and Lent while the anointing of the sick was rare. When the bishop came for confirmations, at perhaps five-yearly intervals, a thousand or more young adults would receive

⁷¹ Braun 1984.

the sacrament including those already married. Thus although pastoral work has often been said to centre upon *sákramen* and *sáksemen* (sacraments and a sack of cement), and even though ritual is pivotal to the identity of Florenese Catholicism, it is also the case that few laity celebrate the sacraments at that point in their life for which the sacraments were designed. Although by the end of the century the number of clergy had greatly increased, the 'emergency pattern' outlined by Braun still obtained in many places outside the parish centres; a majority continue to celebrate a liturgy of the word, rather than the Eucharist, as their Sunday worship.

Flores and the Johannine council

The church in Flores made a modest contribution to the Vatican Council (1962–1965). Willem van Bekkum of Ruteng had long pioneered the use of local melodies in his hymn and prayer book *Dere Serani* where the earliest hymns date from 1937; in 1998 the tenth reprint contained 220 hymns, many with Manggarai motifs, all in the local language. In the 1950s Van Bekkum had already introduced offertory processions with dancing in his 'Waterbuffalo Mass' (*misa kaba*). His talk at the first international congress on pastoral liturgy held in Assisi in 1956 outlined suggested changes to the rite of Mass, all of which were taken up by the Vatican council seven years later.⁷² At the end of the century the liturgical adaptations of Van Bekkum in the 1950s had become routine throughout East Nusa Tenggara. Meanwhile Anton Thijssen of Larantuka, in an intervention on the council floor, suggested the establishment of a body in the curia for relations with other religions; on Pentecost 1965 a secretariat was established by Paul VI. Gabriel Manek of Ende and Paul Sani (from Flores but bishop of Denpasar, Bali) returned from the council intent on the *indonesianisasi* of personnel and pastoral approach.

Negative reaction from the conventional church was strong. On graduating, the first Florenese SVD missiologist, Herman Embuiru (1919–2001), was appointed to Bali and only in 1977–1983 did SVD leader Henry Heekeren bring him in as rector. The second SVD missiologist, Piet Maku (1932–1994), was appointed to the high school in Ende; he later left the priesthood and worked in the Department of Religious Affairs. Immediately after the council a group of Indonesian lecturers at the seminary met regularly to work out how to contextualise the syllabus. Tensions arose between this group and the expatriates and their compliant clients. Although supported by archbishop Gabriel Manek they were dispersed by the SVD authorities in Ende. The *ancien régime* held back seminary reform for years.

⁷² Van Bekkum 1957:95–112.

A bishop's lot is not always a happy one. Both Gabriel Manek of Ende⁷³ and Willem van Bekkum of Ruteng⁷⁴ were pressured to resign in 1968 and 1972 respectively, officially for health reasons (which were real enough), but both also due to the *indonesianisasi* direction they were taking. However, replacing visionaries with compliant functionaries has not proved a happy solution either. Within seven years the successor to Van Bekkum in the major diocese of Ruteng (1972–1980) was transferred to the minor diocese of Denpasar; after a hiatus of five years (1980–1985) a successor was appointed in Ruteng who has had to endure visitations by the apostolic delegate from Jakarta and by an envoy from the Vatican.

Whatever the politics at the top, *indonesianisasi* remained a key buzz word and base communities a key concept throughout the 1970s, for instance during a series of annual study weeks (*pekan studi*) obligatory for clergy up to five years after ordination and held at Ledalero seminary from 1970–1975. The proceedings were written up in *Pastoralia*.⁷⁵ As clergy numbers increased so these annual workshops disappeared.

From guru agama and catechists to pastoral planning

The professionalisation of catechetics to supply sufficient teachers for the increasing number of schools, and later for parish catechetics and diocesan

⁷³ Beding 2000:87–88. Slovak SVD Emile Cernay (1923–2000) wrote from retirement in Techny, USA, to the congregational leader of the PRR Sisters as follows, “I am sure he (Manek) was one of those who wanted everyone to be 100% Catholic and 100% Indonesian. These two aspects are not contradictory but they were considered too progressive given the church atmosphere at the time which was greatly influenced by Dutch and non-Dutch blocks. ‘Good or bad the Dutch are better; all others had to stoop...Pray for the church in Flores, sister, please do...I am sure that archbishop Manek is praying (from heaven) for our church which he loved so much. May the cruel accusations against him not boomerang against his accusers. Let us pray for everyone that we remain Christian...” Letter dated 12 December 1994 (see PRR 2002:144–145). At the time Cernay was one of the group who opposed the archbishop. As in all controversies there is little consensus; there is not sufficient data to support an unambiguous reading of the case. The PRR Sisters arranged for the exhumation of the bishop's body from his grave in Techny USA in 2007 and brought back to Indonesia. After Masses attended by thousands in Kupang, Atambua and Larantuka (but not Ende) the body was laid to rest in a special commemorative chapel at their headquarters in Lebau. After 18 years Gabriel Manek's body remained intact.

⁷⁴ The ousting of Van Bekkum has yet to be fully recorded; the nuncio came by ship to Reo and then to Ruteng by jeep; he obtained Van Bekkum's signature on a letter of resignation that same night; the name of an administrator was announced in the cathedral the following morning, 30 January 1972. That very day the nuncio took Van Bekkum back with him to Jakarta. The papers and documents written or collected by Van Bekkum for over 30 years had to be left behind; someone later destroyed them. “My heart broke when I became aware that no one appreciated my work and sweat.” Until his death he refused to say a word about his ousting. In 1978 Van Bekkum returned to Manggarai where he worked as an assistant priest while continuing his research. Some 17 publications are listed in the BA thesis of Bonefatus Jehandut (Ledalero 1992).

⁷⁵ *Pastoralia* 1971 No. 1, 1972 No. 1, 1973 No. 3, 1974 Nos. 1 & 2, 1976 No. 2.

planning, was supported by the opening of St. Paul's Academy (APK, later STKIP) in Ruteng by Jan van Roosmalen SVD (b. 1920) in 1958. A decade later, in 1969, the bishops of Nusa Tenggara decided to establish catechetical commissions in each diocese.⁷⁶ In the mid-1970s these commissions became the heart of diocesan pastoral secretariats and centres. Under the inspiration of diocesan priests such as Yosef Lalu Nono in Ende, Yosef Gowing Bataona in Larantuka, both with their catechist collaborators, and Br. Thomas Voets CSA and Sr. Marelin OSU in Ruteng, a discernable shift took place from a doctrine-centred to a life-centred catechesis. Concentration on school catechesis was balanced with creative work in *katekese umat* (catechesis in base communities). From the 1970s onwards two of the more creative and productive catechists were Alfons Sene, until 2005 lecturer at St. Paul's Catechetical Academy in Ruteng, and Yakobus Papo of the Diocesan Pastoral Centre in Ende. Beginning in the mid-1970s catechists became pioneers of the biblical apostolate transforming rosary neighbourhood groups into bible sharing communities, at least during Advent, Lent and the national bible month of September. Life sharing and bible sharing in the base communities have provided a firm foundation for an ongoing dialogue between faith and life. However, inadequate church salaries and the pull of local government led most academically qualified catechists to leave employment in the dioceses and become government employees. Some were elected members of district parliaments; others appointed sub-regents (*camat*).

Sisters

The Missionary Servants of the Holy Spirit (SSpS), who had come to Lela in 1917, opened St. Elisabeth's Hospital at Lela in 1935 to which a nurses teaching and training school was attached in 1947, receiving government recognition two years later. They also work in the government hospital in Ende and have many clinics in the parishes. In 1949 they opened their convent on the grounds of Yapenthom lower secondary school in Maumere town. Not until 1955 did they open their novitiate at Hokeng. Traditional work at both minor and major seminaries (kitchen and laundry) is being faded out. At the turn of the century they had two provinces in Flores with headquarters at Kewapantai and Ruteng. A majority of their newly professed were being appointed overseas; they have supplied a provincial for Australia (2003–2006).

Because the SSpS did not receive local recruits until 1955, as described above, in 1935 bishop Henricus Leven founded the diocesan congregation *Serikat Pengikut Yesus*—Sisters of the Followers of Jesus (CIJ).⁷⁷ They began

⁷⁶ Boumans 1970:41–43.

⁷⁷ Beding 1996:79.

with seven sisters, all daughters of leading families. Thirty years later (1965) they numbered 168 sisters and a further 30 years down the road (1995) they had 327 members in a total of 53 communities: 22 in Ende archdiocese, 25 in 11 other Indonesian dioceses as well as six in Timor Leste. The CIJ live in relatively large convents and undertake conventional work in institutions such as schools, clinics and orphanages.

Tarekat Puteri Reinha Rosari—Daughters of the Queen of the Rosary—is a diocesan sisterhood founded by bishop Gabriel Manek in 1958 with three novices. In 1979 they opened their first convent outside the diocese (Timor Leste) and in 1988 their first foundation in Africa (Kenya). By the end of the century PRR had 293 members in 41 convents: 10 communities in their home diocese of Larantuka, another 25 in other Indonesian dioceses, four in Timor Leste and two in Africa (Kenya, Asiki).⁷⁸ The PRR form small communities close to the people and engage in pastoral, educational and medical work.

In 1957 the Ursuline sisters (OSU) were invited to Ende where, the following year, they opened senior high schools (SMA, SMEA), teacher training (SPG) and later a community development academy (AAP now STPM). They later opened three convents in Ruteng. In 1961 the first five Franciscan missionary sisters (FMM) established a convent in Bajawa and later in Soa, both in Ende diocese.

The women's secular institute *Alma*, centred on the *Institut Pastoral Indonesia*, Malang, sent its first two Florenese catechists to Ili, 12 kilometres from Maumere, in 1971, but within two years only Ibu Wis remained. After many difficulties, but with the support of internships from Malang, Alma finally began to develop in 1989 when they took over boarding for handicapped children in Maumere. They have extended their apostolates throughout the Ende archdiocese: Wairklau (1992), Nita (1993), Boawae (1994), Bornio (1996) and Bajawa (1997). Apart from parish catechesis the 25 sisters look after 60 or so children with disabilities and another 70 children in their homes in their *cari-bina-rawat* (seek out, educate and look after) programme.

Congregations well established elsewhere in Indonesia have made foundations in Flores: The Clarists opened their first convent in Wudu, Ngada (1973). The Franciscans (OSF) took over the retreat centre in Detusoko in 1979, *Sang Timur* (PIJ) came to Mauloo (1985), the Franciscans of Sambas (KFS) to Ngada (1986) and the Sisters of Mercy (SCMM) to Maumere (1986), the active Passionists to Ruteng in 1993. The Italian Holy Face Sisters (WK) came to Koting (1991) and later Ndona and seem to have established themselves. Dominican sisters (OP) opened their first convent in Waiklibang, Larantuka

⁷⁸ Beding 2000.

in 1997. Flores was no longer the preserve of the SSpS and their two diocesan offspring, CIJ and PRR.

The bishop of Ruteng has welcomed over 30 different religious congregations to his diocese since 1985, many of which had no other foundations in Indonesia but came to recruit sisters to augment their dwindling numbers overseas. At the turn of the century Flores was exporting around 200 sister candidates a year to convents in Italy and the Philippines.

Seven Carmelite sisters (OCD), six of them Dutch, opened the first contemplative convent in Flores at Bajawa in 1953 at the invitation of Anton Thijssen as the sisters could not return to Lembang immediately after the war. Fifty years later there were 19 sisters, all from Flores; a total of 36 Florenese women had passed through the convent by the year 2000. OCD Carmelite priests from Kerala, India, came to Bajawa in 1982, took over St. Joseph's parish in town and in 1983 opened a novitiate; since 1993 they have sent their major seminarians to Kupang, Timor. Their first nine Florenese priests were ordained in 1999. Italian Passionist sisters (CP) came to Maumere in 1990; within five years they had built their convent enclosure and within ten years had become autonomous with eight Florenese sisters in final vows and just one remaining Italian. A branch of the OCSO (Trappist) monastery at Rawaseneng, central Java was opened at Lamanabi near Larantuka in 1995; the Holy Spirit Sisters of the Perpetual Adoration (SSpS.AD) opened a convent in Ruteng in 2001. Each of these convents remains small but apparently viable, at least for the time being.

Diocesan programmes

In the wake of the Johannine council, pastoral initiatives emerged from a number of remarkable clergy. In the early 1970s Hilarius Gudi SVD (b. 1931) pioneered the biblical apostolate in Ruteng; at that time also Yosef Lalu Nono (b. 1936, in Nita and Ende), Bene Ragha SVD (1933–1997, in Nita and Kewapantai) and Philip Loi Riwu SVD (b. 1943, in Maumere) first developed the parish as a communion of base communities. A decade later these grassroots initiatives were taken over by the respective dioceses resulting not, however, in a network of base communities so much as parish wards or branches serving the parish council.

The first systematic development of pastoral councils at parochial and deanery level was undertaken by Hendrik Djawa SVD, Dean of Maumere 1966–1969.⁷⁹ By the mid-1970s all parishes had councils, although at deanery level the clergy alone met monthly, inviting lay representatives on occasion and according to the topic under discussion. Larantuka diocese, dispersed among

⁷⁹ Da Cunha 1999.

the islands of Solor, Adonara and Lembata as well as East Flores, had long gathered its clergy together twice a year; only in 1987 did Ende archdiocese, with three-times the number of clergy, do likewise.

Larantuka: self-reliance through base communities

Larantuka under bishop Darius Nggawa (1974–2004) was the first diocese in Flores to launch a comprehensive pastoral plan, compiled by the clergy, coordinated by a pastoral secretariat and evaluated during regular diocesan assemblies of laity and clergy. After five years of consultation these five-year plans (*repelita*) have run from 1980–85 ('building cultic communities'), 1987–92 ('building serving communities'), and 1997–2002 ('building communities of solidarity'). Self-reliance became the key word in matters spiritual, personnel and material.⁸⁰ Emphasis was laid upon building base communities as the building blocks of the parish, training lay leaders, inaugurating the biblical apostolate and continuing socio-economic development. The strategy moved from internal church concerns (1980–1992) to issues of social justice (since 1997). Initial inspiration came from the training kits of Lumko Pastoral Institute, South Africa. The first diocesan assembly was held in 1984. Participating were 35 clergy, 11 catechists, 63 teachers, 4 retired civil servants, two tradesmen, one fisherman, one farmer, one trader, one married woman, one nurse (sister) and 5 seminarians.⁸¹ A majority of the diocese consists of women as many of the men have migrated to look for work. The problem of mass migration was studied by SVD sociologist Franco Zocca.⁸² After 20 years of pastoral planning Piet Nong Lewar SVD, then chair of the diocesan priests' council, suggests that the base communities largely remained 'consumers' of catechetical and other material produced by the diocese; that while the leaders are capable, their horizon had yet to encompass the world outside the church; that the diocese had yet to work out appropriate methods for social and cultural analysis in the base communities; that networking with NGOs, which are not part of the parochial structure, might well help to widen the vision and give life to the base communities apart from their role as branches of the parish.⁸³

Ende: mass-participation through diocesan assemblies

At the start of his episcopate in 1969 and in line with the *indonesianisasi* discussions of the time, Donatus Djagom of Ende initiated a triple programme of self-reliance in faith, personnel and finance. Towards the end of his long ser-

⁸⁰ Kopong Kung in Hasto Rosariyanto 2001:30–32.

⁸¹ Sekretariat Pastoral Larantuka 1987:15.

⁸² Zocca 1985.

⁸³ Nong in Sekretariat Pastoral Larantuka 1999:141–143.

vice (1969–1996), a series of five-yearly diocesan assemblies was inaugurated. The open process began in 1987 at base community level where hundreds of felt-needs were drawn up, the discussions continued at parochial and deanery level and finally in a diocesan assembly of 246 participants who gathered in the Cathedral parish of Ende. The assembly formulated a ‘liberating pastoral direction of freedom from the chains of dualism between a life of faith on the one side and daily life on the other,’ focusing upon the split between faith and local culture, the gap between internal concerns and economic development and the need to replace authoritarianism with a participatory leadership. The following year 320 participants gathered to turn the result of the previous assembly into a pastoral strategy outlined in *Keprihatinan Pastoral* (‘Pastoral Concerns,’ 1988). The split between faith and culture honed in upon the question of marriage (most, if not all, couples marry before seeking a church blessing); a renewed effort was made in the sphere of socio-economic development and courses were run on participatory leadership. Diocesan bodies were established to implement the programme.

A tectonic quake and a momentary dream

On 12th December 1992 at 1:35 pm for an excruciatingly long three minutes Central and eastern Flores was rocked by a tectonic earthquake 6.7 on the Richter scale leading to a massive tsunami on the north coast. Two thousand six hundred died and around half the buildings collapsed. Immediately afterwards Donatus Djagom wrote a stirring pastoral letter interpreting the quake as a grace-filled *kairos*: “the collapse of the old church... rigidly organised... with an overwhelming impression of triumphalism, arrogance and closed mindedness; a strong hierarchical leadership, often authoritarian, weakened the work of the Spirit in the live dynamics of the church as the whole people of God; laws and regulations were emphasised so that the church became legalistic.” The bishop continued on the theme of “building up a new church... the earthquake and tsunami brought not only disaster but also grace. A feeling of solidarity and love of each and everyone was released. Walls of division between ethnic groups collapsed; partitions between Christians and Muslims were torn apart; class distinctions between social groups crumbled. We were united in a common solidarity, a deep love, and competed in helping one another, especially those who suffered most.”⁸⁴ This “prophetic and courageous pastoral guide and challenge” brought a positive response from the congregational leader of the SVD, Henry Barlage, “We would like the Archbishop’s message to influence our formation significantly: a formation close to the people, marked by a simple life style; a formation in an inter-confessional and inter-religious

⁸⁴ Djagom 1993:104–110.

(Muslim) context; a formation that helps form lay leaders.”⁸⁵ As humanitarian aid poured in from the Catholic world, the local church committee alone distributing 19.8 *milyar* (thousand million) rupiah between 1993–1997, so this dream of a church of the people sunk under the weight of the massive re-building programme.

Two years later (1994) a third diocesan assembly was held with 318 participants; the priorities of previous years were again renewed. It was admitted that socio-economic development had as yet had little impact on the lives of the 70% who lived in the countryside and that the horizon of many had yet to be widened by contextual theology. A jubilee assembly was held in Maumere in 2000, which emphasised leadership training in an era of uncertainty. Coming after the collapse of the New Order, issues of human and gender rights received attention for the first time. The assembly outlined a renewed strategy to transform base communities of prayer and catechesis into a network of communities of struggle and advocacy.

While the assemblies of 1987 and 1988 gave thousands of laity a voice for the first time and produced a dynamic momentum for renewal in the archdiocese, the routinisation of the five-yearly assemblies gradually led to their ‘take-over’ by the pastoral institutions of the diocese. Nonetheless, numbers of laity active in parochial and diocesan affairs were greatly amplified involving participants from every social and geographical sector. A process of revitalisation, reorientation and reorganisation was set in motion.⁸⁶

Ruteng: planning from the top

Ruteng Diocese held a synod in 1992 on the occasion of the 80th anniversary of the birth of the church in West Flores and 40 years since the erection of the diocese. Nine papers were read on the changing context and pastoral challenges, including one by the local *bupati*, one by the former bishop (Vitalis Djebarus), one by a lecturer in anthropology at the National University in Jakarta (Robert Lawang) and another by the SVD sociologist Paul Ngganggung (b. 1938) from the Catholic University in Kupang. Manggaraians from outside the diocese were invited as speakers and to constitute the formulation committee. The latter produced a grid on which they placed a proposed pastoral direction until the year 2000 based on their strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (*swot*) and by means of thruputs, outputs and impact.⁸⁷ Unlike the processes commencing from below in Larantuka and Ende, this was very much a seminar run by experts.

⁸⁵ Barlage 1993:230–232.

⁸⁶ Tim Pusat Pastoral KAE in: Hasto Rosariyanto 2001:5–6, 10–13.

⁸⁷ Sekretariat Pastoral Ruteng 1994.

While each of the diocesan plans has its limitations, it must be admitted that the 'single-fighter' tradition inherited from the 'bush missionary' has given way to a more collegial leadership among clergy, between clergy and laity and between parishes. Meanwhile, the consensus plans of the 1980s and 1990s, influenced by the homogenising ethos of the New Order regime, have since had to adapt to the much more fluid situation in post-Soeharto Indonesia. All the planning was ecclesio-centric.

Episcopal collaboration

The seven bishops of Nusa Tenggara Province embarked on more formal collaboration with the establishment of a common pastoral secretariat (*Sekpasber*) in 1980, first billeted at the Pastoral Centre of Ende (launched the same year) later moving to Kupang and then Larantuka. The bishops published a number of documents such as *Working Guidelines for the Catholics of Nusa Tenggara* (Kupang 1983), *Guidelines for Parish Priests* (Atambua 1990) and a rather conventional hymnbook, *Yubilate*, launched in 1990. This hymnbook is widely used both in Nusa Tenggara and by Florenese and Timorese Catholics throughout the country. However, it is debateable whether the pastoral guidelines for the people (1983) or those for parish priests (1990) have had any measurable impact on pastoral work. In tune with the ethos of the New Order, every organisation produced its constitutions and guidelines, while 'on the ground' little if any reference was made to them.

After a nine-year hiatus, the bishops met again, this time after the ousting of Soeharto. Preoccupation with internal church matters was put to one side. In Ruteng 1999 and more forcefully in Weetebula 2003 the bishops' assembly with 130 participants, most of them laity, became a workshop on public and political ethics in an unstable society.⁸⁸ Voices long silenced became articulate and helped to formulate a pastoral approach that aimed to distance the official church from too close a partnership with the political and business establishment and allow space for voicing the pain of the marginalised and a willingness to take up advocacy. Sociologist Huberto Thomas Hasulie SVD (b. 1962) and political theologian Amatus Woi SVD (b. 1958) from Ledalero gave sharp analyses at the 1999 Ruteng assembly. Women resource persons, Agustina Prasetyo Murniati, Protestant pastors Pao Ina Ngefak-Bara Pah and Karen Campbell-Nelson, and Sr. Eustochia SSpS, changed the ecumenical and gender equation at Weetebula. While no radical conversion was apparent, a few NGOs, clergy and sisters were taking pastoral concern out of the sacristy and into the turmoil of a rapidly changing post-Soeharto society. A similar tone informed the gathering in Denpasar in 2006. The inter-diocesan meetings

⁸⁸ Embu 2004a and 2004b.

in Ruteng, Weetebula and Denpasar were facilitated by Candraditya Research Centre, Maumere.

The numerical expansion, catechetical deepening and ecclesiastical maturity of the church in Flores has few parallels elsewhere. The conversion of Flores between 1920 and 1960 is undoubtedly a success story, albeit with a heavy price tag. As an SVD researcher explained: "...mission work in Flores ran at high speed and on a large scale...superficiality was inevitable."⁸⁹ The church felt it had to act fast as Islam was taking an interest in the interior of the island.⁹⁰ Bader goes on to explain that a 'new superficiality' was endangering the inner growth of the church, "we easily become mere administrators of religion. We find satisfaction in exterior activities. The external industriousness takes up the *Seelsorger's* time. During the last few years a great deal of money and effort has gone into material construction, school-buildings, churches and other socio-economic projects. But this can never take the place of fulfilling and integrating the spiritual life of the population."⁹¹ He observed that, "Mentally and religiously the people either tend to return to the old traditional heritage (inspired by the national movement to return to its own national character) which for some has acquired an anti-foreigner flavour, or they, in particular the youth, merge into the stream of being *madju* (advanced) and they get uprooted from their old mental and spiritual treasury and find themselves in a spiritual vacuum."⁹² In other words, the Florenese were never mere passive receptors of the missionaries' preaching; they continued to negotiate their conversion as creative actors and largely on their own terms.

Forty years later Florenese Catholics strongly identified themselves as such. This undiminished religious allegiance sprang from the comprehensive roles the church has played as both a nexus of religious symbolism and agent of social transformation. At the same time the laity was increasingly critical of the institutional church.⁹³

The church and cultural change

Already before the Japanese occupation SVD ethnologist Paul Arndt was warning that a too drastic social change would loosen the people's adherence to the Catholic hierarchy: "Through harsh and resolute prohibition we obviously hit the pagan religion itself; however at the same time we also hit the old social order...we shook up everything...held as supporting pillars. The new Christians are becoming off-putting and disobedient to their elders,

⁸⁹ Bader 1965:18, 34.

⁹⁰ Steenbrink 2002.

⁹¹ Bader 1965:17.

⁹² Bader 1965:17.

⁹³ Erb 2003:125–160.

the authority-bearers, and defy the adat. This disobedience to authority is also being directed at Christian authority. The pastor may command, but the people do not follow.”⁹⁴

Within a couple of generations Flores had shifted from small-scale collectivism under a common adat code and the leadership of male elders to a more individualistic way of life partly derived from schooling and outside opportunities. Traditional Florenese society was religiously grounded while contemporary society was distinguishing between ‘religion’ and adat, ‘government’ and ‘church’, ‘private’ and ‘communal’. The seismic social changes initiated by the church were no longer under its control, if they ever were.

Flores like the rest of NTT has never been of economic or political importance to Batavia/Jakarta; it has always been *Buitengewesten en Buitenbezittingen*—marginal and extra.⁹⁵ “Besides the sun and the sea, the mountains and the beach, and besides the simple and ever-smiling people, there is only one factor that determines the atmosphere in which work is done and that is the mission. The mission has been present helping and caring wherever the people are; the mission has been guiding them with special dedication on their way towards self-development. Without the mission the outlook might have been very different.”⁹⁶

The church’s role as primary agent of modernisation also had its downside. During a visit to Flores in 1951 archbishop Albert Soegijapranata SJ commented: “What has the mission been doing all these years when we can still see a great difference between the impressive buildings of the mission and the hovels and shacks of the people?”⁹⁷ A dozen years later an SVD visitor-researcher could still note: “All the huge buildings that one can see from the air flying over Flores belong to the mission.... Would not a non-Christian think the mission a super-rich institution striving for external greatness whose aim is exterior splendour?”⁹⁸

Back in the 1950s the bishop of Ruteng asked, “What is the danger? The danger lies in the fact that with such an economy we (the church) form as it were a state within the state; and this has caused anger and jealousy among many enlightened Florenese... our own Catholic Florenese. They feel humiliated by the very fact that we achieve so much.”⁹⁹ He further cautioned, “To be able to give a response to communism we need money. But if money is used in a capitalistic way, we on the contrary support communism.”¹⁰⁰

⁹⁴ Arndt 1937.

⁹⁵ Parera 2004:14–19.

⁹⁶ Wertenbroek 1963:304–305.

⁹⁷ Soegijapranata in Van Bekkum Unpublished manuscript. Mid-1950s:13.

⁹⁸ Piskaty 1964:254.

⁹⁹ Van Bekkum, Unpublished manuscript. Mid-1950s:11–12.

¹⁰⁰ Van Bekkum *Idem*:14.

The urge to engage in socio-economic development did not come from the hierarchy alone; ethnologist Arndt commented: "It is as if rural life has hardly changed since time immemorial. It is still beyond the national government's capacity; the country is too large and Flores is far from the centre.... Things always remain the same; primitive homes with the same simplicity and scarcity of utensils; the few things that they have are made by hand and for the most part by women."¹⁰¹

Piet Maku wrote up the first critical analysis of pastoral strategy by a Florenese priest-scholar. He distinguished between, "activities benefiting the mission itself and activities for the socio-economic betterment of the population." The former, before the development plans of the 1950s and 1960s, "gave birth to triumphalism and mistrust," while the second planning phase led to, "an overemphasis upon socio-economic planning according to the norms of the European sponsors. The spiritual side of ministry was neglected." Maku concluded that, "economic planning is not an adequate response to the new situation, nor is it central to consolidating the local church. It must be more educative."¹⁰² He himself proposed that development plans be re-rooted in the dynamics of the local culture.

"The first aim of the socio-economic activities of the mission of Flores should be to enhance collaboration through *musjawarah* and *gotong-rojong* in order to obtain a good, healthy, all-sided socio-economic self-development and self-sufficiency of the people and of the local church."¹⁰³ Maku's voice went largely unheard and he himself was sidelined. Forty years later it should be added that, if, in spite of the enormous sustained contribution by the church, and regardless of the economic models employed, the economy of Flores has been unable to 'catch up' with that of Java, this is surely because much of the wealth Flores produces is sucked out again by the mechanisms of state capitalism and a globalising market.

Unexplored areas

One possibly important strand not touched upon in this chapter is an abiding interest in the thaumaturgical: with the miraculous (bleeding hosts, weeping statues), divine healing, mediums, dreams and apparitions. One or two bishops and not a few clergy play the role of *dukun* (shaman). As the social-cultural framework of the adat has dissipated, so an emphasis upon spirits and the extraordinary has increased. However, to date, there is no evidence of any conjunction between this thaumaturgical preoccupation and the charismatic

¹⁰¹ Arndt 1955:591–593.

¹⁰² Maku 1967:39–40.

¹⁰³ Maku 1967:239.

movement or a move towards Pentecostalism. Such incidents are quickly squashed by both church and government authorities.

A second area is that of the role of the seminaries in creating sexually immature clergy. While nothing has ever been published on this sensitive matter and there has been a deafening silence in the public realm, there may well be a link between authoritarian clerical leadership and psychosexual immaturity. There may also be a link between the necessity of keeping private life and public role separate and a lack of transparency and honesty in the church.

An unfinished transition

During the last half of the twentieth century the Catholic Church continued its role as a major agent of modernisation and an important player in state formation. Pioneering every type of schooling and heavily involved in socio-economic planning, the church retained a major stake in nation-building until the end of the century. And because a church led by foreign missionaries brought Flores into the modern world, Flores has never known the anti-western or ultra-nationalistic rhetoric of Java and Sumatra, despite fears of the rise of 'anti-clericalism' in the early days of independence and during the turbulent 1960s.¹⁰⁴

Through schools that opened up windows to the wider world, the *Volkskirche* of the 1950s has evolved into a more complex web of relationships, increasingly consisting of dispersed communities of choice rather than an ecclesial-ethnic *Gemeinschaft*. The common norms of adat and the pre-Vatican II church no longer bind; the people are struggling to develop a workable set of internalised values that are by no means uniform. The church is one reference point among many cutting across the pre-modern, modern and post-modern worlds in which the Florenese live. The de-institutionalisation of religion, so marked elsewhere, has also made its impact on this island of almost two million (1.6 million in 2000 census). In this context two 'alliances' have emerged. The first is that between a conventional ecclesiastical hierarchy, the government and a regressive co-opting of devotional Catholicism. The second is that between grassroots NGOs, a more biblical Catholicism and villagers demanding their rights over land and language.

Whatever one's view of the conventional church and its traditional schools and seminaries, this church has given birth to Catholic scholars who, outside ecclesial structures and away from ethnic Flores, have been living and

¹⁰⁴ Anti-western slights are more common among competitive clergy than the Florenese laity. The governments of East Nusa Tenggara have always supported the presence of the remaining foreign church personnel, thus neutralizing the implementation of Instruction Nos. 70 and 77 in 1978.

articulating their faith confidently and progressively in the multi-faith metropolis of Jakarta. It must be admitted that within Flores itself creative thinkers have always been successfully marginalised in the past, such as bishops Manek and Van Bekkum, seminary lecturers Clement Pareira, Lambert Paji and Kopong Keda, and missiologists Herman Embuiru and Piet Maku. And yet at the turn of the century the clerical institution is facing a progressively more autonomous laity in both village and town, with a small but articulate local intelligentsia who are seeking truth, goodness and beauty in a pluralistic world.

The Protestant and Pentecostal diaspora in Flores 1919–2000

In historical essays by Catholics on Christianity in Flores the Protestant presence on Flores is rarely mentioned.¹⁰⁵ Histories of the Evangelical Protestant Church of Timor (GMIT) have also neglected their presbytery on this ‘Catholic’ isle.¹⁰⁶ And yet the presence of GMIT, and more recently of other Protestant and Pentecostal churches, is of interest: a marginalised minority has steadfastly maintained its identity and refused to be absorbed by an overwhelming majority.

The GMIT presence in Flores was established in 1947 the same year GMIT was born. Thus the period covered here is concomitant with the first 60 years of GMIT as an independent church asserting its identity and discovering its place as one of the largest Protestant churches in Indonesia. In 1951 Flores became a presbytery with Rev. S.A.K. Therik the first moderator.

The Protestant presence is scattered widely along the coast as well as forming pockets in the district and sub-district towns. They first arrived as traders, skilled labourers, police, teachers and government employees from other islands in East Nusa Tenggara, in particular Sawu, Rote, Timor, Sumba and Alor, and also from further afield: Ambon, Manado, Java and North Sumatra. Government workers were regularly transferred resulting in ‘revolving congregations;’ the stable core consisting of those who retired on Flores and those traders who found a reasonable living, married and raised

¹⁰⁵ In the 319-page book commemorating the 75th anniversary of the Cathedral parish of Ende, where the largest Protestant congregations are found and where the earliest ecumenical work was done in the mid-1960s, there is no ecumenical reference; just one of the 68 photographs shows a Protestant pastor (*Paroki Kristus Raja* 2002:301).

¹⁰⁶ The history of the Protestant and Pentecostal churches on Flores has yet to be written. These notes are based on interviews (January–April 2005) with past and present Protestant pastors and a reading of scattered archives. Three B.Th. papers and 14 internship reports have been written by student-pastors from Artha Wacana University, Kupang. These are valuable, though, due to inaccuracies, of limited use. Important facts have been double-checked.

their families there. Ende has the largest congregation and is the home of the presbytery moderator.

Becoming ever more heterogeneous as time went on, GMIT in Flores has accepted Congregational and Lutheran traditions into its Presbyterian fold: GKS (Christian Church of Sumba), GKJ (Christian Church of Java), GPIB (Protestant Church of West Indonesia), HKBP (Christian Protestant Batak Church), GPM (Protestant Church of Maluku), GMIM (Evangelical Protestant Church of Minahasa).

Each of today's congregations and chapels started as a house-church. Although some families went to the local Catholic church on Sundays until they had their own leader, these mini-communities maintained their separate identity by gathering in each other's homes on weekdays to pray and read the bible. For much of the period in question the synod appointed pastors who were still in their early 20s; neither the policy of the synod nor minimal stipends from small congregations made marriage feasible during their time in Flores. Almost all pastors supplemented their stipend through business activities.

From the first record of Protestants settling in Flores in the early twentieth century until now there has been hardly a single case of the conversion of a Florenese except of those Catholics who married into Protestant families. The clan system of Eastern Indonesia has maintained the identity of each denomination; customary neighbourliness and inter-marriage has buttressed tolerance both between Protestants and Catholics and also with Muslims, at least outside times of crisis; marriage and funeral customs cut across religious lines.

To gain acceptance, then, the early pastors spent much time developing good relations with both the local Catholic clergy and the district government. The overriding concern with acceptance and survival precluded a more prophetic role in society.

1919—The 'Syaloom' congregation in Ende

The first record of Protestants living in Ende relates how a group of skilled workers in stone, wood and gold sailed in from Sawu (also written as Sabu) in 1912. In 1919 worship was held for the first time for five households totalling some 30 members. This house church was led by laymen until 1927 when the first pastor was appointed; he was Sapulete from Ambon. In 1928 there was already a congregation some 500 strong.

Until the end of the 1950s most of the Sawu congregation lived in Ipi district by the coast and worked as carpenters and builders, cigarette vendors and producers of coconut oil. They formed around 80% of the congregation; the other 20% were government employees; half a century later just over half

the congregation were still from Sawu; they are known as the best skilled workers in town.

By 1959 there were 42 households in Ende and the congregation had become more diversified: from Sumba, Rote, Ambon, Timor, Alor. A few Sawunese had settled down as farmers, but the congregational leadership was drawn from the government employees, police, army and businesspeople. Chinese became Protestant through marriage. It has not been easy to unite such a diverse congregation: the Sawu workers willingly gave their time and never questioned church policy; the Chinese gave their money but little time; government employees, teachers and police ran the church council but were transferred regularly. Only in the 1970s with help both from Gideon and the Department of Religious Affairs were all families able to obtain a bible. During the same decade Catholics were embarking on bible sharing in their base communities.

In 1938–1939 the first church was built on land given by Raja Haji Usman who had once stayed with a Dutch Protestant family in Kupang when at school. The first stone of the church was laid in 1953 by the district head, Louis E. Monteiro and in 1959 was already in use but—due to lack of finance—only finally dedicated in 1970.¹⁰⁷

The *Syaloom* congregation is the only Protestant community in Flores with its own schools, namely *Syaloom* kindergarten, GMIT primary school (1948) and a Christian lower secondary school. A man from Rote gave land for the primary school at minimal cost. Teachers had a high status in both church and society. Hendrik Kanalewe, at age 17, arrived to teach in Ende without knowing where Ende was! Later he became a school inspector and concluded his career as head of the local Education Department. His wife, also a teacher, was the first woman member of the district parliament for the ruling Golkar party (1977–1987). Around 50% to 60% of the primary school pupils are Muslim due to the school's location; a majority of the students at the high school are Catholic.

The early 1930s were marred by a conflict between the Catholic priest and the pastor over the validity of Protestant baptism. However, gradually the Florenese Catholic majority came to accept the presence of these 'outsiders.' Until the 1960s there were cool relations between the Catholic priests and Protestant pastors. In the mid-1960s, due both to the positive influence of the Vatican Council among Catholics and to the uncertain political situation in the country, priests and pastors began visiting each other (*silaturahmi*); they have exchanged pulpits during the Octave for Christian Unity, and acknowledged each other's baptisms; a joint choir has been established; there have been

¹⁰⁷ Leunupun 2004:7.

seminars, and a tradition of celebrating *Natal Bersama* (Christmas Together) has been inaugurated.

This ecumenical climate was begun at the initiative of pastor John Jusuf. Jusuf was appointed to Ende as assistant pastor (1967–1969) when he was 22 years old; he was later to return to Ende as presbytery moderator (1976–1980). He cultivated good relations with the parish priest of the cathedral, Max Nambu, and later with Alo Pendito at the bishop's residence in Ndonga. These relationships became important during an incident in 1968. A leaflet, purportedly from Makassar, was making the rounds claiming that Muslims were planning to burn down churches. Jusuf was suspected of being the provocateur and was detained by the police for two weeks. Despite intimidation, women from the congregation visited Jusuf in detention hiding a long supportive letter in a loaf of bread. Max Nambu gave moral support also. As tensions rose, weapons were confiscated from all the Protestant police. Post 1965–1966 was a turbulent time to be a young pastor.

Pastor A.M.L. Bakhu cultivated a good personal relationship with Donatus Djagom both when Djagom was director of *Syuradikara* high school (1960s) and later as archbishop (from 1969). Marriage has always been a sticking point; in general the Protestant partner, as a member of a minority, has to 'give in.' Although it was once agreed in Ende that nobody need transfer to another church at marriage, there have been no ecumenical weddings in Ende with the pastor and priest officiating together. Both the families and church leaders accept that families are more harmonious if both parents belong to the same church. As Hendrik Kanalewe, a long-retired teacher in Ende, wistfully put it, "Protestants learn their catechism before joining GMIT; Catholics join first and only then learn their catechism!"

1974 was proclaimed 'Year of the Ecumenical Movement' in East Nusa Tenggara by Catholic, GMIT and GKS church leaders.¹⁰⁸ In 1994–1995 tolerance was strained through a series of host desecrations at the Catholic parishes of Onekore, Mautapaga and the Cathedral in Ende, which culminated in the murder of one suspect at the Catholic cathedral. As the political background became clear (divide and rule), so relations became more equanimous again.

John Jusuf returned to Ende as presbytery moderator (1976–1980), doubling as pastor of the Shalom congregation. He saw that the communities outside town had little formal education and so much of the church council's time was taken up with catechesis. Women members of the congregation increased as migrants came as household maids. Jusuf cooperated well with Bupati Gadi Djo whom he found to be 'understanding and moderate.'

¹⁰⁸ Lang 1974:155.

Ecumenical relations in Ende have been warmer than in Maumere, although the initiative is almost always from the Protestant side. There are choir competitions, exchange of pulpits and GMIT /Pentecostal collaboration. There has been no cooperation with Muslims. While on the island of Alor whole villages can change their church allegiance, in Flores this has never happened.

Holy Communion is celebrated four times a year, Baptism twice. Diakonia involves, among other charitable works, support for 20 widows, elderly and orphans at the rate of 50 thousand rupiah a month; 300 thousand for bereaved families and 20 scholarships for school children.

Outlying chapels

Already in 1933 there was a small house-church in Wolowaru, a sub-regency town 65 km east of Ende, opened by Belo, a Chinese from Rote; he was just 18 years old. In 1950 a branch congregation was established from five households, mostly from the local police station. Only in 1969 was a temporary church put up which was replaced by a permanent structure in 1983; five years later (1987) the first pastor, G. Edu Sir, was appointed. In the year 2000 there were 17 households with 97 members of whom 41 were men and 56 women.¹⁰⁹ On the road to Bajawa *Nangapanda* chapel was opened in 1982 with seven members; it was a house-church in the home of teacher M. Djala Maki. By the year 2000 they had built a semi-permanent church for the nine households, with 33 members. *Maurole* chapel on the north coast also traces its beginnings to 1982 as a mini-house church; a church was dedicated in 2002 for the eight households with 40 members. Forty kilometres from Ende *Detusoko* chapel began in 1980 as a house-church with just 18 members, and by the end of the century had risen to seven households with 44 members. A further chapel was established at Watuneso in 2003 with six households and 23 members.

At the end of the century the Syaloom congregation had a total of 4,204 members of whom 1,925 were men and 2,204 women who came from 783 households. The congregation was divided into 33 districts (*rayon*). This congregation was led by a 64-member council with 43 men and 21 women including two ordained pastors, a husband and wife team. The congregation was comparatively well educated with 75% holding senior high school certificates. While most of the congregation originate from Sawu many have been settled in Ende for over half a century.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁹ Zacharya 2003:7.

¹¹⁰ Jacomina 2004.

1927—*The 'Immanuel' congregation in Ruteng*

Only in 1909 was the government administration of Manggarai transferred from the province of Celebes to the Timor *Keresidenan*; the following year the Dutch carried out their first patrol from the coast (Reo) to the interior (Ruteng). Soldiers, some of whom were Protestant, were barracked at Ruteng in the highlands and at Labuan Bajo on the coast. In the 1920s there were seven households of some 30 members scattered widely in Ruteng (central), Borong (east), Reo (north) and Labuan Bajo (west). They gathered on Saturdays to pray in each other's homes in turn (*kebaktian rumah tangga*). In Ruteng around six to eight people gathered for worship. Pariyama, a member of the Dutch military, was appointed the first minister (*pelayan*) in 1927. This church in Ruteng had members from the islands of Sawu, Timor, Ambon and Rote and continued as such for ten years with pastors visiting sporadically from Ende to celebrate the sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion. Raja Barukh (also Baroek) gave land on which the small community built a house for the minister.

At the beginning relations with Catholic Manggaraians were not good; Protestants would forbid Catholics from carrying their dead in the street, while the Catholic priest prevented Catholics from working on the Protestant church. J.T. Malole was appointed congregational teacher in 1936/37. For a short while his children were prevented from attending the mission school. And so he began the task of building good relations with the Catholic majority, with the adat elders and with Raja Barukh. Malole taught Arabic to Wilhelm Janssen SVD. It was also Malole who established the first church council (*majelis*). His transfer to Kupang in 1939 was deferred due to the outbreak of war; he remained in Ruteng until 1947. For those appointed ministers, life was simple; they lived from dry-land farming and perhaps a small rice-field. In 1942 there were 57 Protestant households in Manggarai, in 1947 around 65 households. Virtually all of these came from islands other than Flores, apart from some Chinese. In 1952–54 a semi-permanent church was built for the 150 members from 30 households. Twenty years later, in 1971 was the congregation led by an ordained pastor, N.S. Kalle. At the end of the 1970s numbers had risen to 65 households including those at Reo, Borong and Labuan Bajo. A decade later in 1989 the congregation was divided with a second centre established at Labuan Bajo; in 2003 a third congregation was set up at Reo. Each of these congregations has far-flung outposts. A new church was begun in Ruteng in 1995, the *Bupati* G.P. Ehok laying the first stone; the finished building was dedicated in 2003.

This small Protestant community has had to reconcile different church traditions according to the origin of its members: HKBP (Lutheran), GPIB, GMIM as well as GMIT (Presbyterian). There have been occasional rifts but

no permanent schisms although the danger of fragmentation was never far from the surface. For instance, in 1977 the pastor of Ruteng refused to transfer. In Reo in 1981, some of the elders complained that the woman pastor was associating too freely (*di luar batas*) with male members of the congregation. The synod sent John Jusuf to mediate; the pastor was removed but she continued to minister to part of the congregation while the new pastor led the remainder. Not dissimilar problems inflict most small, heterogeneous, migrant communities.

Each community retained the loyalty of its members. For example, in 1932 there were just two or three households in Lembor, west Manggarai; far from the nearest Protestant congregation they went for Sunday worship in the local Catholic church without transferring their allegiance. They were 'discovered' during a visit by a minister in 1951; finally a place of worship was built in 1989. Only in 1992 did a Manggaraian Catholic family convert to the Protestant church outside of a marriage arrangement. There was evidently little but marriage to motivate a change of ecclesial allegiance either way; ethnic-denominational identity remained secure.

Relations with the government have been fostered over the years. Towards the end of the century the chair of the church council was also chair of the government evaluation board of the town. In 2000 there were 1,100 church members in Ruteng consisting of 557 men and 543 women with 262 married couples, a better gender balance than in previous decades.¹¹¹ There has been steady growth, but no roots have been set down.¹¹² Apart from Sunday worship family services are held twice a week. Holy Communion is celebrated three times a year and Baptism twice. There was regular catechesis, youth activities, six choirs, and organisations for both women and men. The congregation helps out at occasions of bereavement; the more prosperous members are encouraged to assist with school scholarships for the children of the poor. There is also the *Ephata* congregation at Reo with chapels at Dampek and Pota.

The 'Gunung Salmon' congregation of Komodo (Labuan Bajo and Lembor)

The Labuan Bajo congregation hails from Sawu, Rote, Sumba and Timor, with a few from Alor, Ambon, Toraja, Java and North Sumatra (Batak). Thus there are also a number of different church traditions within the one congregation: GKS (Protestant Church of Sumba), GKJ (Protestant Church of Java), GPIB (Protestant Church of West Indonesia), HKBP (Batak Protestant Church), GPM (Protestant Church of Maluku) and GMIM (Evangelical Protestant Church of Minahasa). Through marriage, there are also a few members with a

¹¹¹ Sine 2004:16.

¹¹² Djari 1998:92–98.

Catholic, Muslim or Hindu background. There is little or no friction between churches and religions.

Relations with the government are fostered, leading to the local pastor being appointed '*penyuluh agama*' (religious animator) by the district government, thus assuring both his position in the wider society and a guaranteed income. He loyally attended government meetings when invited. Problems between members and the pastor or church council are sometimes 'solved' by the person transferring to another Protestant church (such as Bethel) or to the Pentecostals. Holy Communion is celebrated every three months; Baptisms at Christmas and Easter, or according to need. On Tuesdays and Fridays there are prayers, bible reading and catechesis in the local wards. Women have there own service on Fridays.¹¹³

1935—The 'Calvary' congregation in Maumere

The modest beginnings go back to 1935 when Dominggus Haba landed from Sawu, a gold craftsman. Three sisters also arrived, Yuliana, Elisabeth and Martha Hege, who found work in Chinese shops; they married into the Chinese families. On Sundays they worshiped in St. Joseph's Catholic church; at night they said their prayers and read from the bible. Pastor Sapulete briefly made an appearance from Ambon in 1937, but seeing little chance of expanding the mini-community he did not return. Benyamin Pandu with his wife Yuliana Lamongi and seven children arrived from Rote in 1939; he headed the post office. In 1941 one of their children, Adriana, married Yakobus da Silva who was a son of the *Kapitan* of Nita. This connection with a prominent family was useful in obtaining a strategic site south of the raja of Sikka's town residence on the west side of the town square. The post office was built on land adjoining it further south. In 1941 Robert Kaunang arrived as public prosecutor and other civil servants were appointed to Maumere bringing the total to ten households. Worship was held on Tuesdays and Fridays in Pandu's home. Others arrived from Timor, Alor and Sumba.

With around 30 households and a hundred members, mostly from Sawu, Benyamin Pandu requested a pastor from the synod and in 1951 Robert Tahun of Oinlasi, Timor, was welcomed as their first pastor (1951–1960). He was 23 years old. He stayed in elder Pandu's house where all activities took place: Sunday worship (later in the front garden), Sunday school, meetings, classes, receiving guests. The congregation had no hymn books or bibles. The lively family atmosphere did not encourage much thinking. If in 1951 there were around 30 members of the congregation, by the end of the decade the number has risen to 45 households and 135 members. Tahun survived financially

¹¹³ Frare 2003:8–9.

by obtaining a license to export copra. To visit outlying families he cycled the seven kilometres along the coast road to Geliting and peddled a similar distance up the hill to Nele.

Pastor Tahun acknowledged Catholics as 'elder brothers' and often went with his questions to one of the clergy both in town and at the major seminary. He printed his Christmas cards at the Catholic press in Ende. He accepted invitations to Catholic events.

In 1952 a church building committee was formed. Prominent Protestants in Kupang such as I.H. Doko, who headed the education department, and the governor in Singaraja, Bali, assisted with corrugated iron, cement and nails. This, together with much hard work by the local congregation and their Catholic neighbours, led to the first church (28 × 8m) being dedicated in 1957 with both government personnel and Catholic clergy present. The following year a semi-permanent house for the pastor was built next to the post office. Everything went smoothly, for Protestants ran a number of government offices.

Pastor Tahun left Maumere in 1960 to complete three more years of theology at SoE, Timor. He later married the fourth woman pastor ordained by GMIT who was also the first women pastor to minister to inland congregations in Timor. At that time there were no women school directors or village heads; in this regard GMIT was a path blazer.

In 1978 a committee was formed to build a new church. Bupati Daniel Woda Palle laid the first stone. Virtually the entire budget came from the local congregation. The church was finally dedicated thirteen years later but collapsed the following year during the tectonic earthquake of 12 December 1992. Temporary barracks were put up on the site to house five families made homeless; another five were housed on the new housing estate to the west of the town. Others were permanently relocated to Nangahure, ten kilometres west of Maumere. The stricken congregation changed their name from 'Faith, Hope and Love' to 'Calvary.' With government help the church was rebuilt and a second church built at Nangahure for the 26 relocated families. A chapel was built in Geliting after initial suspicion by some Catholics was overcome.

During the 1950s and 1960s most Protestants 'automatically' voted for *Parkindo*, the Protestant political party. This party was co-opted, as were Catholics, into involvement in the army-instigated massacre of 1966. The following years saw strained relations with Catholics. However, internally the congregation matured. In 1969 the *via dolorosa* choir was established. The church council was headed by Napoleon Therik, the police commander. Numbers rose to 80 households with just 235 members ministered to by three elders, three deacons and one sexton.

In the 1950s and 1960s inter-church couples were asked to join one church. Only in the 1970s was an ecumenical wedding celebrated. In 1974 *Natal*

Bersama (Christmas Together) was celebrated in the town square in front of the GMIT church; both Catholic parishes as well as the Pentecostal congregation took part. However, this did not become a regular event.

When Mesakh Ratu Woen was appointed pastor in 1979 he found a cooperative priest at the local parish of St. Thomas More. The two congregations commenced bible sharing, held a joint bible exhibition, celebrated ecumenical marriages, and led each other's Liturgy of the Word on Sunday. Meanwhile Protestant wards and Catholic base communities prayed together and assisted each other. Pastor Mesakh maintained warm relations with both staff and students of the major seminaries of Ledalero and Ritapiret. This was facilitated by the annual exchange of lecturers and students between Ledalero/Ritapiret and the Protestant theology faculty in Kupang since 1976. This developing ecumenism in Maumere did not survive the transfer of the Catholic priest in 1981 and pastor Mesakh in 1983; church leaders returned to 'studied negligence.' Many Catholics considered Maumere 'their district' and the non-Florenese Protestants as 'intruders.' Nevertheless wider contacts remained: seminarians calling at the pastor's home, religious sisters staying overnight, Catholic students staying with the pastor while studying at lower secondary school. Since his transfer, Mesakh has continued his ecumenical outreach from his base at Artha Wacana University.

Pastor G. Edu Sir transferred from Larantuka to Maumere in 1982. When the local Catholic dean was seriously ill, Sir went to pray over him. He celebrated the Week of Christian Unity with Catholic seminarians. Unlike in the 1970s, ecumenical initiatives always had to come from the minority community. The pastor's voting paper at the general election of 1982 was marked as the government suspected that he might not vote for their Golkar party. After two years Sir moved to Ende to become presbytery moderator (1984–1987); the going-away celebration was hosted by Golkar, not by the local congregation!

At the beginning of the 1980s there were 187 households with 530 members ministered to by five elders and five deacons. Suspicion and disputes over money arose; the more diversified the congregation and the bigger the building programme, the greater the problems with both management and honesty. These were partly solved by appointing two treasurers.

In 1993 the first woman pastor was appointed, Ena Umpenawany; she led some 395 households with 1,185 members. When a second male pastor was appointed the following year, the two proved unable to work together, suspicion and recrimination led to their both being reappointed elsewhere.

At the turn of the century there were 28 wards (*rayon*): two in Nangahure, 22 in town, four others outside town. The congregation was being led by a husband-and-wife team, both graduates from Artha Wacana University, Kupang. They were ministering to 487 households with 2,250 members out of a total population of 236,220 Catholics and 20,045 Muslims. Protestants were

working as government employees, teachers, bank clerks, police, army, businessmen, doctors and traders. A high proportion takes part in worship. There are chapels at Geliting (17 households), Talibura (9 households), Nangahure (26 households), Lela (24 households) and Paga (two households).¹¹⁴

GMIT congregations in Ngada

Aimere on the south coast should be mentioned first, both as the gateway to Ngada but more importantly as the first Protestant community in Ngada. Already in the 1930s a house-church had developed there among settlers from Sawu. This was turned into a chapel in the 1950s when police and army posts were established. By the mid-1970s there were 30 households. The first church was built in 1976–1977. In the 1970s the pastor for the whole of Ngada lived in Aimere; in 1983 he transferred his headquarters to the regency capital of Bajawa in the interior.¹¹⁵

In the 1950s there were just 11 Protestant households in Bajawa, nine of them police and army personnel, the other two government employees. There was no pastor before 1969. A permanent church was built in 1976–1977 by pastor John Yusuf. To raise funds the small congregation obtained a fishing net (one third of the harvest was given to the church) and later 1.6 hectares of land, and a few cattle. The present church was dedicated in 1989.

From 30 households in 1976 the Bajawa congregation, at the turn of the century, had increased to 116 households with 528 members. This is augmented by seven chapels or branch-congregations, namely those at Mauponggo (19 households, 71 members), Boawae (14 households, 89 members), Nangaroro (5 households, 25 members), Mbay (34 households, 130 members (including Riung), Mataloko and Soa.

The chapel 'Victory' in Mauponggo is 43 km from Bajawa. In the early 1960s there were already 60 settlers from Sawu. They were augmented by Protestants among the police, army and teachers when Mauponggo became a sub-regency administrative centre (*kecamatan*) in 1962. Within two years regular worship was instituted. In 1967 pastor W. Fangidae visited the chapel but the next visit was not until 1972. Only since 1982 have there been regular visits for sacramental and catechetical ministries. 1997 saw the third renovation of their church. At the end of the century there were 22 households with 86 members.

In 1941 there was a single Protestant family in Boawae, Kornelis Kote Luy Koan, who worked at the telephone exchange. Three Sawu travellers arrived in 1945. The house-church became active in 1949–1955 initiated by the head of

¹¹⁴ Asfes 2001:69–80.

¹¹⁵ Tameno 2004:6.

the public works department. Boawae became a sub-regency in 1962 bringing in government employees and police. After the 30th September 1965 incident in Jakarta and the subsequent army control of the country, an army post was established in Boawae, which increased both the numbers and the profile of this fledging community. When the Catholic Church opened its farming school (SPMA) in 1968, the only one of its kind in the East Nusa Tenggara Province, many of its intakes from Timor and Sumba were Protestants. Sunday school was led by these students. A few pastors managed to visit the Boawae community between 1969–82 so that the congregation took the initiative to build a church. The sub-regent (*camat*) laid the first stone in 1984; the temporary church was finished within three months. In 1997 the first stone was laid for a permanent church, which was dedicated two years later. At the turn of the century there were 23 households with 113 members including Catholics who transferred to GMIT on getting married.

Bait-El chapel in Nangaroro is near the border between Ngada and Ende regencies. In the mid-1960s the three Protestant police and army families travelled to Ende for Sunday worship. They established their own community in 1979 with 60 members. In 1980 they built their own church (5 × 3m). Three years later, with assistance from the sub-regent, they upgraded their place of worship.

Ebenhaezer chapel in Mbay. In 1960 seven households settled in Mbay from Sawu who were augmented by three police and army families. In 1986 Mbay became the centre of a government relocation programme; as part of this *transmigrasi* programme the government built a church for the Protestant community.

In 1998 Catholics formed 92.18% of the population of Ngada, Muslims 6.89% and Protestants 0.84% of whom 72% had high school certificates.

1937—The 'Ebenhaezer' congregation in Larantuka

A house-church was birthed by Dutch army and colonial personnel and settlers from Sawu. This GMIT congregation has remained small. The first church was dedicated on New Year's Day 1938 for the nine households and just 20 members. Forty years later there were 111 members, five years later 155. Pastor Edu Sir (1977–1982) maintained good personal relations with the parish priest of the Catholic cathedral, Paulus Due. Given the time needed to travel round the islands of East Flores, Sir's ministry was largely sacramental; catechesis was left to the local elders. Sir could travel on the diocesan boat *Ama* without having to pay. The 300 or so widely scattered congregation was fairly united as no one ethnic group dominated.

Being so small, the Larantuka congregation had never been host to meeting of the Flores presbytery. However, they did so in 1980 without any financial

assistance from the government. The Catholic bishop, Darius Nggawa, lent the boarding house of the technical school for accommodation. The congregation brought in food each day. While the synod in Kupang had decided on a monthly stipend of Rp. 80,000 in the late 1970s, the Larantuka congregation could only supply Rp. 30,000. Nevertheless, Edu Sir married in 1979 without the blessing of the synod and without an increase in stipend. He boarded with a policeman, and he himself baptised his two children. The temporary pastor's house was replaced by a semi-permanent building, without begging from local traders; it was completed in eight months. Stories of such simplicity and struggle are heard throughout Flores from the beginning until the 1980s. The congregation is now ministered to by two ordained pastors.

By the end of the century there were 120 households with 480 members, of whom 54% were adult and 46% children, with 20% in government employment and 80% in business and NGOs. Educationally the congregation is above average: 53 with university degrees, 23 with senior high school certificates, others still in school including 21 in kindergarten. They are ministered to by a pastor and a church council of 17 members. Apart from the usual catechesis for Protestant government employees, for youth, for first communions (*sidi*), there is also a 'Protestant pulpit' slot on the local government radio station at five in the evening.¹¹⁶

Other chapels

The chapel of *Immanuel* at Waiwerang (Adonara) began with five households, 68 members; by the turn of the century there were 30 households and 90 members. The chapel of *Immanuel* at Boru (East Flores) has 8 households with 32 members and a further four households on the isle of Konga. The chapel of *Eklesia* at Waiwadan consists of fisher folk and farmers, settlers from Sawu. The chapel of *Menanga* in Solor was established in 2003 with four households of 20 members plus six not yet married. The chapel of *Solafide* is a Chinese community at Lewoleba, Lembata, with an outpost at Blauring. Formerly the house of the police chief was used for worship, Baptisms and Holy Communion; at the turn of the century they had one ordained pastor.

Pentecostals, Bethel and others

A brief mention should be made of other churches. Most references are to Maumere; the situation is similar in other towns. In 1974 the *Gereja Pantekosta Pusat Surabaya* was opened in Maumere by pastor Paulus Mite, a Florenese

¹¹⁶ Pattipeilohy 2000:18.

from Ngada;¹¹⁷ his wife hails from Java. They use Javanese at home. Mite began his congregation at Losmen Bogor; in 1985 they moved to Beru district in the newer area of Maumere, where they have built an impressive church. There are lively services six days a week as well as choir and band practice. The congregation of 50 families is primarily Chinese with a few coming from Java, Rote, Sawu, Timor and Palue.

1989 Bethel congregation, Waidoko.—Pastor Dominggus is a Sawunese from Kupang (Timor). He attended Bible College for a year in SoE, Timor and then did his six-month practical, paying for the schooling himself. He was then commissioned by the *Badan Pekerja Daerah* (Regional Body of Bethel) to open the first Bethel Church (*Gereja Bethel Indonesia*) in Maumere in 1989, a few months before Pope John Paul II's visit. He began in a bamboo hut beside the Wini Rai Hotel. They moved to Waidoko in 1996 having received a grant of land from the district government. Their striking church was begun in 2000 and opened by Bupati Alex Longinus in 2003. "We are neighbours," explained the bupati, "We are a single family."

The Bethel congregation began with a couple of families from Sawu; through marriage with Chinese traders, the congregation slowly increased. There are also a few government employees. At the turn of the century Bethel had around 50 members, almost all Sawunese from Kupang. An assistant pastor is in charge of the local TVRI station. They have a church council of three. They admit: "We are simple newcomers we must adjust ourselves in order to live peacefully."

Since his commissioning to Maumere, Pastor Dominggus has eagerly proselytised among pastorally neglected Catholics. He initially obtained a number of Maumere women from among the salt-makers near Waidoko (*kampung garam*); however, these have since returned to the Catholic fold. Some of his congregation hail from the nearby isle of Palue; he attracts locals through his healing services and a gospel of the here-and-now. The pastor obtains income from pig rearing while his wife sells goods in the marketplace. There are three assistance pastors. One of them, John Galuci, once worked as a cook in a hotel.

There is little ecumenism between this proselytizing church and the majority Catholic community. Relations, such as they are, have been formalised through the government-based 'Pastors' Forum', of whom the Catholic member is Islamologist Bene Daghi pr, of Ritapiret seminary. They are happy to attend Catholic functions such as first communions but decry the '*arak culture*' and the 'culture of getting drunk.'

¹¹⁷ Mite's family was harassed during the massacre of February-May 1966, not because of communist sympathies but almost certainly due to their denominational affiliation.

1995 Gereja Pantekosta di Indonesia—Pastor Ibrahim and his wife and four small children came to Maumere and established their Pentecostal church in 1995. They began in a small house in the government housing estate (*Perumnas*), moving to their present location in 2000. The small congregation of around 30 members bought the land. The congregation hails from Java, Rote, Sawu and Timor.

Other ecclesial communities—There are also small congregations of Adventists and Assemblies of God in Maumere. The pastor of the latter, once a pastor in GMIT, transferred to Bethel and now has his own church. Apart from Maumere, there are Pentecostal congregations (*Gereja Pantekosta di Indonesia*, GPdI) in Ruteng, Labuan Bajo and Ende. Bethel also has a congregation in Ruteng, Aimere, Bajawa and Lembata, all of which have their own land. The Bethel congregation in Ende still has to rent a place for worship. The New Testament Church is also present in Ruteng.

According to statistics in the office for Religious Affairs in Maumere, the total number of Protestants in the Sikka regency in 2004 was 6,910 of whom over 5,000 belonged to GMIT. It is not easy to obtain accurate figures as the Protestant congregations belong to largely shifting populations. Also some, possibly many, are counted as members of more than one church.

The appearance of Pentecostal and Charismatic churches preoccupied with healing in the towns of Flores raises the interesting possibility of a 'Latin American' scenario whereby a certain percentage of Catholics might find their home here in smaller congregations and in a church which answers their everyday needs through blessings and healings. However, despite active proselytizing and the temporary attraction of some poor women, it has to be said that, at the turn of the century, such a development has not (yet) come to pass.

At the start of the twenty first century there were eight GMIT congregations in Flores with a total of around 13,250 members served by 15 pastors; both Maumere and Ende had husband-and-wife teams. However, it has to be admitted that this was 'growth without roots'. That these small, scattered minority communities maintained their identity is of interest. As their leadership came from the police and local government, not surprisingly, their horizon has been limited to maintenance and internal strengthening (*missio ad intra*) rather than to a wider societal, let alone prophetic, *missio ad extra*.

If in the early 1950s the main concern of the pastors and elders was the influence of adat on church belief (spirits, healing), fifty years later they were concerned with a more complex world with the conflicting claims of culture, politics and the economy. If half a century ago the pastor was accepted in all sincerity as 'the voice of God', and held a high status and received gifts in kind from the congregation, then at the end of the century he had lost any special

position and, as he receives a regular salary, many in the congregation see no point in giving gifts in kind.

In a way the reminiscences recorded here are all 'minor': who first arrived and when, who married whom, how influential contacts were made and church buildings erected. There is no grand narrative. These incidents have emerged from the memory of a surviving and slowly consolidating minority. At the time when GMIT had barely been born, young pastors with minimal theological education were commissioned to serve diverse, far-flung migrant households in a not too friendly environment. The story takes us from barely equipped but dedicated pastors in the 1950s to university graduates 'doing a job,' who felt educationally on a par with their Catholic colleagues. GMIT moved from a male clergy to an inclusive pastorate; from preoccupation with internal problems of the cohesion of a motley and revolving congregation to achieving an honourable place in the wider society. Flores has been the place where many newly commissioned pastors earned their stripes before returning to Timor to minister to larger, more established congregations. While the ecumenical impact of collaboration between the theological faculty of Artha Wacana Christian University in Kupang and the seminaries of Ledalero and Ritapiret near Maumere has been recorded, there is no testimony as yet on the impact, positive or otherwise, on Protestant-Catholic relations in Timor resulting from the young pastors' experience in Flores.¹¹⁸

If GMIT has refrained from proselytism among the ethnic majority, efforts by more recent churches, such as Bethel and the Pentecostals, have met with no long-lasting success except among the Chinese. Religious affiliation and ethnic identity are still tautly interwoven.

The solid development of a weak germ: Protestantism in Timor

The Indonesian province of NTT is often divided into a northern and a southern section. Flores is the largest island of the northern section. Timor and Sumba are the largest islands of the southern sections. While Catholicism has become the dominant religion in Flores (with quite strong Muslim communities in Solor, Adonara and Alor), in Sumba and Timor it is Protestantism that has become the dominant tradition of Christianity, although with some larger minorities of Catholics in Sumba and a Catholic majority in the north-eastern

¹¹⁸ One long-serving pastor opines, "With few exceptions, pastors who have served in Flores are more sensitive to Catholic-Protestant relations wherever they are serving. On the other hand, it should be admitted that they often feel like they are 'coming home' when they move to a Protestant-majority area."

districts of West Timor, where the diocese of Atambua has an overwhelming Catholic majority. As was the case in Flores, also in Timor there was a first spread of Christianity in the sixteenth and seventeenth century, as sketched in chapter four and five.

The *Gereja Masehi Injili di Timor*, GMIT or Protestant Evangelical Church of Timor, is by far the largest Protestant church in the whole of NTT.¹¹⁹ Some of its features in Flores were already sketched above. It had in 2003 some 850,000 faithful against 173,000 for the major Sumbanese Protestant Church, GKS. The small islands of Rote and Sawu are important districts of this church that resulted from the Dutch domination since 1613. Rev. Matteus van den Broeck was in 1614 moved from Ambon to Solor and he was probably the first Protestant minister in this region. We saw in chapter five that the weak military and political position of the Dutch VOC did not really do much for the spread of Protestantism in Timor before the twentieth century.

A longer lasting and more successful preaching took place in the island of Rote in the 1740s and later. Christianity had started in Rote with the baptism of chief Poura Messa, raja of Thie, and his family in 1729. Poura Messa died soon after the baptism, but his son Benyamin Messa wanted to continue the spread of Christianity. He asked for teachers to be sent to Thie. Yohannes Senghaje and later Hendrik Hendriks, probably Ambonese, were sent. Thereupon a second chief (out of the 18) asked for baptism: the raja of Loleh, to whom was given the name of Zakarias Dihua. He was followed by the raja of Baa, Tudeka Lilo, and the raja of Lelain, Naho Dali. When a raja converted he prepared also the baptism of his family and village, and asked for a school to be opened.

In the district of Thie there were already four congregations in 1741, with 964 baptised members and 182 candidates for baptism. The Raja of Lole asked baptism for 700 people.¹²⁰ In 1760 there were already fifteen congregations in Rote with 5,870 members. The largest congregation was Thie (1,265 members), the smallest was Landu (54 members). 1,445 children went to school. People on Rote asked for an ordained minister, but the VOC could never send one. It was the school masters who led the congregations. The collective conversions resulted in a poor quality of Christianity because of the secular motivations

¹¹⁹ The word *Masehi* in the title is from the Arab *Masih*, a Quranic title for Jesus that is related to the Hebrew Messiah. It is like the word *Kristen* used quite exclusively for Protestants in contrast to Catholicism in Indonesian. Evangelical in Indonesian does not have the modern English conservative connotation, and is more akin to German 'evangelisch.'

¹²⁰ Fox 1977:106–109; Enklaar 1947:48. Dutch and Indonesian Reformed make a distinction between members who are only baptised and those who have (mostly at the age of 16–25) also confirmed their membership through a formal personal confession. In Indonesian they are *sidi*-members (from Arabic *shahid* for 'witness,' perhaps also from Sankrit *sidi* for 'full').

for the change of religion. This was clearly stated in 1828 by J.C. ter Linden, the first missionary of NZG in Rote.¹²¹

There are only a few hard facts that prove that Christianity was spread in Sawu at this period too. The minutes of the church council of Batavia show for 1756 that there were 600 people prepared to receive baptism. In 1760 five congregations in Sawu were mentioned with 826 members. If these notes are true, then nobody subsequently promoted Christianity for when Rev. W. Donselaar settled on Sawu in 1870 he had to start from zero.¹²² In Timor itself there was no real missionary work until the late 19th century. The only Timorese Christians lived in the castle of Kupang. Only in Rote there was a continuity of Christianity from the eighteenth century.

Also during the first two decades of the nineteenth century not much progress was made. Raffles is said to have established an Auxiliary Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Kupang but information about this body is very meagre.

NZG Missionaries in Timor and Rote (1819–1860) and Sawu (1872–1901)

NZG missionary R. le Bruyn was in 1819 the first minister to arrive in Kupang since 1775. He was nominated by the colonial officials to be the regular minister of Timor. He found the Christians in Timor in a desolate state and reported in 1820 that there was no full copy of the Bible available and that the school in Kupang only counted eight pupils, who received a very low quality of education. The church had been destroyed by an earthquake and had not yet been restored. In general the scattered Christians did not differ much from common pagans. Le Bruyn started to reform the congregation of Timor and with the help of Resident Hazaert, the church was restored in 1826.

Le Bruyn translated Dutch hymns (*tahlil*) and the Psalms into Malay and they were printed in 1825. In Kupang he established a branch of the Bible Society of the Indies that distributed Bibles and religious books. He published also simple sermons. Together with Resident Hazaert he established the Auxiliary Society for the Propagation of the Gospel. The first goal of this body was the erection and administration of schools. In 1824 there was a Dutch school in Kupang, besides a Malay school with Ambonese Lukas Pattinasarani as teacher. There was also a special school for children of slaves in Kupang.

In Babau, a centre of migrants from Rote who had constructed wet rice fields, 20 km east of Kupang, Le Bruyn started a new congregation. He also opened a school in Babau. The same happened in Oesapa, 10 km east from Kupang. Le Bruyn was a true rebuildier of the Protestant church of Kupang. He

¹²¹ Abineno 1978–I:104; Cooley 1976:11–32.

¹²² Abineno 1978–I:104; Müller-Krüger 1968:137.

died 21 May 1829 in Kupang where he was buried. After his death Johannes Coenraad ter Linden was moved from Rote to Kupang, while in 1830 NZG sent D. Douwes to look after the schools. Douwes left Kupang in 1832, Ter Linden died on 30 May 1833. Thereupon missionary Heijmering was moved from the small southwestern island of Leti (close to Kisar) to Kupang. He could extend the number of schools with new ones in Pariti, Usao and Ulio. In 1838 he could report a total of 2,000 pupils in Timor. Most of the settlements where the schools were found were inhabited by migrants from Rote. In 1840 a first school for Timorese children was opened in Ukabiti, soon followed by some more in Baun, Pola and Bakunase. The local chiefs had asked for these schools. Heijmering reported in 1841 that there were more than 300 Timorese children in these schools and he saw a good sign of progress for the spread of the Gospel in the fact that it was children of rajas who were in these schools.¹²³

The NZG continued to send missionaries: H. van der Wulp in 1839, W. Donselaar and J.D. Vermaassen in 1843. The latter, however, died in 1844. In 1847 the inspector of the NZG mission, L.J. van Rhijn, visited Kupang. He noticed that the majority of the 2,000 Christians were from Rote and that there was very little done for the original population. There were 29 schools with 520 pupils, but the overall quality of the congregation could not be praised. There was a feeling among NZG leaders that missionaries should better be sent to other parts of the archipelago. Some of the missionaries, especially Donselaar, protested against their relocation to other regions. Donselaar nevertheless was moved to Bonthain in South Sulawesi where he worked between 1852 and 1861 when he was allowed to return to Kupang, but in another function, as minister of the *Indische Kerk*. This was the end of the efforts of the NZG to missionise in Timor. The work in Kupang and other congregations was transferred in 1854 to the *Indische Kerk*, basically the church of the Europeans and Eurasians. The schools were taken over by the colonial administration. Heijmering was accepted as minister within the *Indische Kerk* and retired in 1859.

When Le Bruyn visited Rote, soon after he was appointed to Kupang in 1819, he found a very sad situation. The schools and congregation lacked discipline but Le Bruyn was convinced that Rote was open for the gospel. In 1825 eight new schools were opened, in Landu, Termanu, Baa, Dengka, Unala, Thie, Loleh and Talae. The teachers came from Ambon: Joseph Huteuli, Dominggus Sahertian, Johannes Matteus, Laurens Hans, Pieter Talahatu, Louis Ayal, Christoffel de Fretes, Willem Talahatu, Markus Hitiahubessi and Louis de Fretes. In 1827 Ter Linden was moved to Rote, where he worked only during one year before he was moved again to Kupang. He found the morality

¹²³ *Maandberigten NZG* 1841:198.

of the teachers very low and dismissed a number of them, whereupon many schools were closed down again.¹²⁴

As long as Ter Linden was minister of Kupang he never visited Rote. Only his successor Heijmering restarted the visits in 1833. He re-opened schools, like in Ringgouw, Upao and Bilba and in 1833 the number of pupils has risen again to 1,122. In 1839 F. Hartig, and in 1841 G. Noordhoff were nominated for Rote. The latter died within eight months, while Hartig was moved to Minahasa. Also other missionaries could not work for a longer period in Rote. The last missionary was withdrawn in 1851 and Rote also was surrendered to that large institution administered by the colonial government, the *Indische Kerk*.

The name of colonial official and Kupang Resident Isaac Esser, besides that of Rev. W. Donselaar, is connected to a successful mission in Sawu that started in the early 1870s. As Resident of Kupang, Isaac Esser opened a first school in 1862 and placed an Ambonese teacher, a member of the Manuhutu clan, in Sawu. He was followed in by S. MaE (1866) and W. Patti (1869). In this period the colonial administration also stationed a *controleur* in Sawu. The teachers and the colonial official had a decisive influence on the process of evangelisation in Sawu.

In 1869 there was a cholera-epidemic that killed two-thirds of the inhabitants of the island. This caused the survivors to accept Christianity. When Rev. Donselaar visited Sawu in 1870 he could baptise hundreds of people. He asked the NZG to send missionaries and the first to arrive was M. Teffer, son of the former Resident Teffer of Kupang.¹²⁵ He worked in Sawu until 1883 and was followed by several other missionaries. The ministers of Kupang supported this work in Sawu also. In periods when there was no missionary, they sent the assistant ministers of Kupang to visit the schools and the congregations. Finally the NZG was not happy with the development and in 1901 surrendered Sawu to the *Indische Kerk*. Once again, the last missionary, J.H. Letteboer, became an assistant minister in the *Indische Kerk*, and continued work in Sawu until 1903. Most of the teachers in the service of the NZG came from Ambon and Manado. There were in this early period two teachers from Sawu who became well known: Rudolf Meno Radja and Yakob Riwu Lobo.

The Indische Kerk in Timor, Rote and Alor (1860–1947) and in Sawu (1901–1947)

Initially in Timor it was not regular ministers, but (former) missionaries who lead the congregations of the *Indische Kerk* after it had taken over the

¹²⁴ *Maandberigten NZG* 1827 no. 7:120–124; Dicker 1964:20.

¹²⁵ At old age this remarkable man became a Catholic in Semarang, see chapter fourteen.

missionary congregations of the NZG. Heijmering and from 1867 until 1883 Donselaar were minister in Kupang, while Gossner missionary Fr. Pape (a teacher) became the minister of Babau until his return to Germany in 1869. Donselaar started a training programme for teachers in his house where, among others, Mesak Hendrik Pello was trained. He served later in the congregations of Babau (1873–1883) and Kupang (1884–1904). Another missionary who became assistant minister of Kupang was J.F. Niks, who in the 1870s built the great Protestant church that is still the pride of the congregation of Kupang. Because missionaries had no academic theological training they could not be nominated as full ministers. Niks worked in Timor until his death in 1904.

In 1907 a fully educated and ordained minister was nominated for Kupang, S.A. de Vries. He became the head of the *Indische Kerk* in the whole Residency of Kupang (including Sumba and Timor), but these functionaries never stayed longer than four years. In 1908 the *Indische Kerk* opened a new station, inland 50 km eastwards of Kupang, in Camplong, where F.A. van de Wetering started his work. It was a sign that evangelisation of the Timorese themselves should be taken seriously. In 1916 another station was opened in Kapan, some 150 km southeast from Kupang. Kapan would become the starting point for a true missionary activity in the southern section of Dutch Timor.

The great stimulator for the mission among Timorese was Pieter Middelkoop (1895–1973). Taking advantage of the education for missionaries provided in Oegstgeest, Middelkoop had learned proper Malay and soon after his arrival in Timor (1922) he was placed in Kapan where he did pioneering work in West-Timorese (Dawan), wrote down many oral texts, translated the New Testament and many hymns into Timorese and after independence, also, the full Old Testament. The poetic parts of the Bible were translated in the rhythmic ritual language that Middelkoop knew so well that he could recite long sections of the traditional Timorese ritual for the dead.¹²⁶ The hymn-book composed by Middelkoop, *Si Kniko Unu Ma Suni*, was still in use in the first decade of the twentieth-one century, in the traditional rural areas of Timor, where Timorese was still used in church services (in contrast to the urban congregations that preferred modern standard Indonesian). Middelkoop started the practice of group baptisms in the countryside of Timor. It was not unusual that he baptised more than 400 people in one ceremony. Kapan and Camplong became the main centres for the expansion of Christianity in inland Timor, with SoE as a third centre after the foundation of the theological college there in 1936. The period 1920–1940 was the time of quick nominal adherence to Christianity, after the pacification of the inland districts in the first two decades of the twentieth century. This development was greatly

¹²⁶ Swellengrebel 1978–II:222.

stimulated by the Flores-Timor agreement of 1913, already discussed above, that transferred all authority and finance for education in NTT to the missionary parties whether Catholic (in Flores or the north-eastern section of the Dutch section of Timor) or Protestant. In 1938 the Timorese section of the *Indische Kerk* counted 172,000 baptised.¹²⁷ This included the members in Sawu and Rote and other islands.

A similar development took place on the island of Rote. In 1860 the *Indische Kerk* took over the former missionaries Franz Pape and August Jackstein, both 'tent-making ministers' from the Gossner mission, and they became, as ministers of the *Indische Kerk*, government officials. The often interrupted history of the evangelisation since the 1730s had resulted in a nominally Christian community. Because of the presence of schools, many people migrated, becoming elsewhere government official, teachers, or simply seeking a living in agriculture. In Baa a college for the training of teachers was established in 1903 by Le Grand (STOVIL, *School tot Opleiding van Inlandsche Leraren*). It provided teachers and native ministers for the whole residency of NTT in the first decades of the twentieth century. The *Indische Kerk* gave much attention to the small island of Rote (1226 sq. km) that could be seen as its 'favoured child.' Because of the training school better qualified assistant ministers were sent to the island. One of these was Rev. I.E. de Vries who served in Baa between 1912 and 1920. Jeheskiel Sjoen was the first native assistant minister to be placed here in 1921. In 1922 there were 34 congregations in the island with 21,426 members. Most of the congregations were led by school teachers or lower level catechists.¹²⁸

Sawu, about one third the size of Rote, was handed over to the *Indische Kerk* in 1901 as mentioned above. It was, after that year, placed under supervision of the (assistant) ministers in Kupang or Rote. J.H. Tentua who was here *inlandsch leeraar* (native teacher) was given the authority to administer the sacraments, notwithstanding his low place on the scale of the pyramid of hierarchy in his church in the 1910s. But after his period of service had ended visiting assistant ministers from Rote regularly came to administer the sacraments in Sawu, until Abraham Haba Kore, a native from Sawu, was nominated as assistant minister. Haba Kore died in 1932 and was succeeded by a long row of native ministers.

In the twentieth century the *Indische Kerk* could extend its work to the northern islands of Alor, Pantar and Pura. Rev. J.F. Niks visited Alor in 1901 and could baptise Willem Hatsarani as one of the pioneer Protestants in the island. Growth of Christianity was strengthened with the nomination of

¹²⁷ Van Boetzelaer 1947:379.

¹²⁸ For the pyramid of the hierarchy in the rather bureaucratic *Indische Kerk* see also chapter ten.

Meulemans as *posthouder* or junior colonial official in Alor in 1910. In the early 1910s many people could be baptised and some teachers were sent from Rote to maintain the influence of Christianity there. In 1916 an assistant minister was placed in Kalabahi (Alor) who also could stimulate the development of education. Missionary A.N. Binkhuizen worked there between 1917 and 1922. He was succeeded by a native minister, I.L. Hehanusa. This was also for Alor a period of group baptisms. People had to promise to follow religious courses for two years, to throw away their idols and to follow the directions of the teacher. In the early 1930s Rev. A. Boeken Krüger could already report that, with the exception of the approximately 25% of Muslims, the whole population of Alor had accepted Christianity. In 1939 the statistics for Alor (2120 sq km, nearly twice the size of Rote) and Pantar (720 sq. km) showed 66,850 baptised. There were 30 schools with 2,552 pupils there. These numbers show that about one third of the Protestants of the *Indische Kerk* in NTT were found on these two rather small islands.

During the period of the *Indische Kerk* a spectacular growth of Christianity took place in Timor and surrounding islands. Above we have already stressed the two main reasons. Firstly, the 'pacification' or actual imposition of Dutch colonial rule that made travelling safer and more secure. Secondly, the Flores-Timor Agreement of 1913 and the subsequent spread of education through the Catholic and Protestant churches in the regions that were allotted to them. For the region of the *Indische Kerk* some special reasons must be added here. All personnel of the *Indische Kerk* was nominated and paid by the colonial state. This enlisted the loyalty of the whole bureaucracy for the spread of Christianity in this region. The government officially promoted Christianity and contained the spread of Islam. This is quite different from what happened in West Indonesia, like in Batakland, where colonial officials could not so overtly support Christianity. From the 1910s on the *Indische Kerk* spread Christianity in a more systematic and even aggressive way. The strict hierarchy was from that time lead by the Senior Minister (*pendeta ketua*) of Kupang who planned the whole strategy for his large district. At all levels more personnel became available for church and schools. The STOVIL of Baa, founded in 1903, moved to Kupang in 1926 and then to SoE (1936).

The Japanese period started for Timor on 26 January 1942 with an attack by aircraft on the plane that was used by Assistant-Resident Ch. Weidner and *Controleur* L. Goodhart to seek refuge. They died when their plane was hit. On 19 February the Japanese landed in Baulesa, south of Kupang. The foreign missionary personnel were put in detention camps and church property was confiscated by the Japanese. Many churches were transformed into government warehouses. Three Timorese ministers were killed by the Japanese: S. Dekuanan and L. Riwu were drowned in the Mutiara Street, close to Kalabahi on Alor, while Bernard Sau was killed in inland Timor, suspected of being a

Dutch spy. In this period a spiritual revival took place in Nunkolo, an isolated place in inland Timor. It started with a teacher and his wife. This movement could not develop fully because the leading figures in Timor set themselves firmly against it.¹²⁹

This period also brought steps in the direction of maturity of the church. Three districts (South Timor, SoE and Alor) established a governing body for the administration of their congregations. On 10 August 1943 for South Timor even something like an independent church was founded, *Badan Gereja Masehi Timor Selatani* (litt.: The Body of the Christian Church of South Timor). The Japanese administrator of the region attended its institution. Its chairman was N. Nisnoni, the raja of Kupang.

The Autonomous Protestant Church of East Timor: Gereja Masehi Injili Timor (GMIT), 1947–2000

After the capitulation of Japan the Dutch ministers returned: A. van Alphen, Pieter Middelkoop, Rev. Mollema, Rev. Roti and Rev. Durkstra. The STOVIL was reopened in SoE in 1946. Steps towards autonomy were soon taken: on 31 October 1947 the first synod meeting took place. The congregation in NTT became an autonomous church within the *Indische Kerk*. Rev. E. Durkstra became chairman of the synod with the Timorese Rev. E. Tokoh¹³⁰ as its secretary. The GMIT was divided into six *classes* or districts: Kupang, Camplong, SoE, Alor-Pantar, Rote and Sawu. The congregations outside these regions (the town of Kupang, Flores, Sumbawa) were given a special status.

This process towards autonomy had already begun in 1935 with the creation of district councils as advisory boards to the assistant minister of that district. In 1938 a mixed Dutch-Indonesian board for the whole residency advisory council had started, which discussed a new church order. This development was not yet finished when the Japanese invasion took place. GMIT was the last missionary section of the *Indische Kerk* to receive its autonomy, because Minahasa (1934) and the Moluccas (1935) had preceded it. Nationalism had reached Timor also in the 1920s and 1930s. One of the reasons for the closure of the STOVIL in Kupang in 1931 was that its students showed a strong nationalist spirit and considered the school directors as just instruments of Dutch colonialism. The ministers in Timor heard the example of their colleagues and after the Japanese period and the Indonesian declaration of independence the development no longer could be halted.

¹²⁹ A detailed history of the Nunkolo revival in Middelkoop 1982:186–217.

¹³⁰ Classis is the Presbytery in the English speaking Reformed and Presbyterian church order. It brings together some 10–20 local congregations.

The position of E. Durkstra as chairman of the synod proved that the Dutch ministers were not yet prepared to initiate a full transfer of responsibility, but in 1950 the next chairman was Timorese Johannes Ludwig Chrisostomus Abineno who led GMIT until 1960.¹³¹

The Timorese Protestant Church was financed by the colonial and later the Indonesian government until August 1950 when President Soekarno declared the separation of state and religion. The GMIT received a lump sum of two million rupiah as a buffer to arrange its own finances. This money had run out in 1955 and a severe financial crisis arose, that lasted until the economic recovery of the country in the 1970s. Although salaries were often not paid, the church workers continued to fulfil their duties. In order to find new finances the GMIT encouraged gifts, payment of 10% of income, promises and other means.

The rapid development of the church had also caused a shortage of qualified workers. As a result evangelists with only a little training were ordained as ministers. In 1949 in SoE a school for leaders of congregations was opened, that provided two years of training after primary school. This apparently was not enough for a minister in a modern congregation. In 1957 this school was upgraded to become a Lower Theological School with a curriculum of five years. In 1962 this school was moved to Tarus, close to Kupang, and it closed in 1975 following the opening in 1971 of the ecumenical school, a project of GMIT and GKS in Kupang. This school developed into the full theological seminary and is now the Faculty of Theology of the Artha Wacana Christian University.

The number of GMIT members rose to 253,501 in 1953 and 517,779 in 1971. This quick growth is not only related to the expansion of the population but also to the increase of Christians, especially after the political turmoil of 1965. As in other places, also in Timor there were many members of the church and even some ministers who were members of the Communist Party. After the banning of the Communist Party it was strongly urged that all Indonesian citizens apply for membership of one of the five recognised religions. This increased the willingness of many people to become members of GMIT or another Christian denomination.

The rise in number of Christian baptisms had a special history in Timor where a high-spirited revival took place in this period starting from the town of SoE. From mid-1963 on there was a long drought that increased the tense and nervous condition of the people. From mid-1964 on a teacher of Rotenese descent, Johannes Ratuwalu, started to preach in public that people should convert and speak aloud their confession of sin. Ratuwalu claimed that he had

¹³¹ For a broader picture of Abineno as a pastor and theologian see chapter sixteen.

received his first vision to preach the Gospel and heal the sick on 10 April 1961. He later approached the Synod of GMIT and this body recognised him on 8 July 1864 as a true preacher. He was joined in early 1965 by a pastor of GMIT in SoE. In July 1965 Detmar Scheunemann, a lecturer from the Institut Injil Indonesia, came to preach in Timor with a group of his students (on this evangelical institute, established in 1960 by Petrus Octavianus, see also chapter eighteen). A quite important figure in this revival was also Ms. Hennie Tunli'u who had been reared in the house of Rev. Pieter Middelkoop in SoE and later educated at the Christian University of Salatiga. She was, in 1965, in SoE on vacation and later joined Scheunemann in Batu. This revival lasted from 1965 until the early 1970s, but it was most active until 1967. There was much talk about miracles like healing of sick, dead who had risen, water changing into wine, visions seen by people and more of these exceptional gifts. People confessed their sins without shame or fear. People were stimulated to share their conversion, guided by the Holy Spirit. Children left their school, government officials left their job in order to go preaching under inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Some went to Sumba, Flores and even as far as Papua, Java and Sumatera.¹³²

There was a heated debate within the GMIT leadership about the policy to be taken in this case of a revival that had started from the bottom up and had strong links with the Evangelicals of Batu, in East Java. Finally many people saw that the revival met a very broad response, that people started to do more Bible reading and that the increase in members was very spectacular. Therefore the movement was welcomed within the structures of the GMIT.

The early 1970s were again difficult years for GMIT that experienced a change of leadership. The 'Abineno generation,' educated at the theological school of Jakarta, were taking the place of the older generation that had only an education at the lower theological schools of Rote and Timor. This made a special synod in 1975 necessary, but since then GMIT could see a more stable development, concentrated on consolidation of a majority church.

Education continued to be the major social contribution of this church, although the GMIT was no longer the sole player in this field as had been the case between 1913 and 1942 under a contract with the colonial government. In 2004 the GMIT foundation for Protestant education had the responsibility for 102 kindergartens, 340 primary schools, 30 junior, 9 senior high schools, and two vocational schools. But more and more education is seen as the first responsibility of the government and church activities as good complimentary enrichment. The same can be said of health care and development aid. In the 1950s GMIT started cooperation with American Mennonites for agricultural

¹³² Cooley 1976:194–220.

training and development. These activities were continued with many other partners after 1967, when GMIT started an NGO with the name of *Alfa Omega Foundation*. It is active to the present and has developed along the lines of similar institutions. In the 1990s it was a major critical voice against the corruption of the New Order Government. In 2000 it cooperated with the Catholic Archdiocese of Greater Kupang to constrain Muslim-Christian conflicts and to channel the rising problems between refugees from East Timor and the poor population of the Western, Indonesian section of the island. In the field of health education special action was taken in the island of Alor, where in 1971 a small hospital was erected. This foundation later was surrendered to the government, as has happened with more initiatives in this field, because development aid is usually given as a temporary project and continuation is often difficult. But in the case of the two orphanages of GMIT in Kupang and Oeba, there is still a guarantee that this work will go on.

For the first decade of the 21st century GMIT has to face the following challenges as heritage from its past: Firstly, because of the practice of the *Indische Kerk* first to administer baptism and to provide Christian education later, the knowledge of Christianity is often not very accurate. Group baptisms are not the best road to a vivid and well-instructed community. Many practices of paganism still continue. Baptism is often seen as a ticket to enter heaven; bread and wine at the Lord's Table are seen as magical and healing food. Christianity has become the majority religion in NTT, but still much education and instruction has to be given. Secondly, in south Timor the hegemony of GMIT has become weaker. Through the many internal migrations within modern Indonesia many people from the majority Muslim regions of the country have settled in Timor. Most of them are Javanese or Buginese and Makassarese from South Sulawesi. Besides, within Christianity there is a strong movement towards the more emotional Evangelical and Charismatic movements and streams, away from GMIT that is often considered as rather dry and bureaucratic. Thirdly, we have seen in this section that there were several revivals in Timor, especially in the periods 1916–1920 and 1965–1970. On a less spectacular scale this movement continues. There are within GMIT many prayer groups (*persekutuan doa*) that hold special meetings. Most of their members remain GMIT member and join the regular activities of this church as well, but there is still the risk that they may break away from the main church, because many of their activities are not supervised or directed by ordained ministers. Fourthly, the rise of Evangelical and Pentecostal streams has also influenced the confession of the church itself. It is felt that its theology has become less outspoken. Fifthly, GMIT members nowadays have a quite diverse ethnic, traditional and language background. There is a wish that GMIT should be divided further along ethnic and language lines, but up till now this has been rejected by GMIT leadership.

*Restoration, expansion and consolidation in the 'catholic'
section of Timor*

The Indonesian half of the island of Timor is divided in three southern districts that have an overwhelmingly Protestant GMIT majority and two northern districts with an enormously Catholic majority (in 2000: 93.5% out of a population of 416,039, meaning 389,364 Catholics in the diocese of Atambua).¹³³ The division between the two denominations has its cause in the Portuguese past. The present diocese of Atambua observes the year 1556 as the beginning of Christianity. This history has been described in chapter four. In the second half of the nineteenth century there were only little remnants of this rather tumultuous past, but it remained a cherished heritage that deeply influenced the self-understanding of these Christians.

The Dutch missionaries of Larantuka already in the early 1860s heard messages about old and new aspects of Catholicism in the sections of Dutch colonial Timor that were close to the Portuguese territory. Some Dutch priests had paid visits to the Portuguese capital of Dili. Atapupu, the small harbour town on Dutch territory, was not only a permanent stop for the Dutch steamers that travelled to Dili, but also it had a Catholic raja. The first missionary to visit the inland region in 1879 was the Jesuit Jacob Kraaijvanger. Bishop Claessens reported in 1881 about his findings in a request to start a permanent mission post in Atapupu:

It became clear to the visiting priest that the natives of these areas still foster the memory that their ancestors were Christian. Crosses, rosaries and other objects of the Roman Catholic liturgy, which are conserved with great care, confirm this tradition. . . . It is highly desirable that a minister should settle in a realm whose chiefs and population are so inclined to embrace Christianity. This is very promising both for the religion as well as to the government. The Christian religion brings loyalty to the government, because people will realise that this government is the major guarantee for civilisation, law and order, and prosperity.¹³⁴

In a later period, when the missionaries had learned Tettum and could communicate better with the population, it turned out that there were old stories and myths that had incorporated several Christian elements into common Timorese tradition. The most impressive was a hymn in the sacred liturgical language of Timor that uses the method of 'speaking in pairs' in a way similar to old Hebrew poetry of the Psalms. A hymn on the cross was noted down with the help of local translators by SVD anthropologist B. Vroklage in 1938,

¹³³ Hasto Rosariyanto 2001:110.

¹³⁴ Steenbrink 2003-I:174.

O, parents and ancestors, our fathers and our lords
 Lo, here are your loyal children, your faithful grandchildren!
 Noble ancestor Bau Taë, Lord of Halimama
 Thee we follow, thou preceded us.
 Like you, we make the cross; we erect it as you once did.
 The noble Lord Bau Taë, Lord of Halimama
 Travelled comfortably and arrived safe in Larantuka.
 Here he made with skilled hands, with competence,
 His cross called Korloli or Bau Saë.
 When the vertical beam was cut and hewn,
 He made the horizontal beam and cut ornamentation in the lower parts.
 The horizontal beam fitted in the hole of the vertical one, was fixed.
 He took the cross on his shoulder, he bore it
 To Baurato, to Baulili, where he was born.
 He brought it to this mighty house, this lofty house.
 Then he entered this mighty house, this lofty house,
 To pay offerings in the manner and custom of his ancestors.
 A great pig, a pig with long tusks,
 As well as a castrated or uncastrated buffalo, a heavy one he took,
 The scrutiny of the liver was promising, the veins ran right.
 In this way the sacrifice was ended, so it was performed.
 At the central house Babulu or Leo Loro
 Its cross, named Korloli or Bau Saë,
 Was planted and erected propitiously.
 Now the cross stands there and shows off
 Together with the royal house, the precious house.
 They fit together, they belong together.
 In this house the dynasty of the Raja found its beginning and origin.
 Here were his roots, from here he came.
 They fit together, they belong together, the house and the cross.
 They are both equally good, equal in value.
 All details are attended, everything is in order.¹³⁵

According to the researcher Vroklage this use of the cross could not be seen as the result of modern-day evangelisation, which had not yet reached the areas of his inquiries. "I suppose that the Portuguese missionaries frequently used the cross as a symbol of salvation and protection against evil."¹³⁶ Very few advocates of inculturation and very few contextual theologians will accept this ritual text of the cross as an exemplary or even legitimate case of appropriation of the traditional Christian symbolism; nevertheless this is the course the religious development of the population of Central Timor took.

The island of Timor is linguistically divided in a Tetun (in former times also called *Belu* or *Tetum*) speaking northeastern and a *Dawan*-speaking southwestern section. The dividing line does not coincide with the boundary

¹³⁵ Vroklage 1949:37–41.

¹³⁶ Vroklage 1940:21:229.

between the Indonesian and former Portuguese, now independent Timor Leste territory. It is in the middle of the Indonesian part of the island and can be located some 50 km west of the line Besikama-Halilulik-Atapapu. This means that it runs through the 'Catholic' part of Indonesian Timor. This means that the former Portuguese enclave of Oikusi is Dawan-speaking, as also the region of Maubesi and Noemuti. Protestantism arrived here from the southwest, Catholicism from the northwest. In 1916 the Dutch colonial government signed a last treaty with the Portuguese colonial power, defining the central boundaries and also that of the enclave of Oikusi. The status of Noemuti, now finally under Dutch control, became disputed between Protestants and Catholics. Prefect Noyen even made comparisons between the Catholics of Larantuka in 1859 and later where the Dutch Catholic clergy was an element to soothe the population with the transfer of power. He emphasised that the children of the raja of Noemuti had received their education in Dili with the clergy and one daughter even had gone to Macao together with the Catholic nuns who were chased from Portuguese Timor after the 1910 revolution in Portugal where an anti-religious government has taken the lead. In a letter to the governor general, sent through the intermediary of the Kupang resident, Noyen wrote in late 1915 with reference to the special permit for missionary work under article 123 of the Constitution of the East Indies and the factual ban of double mission for Protestants and Catholics in one region,

In former times the Catholic clergy went to that region and there is already a considerable number of Catholics. I have to remind Your Excellency, that we have to go to Noemuti to serve the Catholic faithful, whatever may be the final decision. This regular religious service is always permitted and not depending upon art. 123 of the Colonial Constitution. Such a situation would be undesirable for us and for a possible future Protestant mission working in this region. I now already wish to declare that the parents will make use of their right to withdraw their children from religious education, if schools would be erected by the Protestant mission. It is known that the people of Noemuti are really attached to their faith, although not really active in the regular practice of several aspects of Catholicism because of certain circumstances.¹³⁷

The outcome of this process was that the boundary between Catholic and Protestant mission was in the midst of the Dawan-speaking population, some 20 km west of Noemuti.

A quite spectacular remnant of the 'Old Catholicism' in this region was the discovery of the cave of Bitaoni, near Maubesi. During their first field trip in this region, the SVD priests Noyen and Verstraelen were led to this place by the local people. It was a place with two altars, a crucifix, a statue of

¹³⁷ Apostolic Prefect Petrus Noyen SVD to Governor General Idenburg, 1917. See Steenbrink 2007-II:170 and Document 18.

Mary and some candlesticks. People told them that they celebrated Easter in March or April, after the harvest at the end of the rainy season. Sometimes people had come from here to the priests of Atapupu to ask the precise date of Easter for that year. On the Wednesday before Easter the cave was decorated with banana leaves. On Maundy Thursday the raja with his chiefs would come to pray in the cave. On Good Friday and Saturday people were not allowed to wear head scarves, a sign of grief in memory of the “death of God. . . . On Easter, however, there is a merry celebration with buffaloes and pigs slaughtered, partially offered to the crucifix, but mostly eaten with dancing and drinking of gin.” Noyen noted that the raja asked to send a priest, to instruct the population better about the religion.¹³⁸ The raja of Insana, the district of the cave of Bitaoni, told that he was baptised at the age of 12 by an old woman.¹³⁹ In this area the station of Oilolok was opened in the late 1920s. At 6 km distance the cave of Bitaoni was then developed as a place of pilgrimage for St. Mary, with 15 August as the most important day. The celebrations of Easter were transferred to the proper church of Oilolok. The SVD priests had much less respect for the old Portuguese Catholic remnants than the Jesuits in the previous period.

Not only older memories were found. Also new arrivals from the Portuguese section of Timor influenced the development of Catholicism. The boundary between the Dutch possessions and the Portuguese colony was not controlled very strictly and at some places it was even not always properly defined. At the great revolt of 1912 the government buildings in Dili were looted by the resistance, but later the insurgents were severely hit by the army. Many were killed or imprisoned, but many also sought refuge in the Dutch section of the island. Quite a few of them had been educated at a mission school and baptised. Piet Noyen, the first SVD missionary to work in this region after the Jesuits had left in 1912, doubted whether they would be of any use for the Dutch Catholic mission in this region.

As in Flores, it was not the memory of a Christian past, mostly among the elite and chiefs, but it were the schools built in new villages, that was the real start of the spectacular increase of Catholics. In 1912 the statistics only could show 2,554 Catholics here, while it showed there were some 40,000 in 1940. They were first directed from the mission centre Lahurus, then Halilulik (from 1917), but finally the mission also followed the colonial government that established the administrative town of Atambua from zero in the mid-1910s. Only in 1935 did the Catholics move to this new centre.

¹³⁸ Steenbrink 2007-II:164–165.

¹³⁹ Vroklage 1937:109–114.

Until 1936 this region was under the administration of the Apostolic Vicar of Ende. In 1936 Jacob Pesser (1896–1961) was nominated the first Vicar Apostolic of Atambua. He was succeeded by Theodorus van den Tillaart (1961–1985) and Anton Pain Ratu (1982–2007). In 1967 the Archdiocese of Kupang was separated from Atambua: this is the diocese for the overwhelmingly GMIT territory. In 2002 out of the total population of Southwestern Timor and attached islands (total population 1,187,912) only some 10% were Catholic, much less than the 93.5% for the Atambua diocese. The colonial policy of double mission has still its effects on the present division of Christian denominations in Indonesia.

The Catholic Timor mission experienced a tremendous increase in the number of baptised in the period 1920–1940, related to the exclusive control over education in that period, as in other regions of NTT. In the 1910s the mission had to rely on scores of Minahasan Catholic teachers who were sent from Woloan by educator-priest Anthonius van Velsen. The six first arrivals of 1913 are still honoured in Timor: Arnold Wanget, Yafet Tinangon, Aris Makalo, Albert Nangung, Osef Weweng and Z. Makalo. They are seen as the Indonesian missionaries who joined this educational endeavour beside the major Timorese teacher, Joseph Atok Serani, who was instrumental in finding the first Catholic rajas in inland Timor in the early 1880s. Atok Serani was taken to Larantuka for further education. He was the founder of an important Catholic ‘dynasty’ of teachers and later also priests.¹⁴⁰

For the second half of the twentieth century there was first a process of consolidation. Within the new Indonesian Republic Catholicism in the Atambua diocese behaved somewhat like in Flores: a strong majority religion with a firm position in various sectors of society, especially in education and health care, but also in agricultural development. There were never such grand development plans in Timor as were designed in the 1960s for the cooperation between western governments and Catholicism in Flores. Still, bishops Van den Tillaart and Pain Ratu have been strong promoters of a Catholic involvement in social and economic development. Nearly simultaneous with the age of development, this region was influenced by the Indonesian occupation of East Timor in 1975 and the cruel oppression of all opposition in that region until the referendum of 30 August 1999 that was the beginning of independence for Timor Leste.

As in Flores, also in this Catholic region there were many cases of true or only imagined desecration of the host since the early 1980s. There is some kind of hysteria, a mixture of a strong sense of sacredness attached to the Eucharist and the host, as well as the strong feeling of separate existence of

¹⁴⁰ Herman Lalawar in: Muskens 1974–IIIb:1294.

the various religious communities. As in Flores the fear of desecration of the host increased tensions between the religious communities, in the Atambua region more between Catholics and Protestants than between Muslims and Christians. In the late 1990s Muslim-Christian tensions occurred mostly in the town of Kupang and on the southwestern coast.

The unequal fight between traditional religion and Christianity in Sumba

The island of Sumba is one of the three or four larger islands of NTT (besides Timor and Flores, and sometimes including Alor). Since 1958 Sumba has been divided into two regencies (*kabupaten*), East Sumba with the capital of Waingapu and West Sumba with Waikabubak as its capital. In 1950, when Indonesia was formally recognised as an independent state, Sumba was part of the province of the Lesser Sunda Islands, with 16 semi-independent feudal kingdoms. The last remnants of the feudal structure, still maintained by colonialism, were abolished in 1954.

With a surface of 11,152 sq. km Sumba is about double the size of Bali. It had in 2000 two airports, Mauhau (the oldest one and already built in the colonial period) in the east, and Tambolaka for West Sumba. The capital of East Sumba, Waingapu is also its main harbour. For West Sumba a good natural harbour is more difficult to find, but that of Waikelo is the best developed.

In history the most important product of Sumba was its sandalwood (*Cendana*) that could be found in large quantity until the end of the eighteenth century, but at that time the island was already barren, because most trees were cut. Since then the major export of the island had been cattle for meat consumption and the small but strong and tough horses, that are also known as sandalwood horses, a name given by Samuel Roos, first colonial *controleur* in 1866.

There is one Sumbanese language with a number of different dialects, although there is more homogeneity in East Sumba, where the Kambera dialect is spoken. In West Sumba the dominating dialect is Wajjewa, after the largest and most populated district, but there are several other dialects. Protestant missionary and linguist Dr. L. Onvlee therefore made translations of the bible in Wajjewa and Kambera (published between 1938 and the 1970s).

Traditional religion in Sumba is called Marapu, after their name for the High God. The proper name of this highest God is not known to common people. He or she has created heaven and earth and everything. This God knows and hears everything, forgives and loves, and does justice. In daily life, however, this High God is not so much venerated, because the daily contact is with the spirits of the ancestors. For the veneration of the Marapu special pillars of

adoration have been built. These stone pillars (or *menhirs*) can be found in the dry and wet rice-fields, in the villages, along the coast and in other places.¹⁴¹ Sumbanese people, as in many traditional cultures, do not accept a separation of religion and local traditions. Implementation of traditional directions is believed to be the best way to a happy life, here and in the hereafter. Therefore Sumbanese are very strongly attached to their old traditions, especially to those related to marriage and burials. They do not so much care about being called “people without religion” as being labelled “people without a proper traditional culture or adat.” This has been a great hindrance for the spread of Christianity in Sumba, which is one of the few regions of Indonesia where there is still a rather significant number of people adhering to traditional religion. At the 1970 Indonesian census NTT had by far the highest number of ‘others’ (i.e. besides the ‘Big Five’ of Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Protestantism, Catholicism): one third or 33%, while South Kalimantan had at that time 28% of ‘others’, Riau 13%, East Kalimantan 3%, and all other provinces a negligible amount. Probably on the basis of these numbers the Catholic church in 2000 estimated roughly that in Sumba the number of all kinds of Protestants was about 40%, Marapu 35%, Catholics 20% and 5% for the rest. The official census for 2000, however, saw a drastic reduction in the number of ‘others’ to 3.8% for the whole province of NTT, still by far the highest number for the whole of Indonesia.¹⁴² The influence of traditional religions is not only a matter of numbers. We will see below that in all Christian denominations there are still many influences from traditional religions. Therefore we should also take into consideration the reality of double or even multiple religious identities. It is without doubt that the Marapu are in a weak position: whatever may be the outcome of the struggle for souls, it is an unequal fight for traditional religion even when it is as tenacious as in Sumba.

There are few Hindus and Buddhists in the island of Sumba and nearly all of them are migrants from other regions. Christianity is spread in various denominations with the *Gereja Kristen Sumba*, GKS or (Protestant) Christian Church of Sumba as the largest. This church is called the *Gereja Besar* or Great Church. Therefore in this section most attention will be given to this church.

In Sumba people are divided along three social classes: a feudal class, free people and slaves. The raja and the nobility were and in many cases still are the ruling class. They owned the cattle and the slaves. They were rich and practised polygamy. The middle class or free people were sometimes also rich and led a polygamous life. We will see below that polygamy has been an

¹⁴¹ Wellem 2004:41–54.

¹⁴² Hasto Rosariyanto 2000:135–136; Suryadinata 2003:136.

important issue in the GKS. In the countryside this division of society into three classes still plays an important role.

Sumbanese and outsiders: background for the beginnings of Christianity

Western colonisers were not the first outsiders to come to the island of Sumba. They were preceded by Sawunese, Bimanese, Endenese and Chinese. Most of these migrants are found on the northern coast of the island.

There are genealogical bonds between people of Sumba and those of the small island of Sawu. According to a myth of origin, they come from two ancestors, Hawu Meha and Humba Meha. Hawu Meha gave birth to the Sawunese who initially lived in the island of Sumba but later migrated to the small (461 sq. km) island of Sawu, between Sumba and Timor. The offspring of Humba Meha remained in Sumba. Sawunese were already soldiers in the army of the Dutch East India Company, VOC, before 1800. They were placed in Sumba in order to prevent the slave trade by the Endenese of Flores. The closest ties are between Sawu and the western coastal regions of Sumba, Mangili and Wajelu. In 1848 there was a sudden great migration from Sawu to this region. The newcomers integrated into the Sumbanese society through marriage. In the late nineteenth century the colonial government organised massive migrations from Sawu to the north coast, Kambaniru and Melolo, but this latter group did not really merge with the Sumbanese people. They established settlements of their own, and they were used by the coloniser to fight against the traditional rulers of Sumba, such as in the Lambanapu War of 1901. Most of them lived in settlements on the north coast and some also in West Sumba. Most of them, also, were already Christian before they migrated to Sumba and now the Sawunese are all Protestants. Many congregations of the GKS in East Timor are pure Sawunese communities.

In the seventeenth century the power of the Sultan of Bima reached as far as the island of Sumba. Therefore a number of Bimanese still live on the west coast and in the western hills of Waikabubak. Most of them are traders and fishers. The Endenese originate from Flores. Many of them married Sumbanese women and they live on the north coast of Sumba. Like the Bimanese, all Endenese are Muslim.

It is difficult to determine when the Chinese arrived in Sumba, but they must have been there for a very long time. This can be proven through archeological findings of very old Chinese ceramics in Sumba. The Chinese usually stay in the larger towns as traders and most of them are Christian.

There have been some famous Arabs in Sumba. One of the first must have been Sharif Abdurrachman bin Abubakar Algadrie who was the official representative (*posthoulder*) of the Dutch colonial government in Sumba in 1843. After him many other Arabs settled in towns in Sumba as traders. All of them

are Muslim. Finally, members of nearly all the ethnic groups of Indonesia have settled in this island as traders or government officials. These groups have made Sumba a heterogeneous society at least in some regions.

The relation of Sumbanese people with the West began with the Portuguese and the Dutch. The Portuguese built a fortification in Tidas, on the south coast, but they had no frequent contact with the population. In 1750 a first formal contact with the Dutch resulted in an oral contract between Daniel van den Burgh, *opperhoofd* of the VOC in Kupang and eight chiefs of Sumba who formally recognised the Dutch trading company and promised that they would sell the products of their land exclusively to the VOC. In practice, however, the rajas of Sumba did not worry about this pledge. In 1769 the first VOC official, J.J. van Nijmegen, was posted in Mangili, but this did not really increase the interest of the VOC in Sumba.

Dutch interest was only resumed in 1866 with the placement of a *controleur*, Samuel Roos in Sumba (1866–1873). In 1875 Sumba became a district of the Residency of Kupang, with Waingapu as its capital. After the pacification of the first decade of the twentieth century there was an Assistant Resident in Waingapu and further divisions of the Sumba territory followed, with more colonial officials appointed. Karuni became the capital for North West Sumba, Waikabubak for South West Sumba. Central and East Sumba then became united in the district of East Sumba with Waingapu as capital. This division into various subdistricts also had its effect on the spread of Christianity because it was during the more intensive colonial period that the spread of this new religion started.

In 1942 the Sumbanese made contact with the Japanese army who arrived in Waingapu on 14 May 1942 under S. Nagata. On 8 November 1945 the Japanese surrendered to the allied forces of NICA. The memory of the Japanese is that of a very cruel time, where they had to do much forced labour in order to build fortifications, roads and airstrips. Many women were brutally raped by Japanese soldiers. After World War II the Dutch returned. Although the political ties were cut off in 1950, religious relations continued until 1990. Since then also many Western tourists and researchers have arrived, to start more secular relations with Sumbanese people.

*Christianity restrained in the circle of Sawunese Christians (1876–1912);
Protestant and Catholic failures*

Christianity was not something altogether new for Sumbanese people. They knew that the Dutch colonisers were Christian. They also knew the Sawunese migrants who moved under compulsion around the 1870s. These Sawunese were transported by Isaac Esser, former Resident of Timor (1862–1864), as a method of evangelisation and also in order to improve their income. Esser

was very concerned to see an end to the continuing state of war, theft of cattle and killing of people in Sumba. He assumed that the Sumbanese were people without culture. They had to become subjugated to colonial society and brought into a proper culture. The only way in that direction was by the process of converting them to Christianity. The Gospel would make them people with a culture.

Most of the Sawunese migrants were Christians. They settled in two places, in Kambaniru (close to northern Waingapu) and Melolo in the east of the island, where they were looked after by the missionary of Sawu who, in 1877, also appointed two teachers, Eduard Thenau for Kambaniru and David Hutuhuli for Melolo. The teachers were not sent to evangelise the Sumbanese but to serve the Sawunese in Sumba. In that period, the only Sumbanese who wanted to become Christian were run-away slaves who sought protection in the Sawunese villages.

The religious isolation of the Sawunese on Sumba also had a social and political impact. The Sawunese were not put under the authority of the Sumbanese chiefs, but under their own raja, who as an assistant raja represented the chief of Sawu. They also followed the traditional custom of Sawu and its culture. They formed a colony, even a ghetto, isolated and separated from the people of Sumba.

Isaac Esser also directly contacted the missionary organizations in the Netherlands, to start a mission in Sumba. This resulted in the sending of the first and only missionary by the NGZV, *Nederlands Gereformeerde Zendingsvereniging*, J.J. van Alphen who arrived in Sumba in 1881. He did not work among the Sawunese but approached the Sumbanese, but, because of the disorderly situation in Sumba, Van Alphen stayed in the village of the Sawunese. The Sumbanese chiefs showed an unfriendly attitude towards this foreigner who arrived with a foreign religion that would destroy their social structure and their old traditions. Only the chief of Melolo noticed the friendly attitude of the missionary and through him Van Alphen was able to make contact with some Sumbanese. But he was rather disappointed to hear that the Sumbanese were not interested in the Gospel or any message of salvation. They asked only for medicine, food, the sirih drug and similar needs and did not express to him their spiritual needs. Van Alphen was struck with tragic disasters: his wife died after giving birth to her first child, and Van Alphen caught malaria and in consequence left Sumba after two years, to seek recovery in Java (1883). He remarried in Java and in 1885 came back, no longer as a NGZV missionary because that society had concentrated on Central Java. He now came for the ZCGK, the Christian Reformed Church. Also the two existing posts in Kambaniru and Melolo were put under the authority of this orthodox Reformed mission.

After his return to Sumba, Van Alphen noticed that the chief of Laura in West Sumba was open for the Gospel. He travelled to that place, and made an agreement with the raja that he would open a missionary post in that region. But transport between the various places on the northwestern and northeastern coast was very difficult, over land as well as by sea. Van Alphen fell sick again and sought recovery in Java for a second time. In this period the Catholics in East Flores (Larantuka) and Central Timor (Atapupu) had heard about possibilities in Sumba. They were stimulated by negotiations between the apostolic vicar in Batavia and the governor general about new openings. These discussions were quite far removed from the local reality in far away Sumba and on 24 June 1888 Governor General Van Rees permitted the Catholics to start a mission in West Sumba. The Jesuit priest, Bernard Schweitz, arrived in Laura in April 1889, together with a Dutch lay brother and seven young men from Larantuka, who would build the mission station and work as teachers. In August the baptismal books already recorded 758 baptisms of children below the age of seven years, who were baptised under promise of the chiefs of Laura that they would be educated as Catholics.

After this promising start the Catholic mission also experienced many difficulties. Communications with other parts of the islands, let alone of the archipelago, proved to be very troublesome and expensive. There was a steady but very slow development. The Jesuit priest Anton van der Velden did linguistic work and compiled a grammar of Sumbanese as spoken in Laura. The number of children in school slowly rose, but all of a sudden, in 1898, the decision was taken in Batavia that this Catholic mission was a failure, that it was too expensive and the missionaries were withdrawn. Some twenty Sumbanese boys accompanied the priest Van der Velden to Timor and later to Larantuka, to finish their primary schooling. The 1897 annual statistics of the Catholic mission mentioned 922 Catholics for Laura. In later statistics the Catholics in Sumba were not mentioned, until the return of the clergy in 1929.

Van Alphen, the unlucky Protestant missionary, arrived for a third time in Sumba to work in the Sawunese village of Kambaniru, between 1889 and 1893. In September 1893 he was dismissed from the mission as unfit to do this job. He challenged this dismissal and a long legal process followed, lasting until 1925. But, in 1905 Van Alphen's name was cleared by the synod of his church in the Netherlands. He never returned to the mission.¹⁴³ In 1889 the ZCGK sent a second missionary, Willem Pos, to Sumba, for the post of Melolo. Pos opened a clinic and a school in Mangili, with an Ambonese and also Titus Djina, a Sumbanese, as teachers. This Titus also made the first

¹⁴³ Van den End 1987:5.

translations in Sawunese, of the Ten Commandments, Our Father, and similar texts, but the school was set on fire during one of the many local conflicts. A third missionary, C. de Bruijn, was sent to work more specifically among the Sumbanese, but in his long period of duty (1892–1927) he also concentrated on the Sawunese in Kambaniru.

The last decades of the nineteenth century were a period of turmoil and schism in the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands. This caused a regrouping of missionary societies, the outcome of which was a strong congregationalist emphasis on the organization of the mission. The island of Sumba was entrusted to three northern districts (*classes*) of the Reformed Churches of the Netherlands (the plural churches was chosen to accentuate that reference was not to the national church, but the local congregation of the true church). They sent, as ZGKN, Douwe Klaas Wielenga to Sumba after his study of theology and some additional training in practical medicine, Malay and Sumbanese. Wielenga arrived in Sumba in 1904, and stayed for some time in Kambaniru. From here he opted for Payeti as a truly Sumbanese settlement. He opened a medical clinic and built his own house as a missionary post among the Sumbanese. The house was burnt down before it was finished. But Wielenga continued his efforts and moved to Payeti on 30 September 1907, leaving the circle of Sawunese that had for so long restrained the spread of Christianity to minister to proper Sumbanese.

Wielenga's strategy focused on health care and education. He sought good contact with the chiefs of Sumba like the rajas of Napu, Memboro, Laura, Waijewa and Lauli (West Sumba), initially without much success. Until 1912 there was not much progress in his work. Why were the Sumbanese so resistant? There were four reasons. First, there was no public security in Sumba. There was a constant war between the petty rulers. The pacification of Sumba had started in 1901 with the so-called Lambanapu War. In 1906 the raja of Memboro attacked the raja of Laura and this was the reason for the colonial army to start the pacification of West Sumba. Only in 1912 was the whole island of Sumba considered safe and under Dutch rule. Second, the first missionaries had no good knowledge of Sumbanese, had a poor idea of its culture and customs, and they had no training in health care, agriculture and other practical matters. Third, there was suspicion from the side of the Sumbanese, who supposed that the missionaries came to destroy their social structure, belief and culture. Fourth, there was suspicion that the missionaries had a double agenda: besides evangelising the Sumbanese (to estrange them from their culture and belief) it could also be their purpose to bring Sumba under Dutch rule. The Sumbanese and the missionaries kept their distance and suspected each other.¹⁴⁴

¹⁴⁴ For this whole section see Djara Wellem 2004.

Christianity approaching Sumba society and the intensive evangelisation of Sumbanese, 1913–1942

The pacification of Sumba and the administrative division of colonial rule in the island gave room for the evangelisation of this society. Besides, there was a strategic division of the missionary work between the fundamental service (*hoofddienst*) and supporting service (*hulpdienst*). The evangelisation was not only carried out in words, but also through concrete service, in the field of health care, education and community development.

In this period the whole island of Sumba became a target of evangelisation. The territory was divided into areas that were under the supervision of a missionary minister. They were the leaders of the missionary activities. In Payeti (Central Sumba) it was D.K. Wielenga (1904–1921), and P. Lambooy (1924–1940); in Melolo (East Sumba) it was F.J. Colenbrander (1913–1927) and S.J.P. Goossens (1931–1938); for Karuni (West Sumba) it was L.P. Krijger (1913–1924) and W. van Dijk (1921–1942). Between 1932 and 1942 Rev. P.J. Luijendijk served the new district of Waibakul in West-Central Sumba. Together with the ministers as directors, the school teachers and the evangelists were executing their duty in their local conditions. The work in the local communities was done by the indigenous helpers, who could directly understand the concrete needs of the people of Sumba.

Before the arrival of Van Alphen there were already schools, in Kambaniru, Melolo and Waingapu, but their pupils were nearly all Sawunese. Pos and Colenbrander already tried to establish schools for the original population of Sumba, but they did not yet receive a positive response. Sumbanese people withheld their children, for various reasons, from attending the new school. A school that was opened in Lai Handung was burnt down soon after it opened. Also the school of Wajelu did not attract enough pupils.¹⁴⁵ Still, it turned out that Sumbanese people were starting to accept school for their children. Thanks to the agreement with the colonial government, the Flores-Timor agreement of 1913, already discussed above, the whole field of education in Sumba was entrusted to the Protestant mission with full financial reimbursement by the colonial government. The qualified teachers Tjalling van Dijk (1913–1938) and Jacob Erkelens (1938–1947) were the inspectors of education in Sumba.

Basic education was taught in a course of only three years. In 1914 the missionaries already opened an extended primary school in Payeti and in 1920 in Karuni. Also in 1914 a special teachers' training course was set up in Payeti by Tjalling van Dijk. It gave (after three, later five years of primary education) a course of two years to become a teacher, but also included an additional theological year for those who would fulfil the double position of

¹⁴⁵ Wellem 2004:156.

school teacher and leader of the local congregation. Initially a number of teachers had arrived from Ambon and Timor, but the goal was to educate enough local people to work for the development of education. In 1925 a vocational school for agriculture and cattle breeding was started.

The development of evangelisation stimulated the missionaries to start theological education at a higher level than the simple teachers' training. Therefore a theological school was opened in Karuni in 1924. Lodewijk Krijger (1924–1934) and Dr. Hendrik Bergema (1938–1942) were the principals of this school. Most of the students were sons of chiefs, of the nobility and of freemen, besides some Sawunese. There was, until Indonesian independence, no son of a slave in this school. This school graduated 58 evangelists up to the Japanese occupation. They had an important role in the further spread of the Gospel in Sumba, where never more than five ordained European ministers worked at one moment.

The mission also gave much attention to health care. In all districts a clinic was opened, while there was a government hospital in East Sumba and a mission hospital in West Sumba. The Dutch missionary society not only sent ministers and teachers, but also some doctors and nurses who immediately started to train Sumbanese personnel.

The Christian mission did not arrive in a country without culture or tradition. It was exactly this traditional culture that made the integral acceptance of Christianity very difficult in the first decades of the missionary endeavour. There was a great interest among the first missionaries to study the culture and languages. They wanted to know the way of thinking of the Sumbanese and to truly understand their language. Therefore, in 1926, Dr. Louis Onvlee, a linguist, was sent as a member of the missionary team. He wrote a dictionary and a grammar of Sumbanese, translated the New Testament in the dialect of Kambera (published in 1961) and of Wajjewa (published in 1970). Also the Psalms and many hymns were translated in these two Sumbanese dialects. In 1942, when the Japanese conquered Indonesia, there were already seven autonomous congregations and 47 missionary stations where a community of 5,855 members of the Protestant churches came together.

A second arrival of the Catholic mission. The beginning of the fragmentation of Sumbanese Christianity, 1929–1942

There was something like a gentlemen's agreement about the ban on "double mission" in the Dutch East Indies. It was strongly supported by the Protestant mission that was very loyal in maintaining it. It was also supported by the colonial government that had to issue permits for missionary work by European people and would only give permits to Catholics for 'Catholic territories' and similarly to Protestants for the territory of 'their mission.' The Catholics,

however, never fully and whole-heartedly accepted this agreement. The most painful case probably is the history of Minahasa. Another complicated case is Sumba.

Until 1921 there were no visits of Catholic priests to the island of Sumba, although a number of those baptised in Laura remained committed to the Catholic faith after the priests had left in 1898. Very few Catholics embraced the Protestant faith, but many more returned to traditional religion, or rather continued practices that they never had fully given up. Quite a few continued to cherish a warm and vivid memory of the 'Catholic decade' at the end of the nineteenth century. In 1913 the departing Resident of Kupang, C. van Rietschoten, mentioned the vivid and warm memory of the short period of Catholic missionaries, "In West Sumba a small number of Roman Catholics are found who still cherish the memory of the former mission post, left empty for many years."¹⁴⁶ After many applications, the Catholic priests of Flores were, from 1921, allowed to visit those who had remained Catholic. We have a quite curious description of these visits (in 1923 and 1924), written by the Protestant missionary in Karuni,

In August last year the Catholic missionary also paid a visit to our house and more or less discharged himself: it was not really worth the visit for him to come to Sumba and to enter our territory, because there were only very few Catholics here, but he was sent by the bishop, etc. Later I heard that he also administered baptism, but I have no proof that he baptised other children besides the offspring of the former Catholics. He was again here recently for a visit of several weeks. And now I receive information that he goes around to evangelise and administer baptism. His method is as follows: he carries a big bag with the *sirih-pinang* drug, enters a village, and collects people who of course are curious to meet such a foreigner. He presents the *sirih-pinang*, looks friendly and talks with people with the help of an interpreter. At the end of such a party he suggests that he should baptise them and their children. Of course, they enjoy this very much. He administers baptism and writes down the names. I heard that there were some hundred baptisms in Tana Riwu, children and adults, of course still absolutely pagan, but already received in the bosom of that 'holy' church. I think that this number is exaggerated but in this way it is quite easy to make the whole of Sumba Catholic in a few years through three visits per year. . . . But who will prevent them to enter Sumba for permanent stations, when so many are already baptised by them?¹⁴⁷

Quite understandably, the Catholic reports of the visits are different, although they are also dominated by the friction between the Catholic and Protestant mission. The Sumbanese series of conflicts between the two missions was

¹⁴⁶ Steenbrink 2007-II:130.

¹⁴⁷ Wiebe van Dijk to the Deputies for the Sumba Mission in the Netherlands, Karuni, 20 August 1924, text in Van den End 1987:233-234.

probably the longest after the even more difficult and continuing conflicts about Minahasa. Basically there were five points of disagreement between the Catholics and Protestants. First, there was the question of the first permit: Protestants claimed that the Jesuits entered in 1889, when Protestant missionary Johan Jacob van Alphen left the mission (where he had begun in 1881) only temporarily due to personal problems. The Jesuits claimed that they had received government permission to visit Sumba and start work there on 20 January 1878. Second, who arrived first? The Protestant Van Alphen arrived first on (East) Sumba in 1881, but the Jesuits arrived in 1889 in West Sumba. Third, the division of territory: the Jesuits understood that they would work on West Sumba, but this restriction was never formally given to either party, it was only a gentlemen's agreement dictated by the Resident of Kupang. Fourth, was the practice of baptism: the Protestants criticised the Catholics in that they conferred baptism on those who had not yet received sufficient instruction. The Catholics answered that they did give good instruction and that they considered baptism necessary for salvation, a good reason not to wait too long with this sacrament. Fifth, there were different interpretations of the interruption of the Catholic mission in 1898: the Catholics considered this a temporary stop only, while the Protestants interpreted the departure of the Jesuits as a final decision. Only a new permit by the governor general could change things again.¹⁴⁸ The usual local expression for Protestants was *Sorani Muda*, or New Christians, while in local Malay the Catholics were called *Sorani Tua* for Old or Traditional Christians. This terminology involved an acceptance that the Catholics were the original and genuine believers. There were some complaints by Protestants about the use of this terminology.¹⁴⁹

In October 1929 SVD priest Heinrich Limbrock started a new Catholic station in Weetebula, in fact outside the regular existing villages. It was a new creation where a grand mission station with a great school, dormitory and much later also a church was built. This was the start of the new beginning of the Catholics in West Sumba. In 1942 there were about 3,000 Catholics and some 6,000 Protestants in the island. At that time this was not yet 10% of a population of some 120,000. Compared with Timor, or even more with Flores, this was a small number of Christians. This would remain so later as well.

During the Japanese occupation, 1942–1945, the Catholic (like the Protestant) mission in Sumba suffered much more than in Flores. The village schools were closed and the great mission compound in Weetebula was confiscated by the Japanese army. There was also some overt anti-Christian propaganda by the

¹⁴⁸ A summary of these viewpoints in Muskens 1974–IIIb:1358–1360. Also Van den End 1987:43–44 with references.

¹⁴⁹ Wiebe van Dijk in a letter to the deputies for the Mission in the Netherlands, Karuni 10 February 1930, published in Van den End 1985:320.

Japanese authority, declaring that “Christ had died and now also Christianity should pass away. Christianity must be seen as a religion of the past, because it is the religion of the Dutch and the Americans.”¹⁵⁰

After the Japanese surrendered there was a period of recuperation. The SVD then realised that they had not enough personnel for the whole of NTT and they sought other people for their most difficult mission, Sumba. In 1956 German members of the Redemptorists (CSsR) order arrived. Their mission in Argentina became autonomous and after options for Norway, Ethiopia and Columbia were rejected they accepted work in Sumba, where they were quite successful. In 2001 they had 30 CSsR priests in Sumba, only nine of them of German descent (the youngest born in 1948, most of them from the 1930s; the oldest Indonesian was from 1942, but most of them were from the 1960s and 1970s), while there were 38 CSsR students, mostly from Sumba, undertaking their study of theology in Yogyakarta. The CSsR could not yet provide a bishop and in 1975 the Javanese Jesuit H. Haripranata was elected. After his unexpected death in 1980 it took five years before there was a new bishop appointed, the Florinese SVD priest Girulfus Kherubim Pareira (born in 1942 from an old elite family that used Portuguese names, in Lela close to Sikka).

As the ‘smaller church’ (in comparison to the GKS), the Catholics built a solid community, where much attention was given to slow expansion and even more to consolidation. Inculturation, the discourse with traditional religion, is much more prominent than ecumenical relations that seem to be in a deadlock with a minimal agreement on mixed marriages and the ceremonial common Christmas celebration. A quite unusual study on Sumbanese traditional religion is by CSsR priest Dr. Edmund Woga (born 1950) who defended his German language dissertation in 1993 on the concept of God in Sumbanese tradition. The High God of Sumba is not the creator, but some kind of ancestor: both mother and father, as the highest being in a permanent caring relation to mankind.¹⁵¹

Progress in a period of suffering: 1942–1945

After the German attack on the Netherlands, in May 1940, communication between the Dutch missionary organisation and Sumba was halted. But the Batavia district of the Reformed Churches could still provide financial help. On 7 December 1941 World War II was extended to the Pacific through the bombardment on Pearl Harbour. Because of the remote location of Sumba the missionaries expected that the Japanese would not come so far, but soon they

¹⁵⁰ Haripranata 1984:351.

¹⁵¹ Woga 1994.

were afraid that Sumba would be used as a station on their way to Australia. On 1 February the first bombs fell on Waingapu. Therefore Rev. Luijendijk asked that the evangelist of Payeti, H. Mbay, should be prepared to be ordained as the first native minister of Sumba. The ceremony took place on 3 March 1942. Also the leader of the congregation of Rara, H.M. Malo was ordained, on 16 March 1942. At that time there were already scores of ordained ministers in Timor. Compared to the European ministers in Timor (members of the *Indische Kerk*), the ministers of the Sumba Mission were quite orthodox and conservative, and must be seen as somewhat paternalistic. They wanted a very thorough theological training for ministers and formulated such difficult requirements that until the emergency conditions of 1942 nobody could fulfil their wishes.

On 14 May 1942 the Japanese occupied Waingapu. The European missionaries and colonial officials were arrested and put in prison. They were later transported to Makassar and brought to a detention camp in Pare-Pare. Their wives and children were also brought to South Sulawesi, first to Malino, later to Kampili. Their houses were burnt down, or used by the military.

From that time the congregations had to be directed by the Indonesian evangelists, while the administration of the sacraments was handled in an orderly way by Rev. H. Mbay in Central and East Sumba. The usual meeting of the teachers in Payeti continued, but was closely observed by the Japanese. In July 1945 Rev. Mbay was killed by the Japanese, his body was concealed and never found. Rev. S.H. Dara, the evangelist (*guru injil*) of Melolo took over the responsibility of the Eastern and Central congregations.

The congregations of West Sumba were led by Rev. H. Malo, who was able to maintain better relations with the Japanese authorities. He was even decorated by the Japanese with a paper medal, with the promise that after the Japanese victory, this medal would be changed for a golden one. Rev. Malo could preside over the regular meetings of the teachers and during the Japanese occupation he baptised 409 people. The council of teachers had already taken the decision that the evangelist of Waikabubak should be called as their minister, but this decision was not executed because of the end of the war. They also declared their meeting to be the council of an ecclesiastical district or *classis*. They also opened an education programme for evangelists, led by Rev. Hama himself. These decisions could not be fully implemented because of the end of the war.¹⁵²

The Japanese occupation was a period of much suffering for the Sumbanese Christians, but also a time of ripening. They learned how to lead the congre-

¹⁵² Wellem 2004:244–245.

gations themselves and proved to be able to maintain their faith without the foreign missionaries. This troubled period also fostered the spirit of self-reliance. After the Japanese capitulation on 15 August 1945, it took some time before the allied forces took over authority on Sumba. In West Sumba as well as in East Sumba a Council for Safety and Peace was constituted before they arrived. Later the Dutch *controleurs* for both regions arrived in order to restore colonial rule. But they met strong opposition from the rising nationalist movement. The traditional chiefs of Sumba constituted a Federation of the Island of Sumba, with a Council of Rajas as the highest body, while the administration was run by the Executive Board of the Council of Rajas. A spirit of independence had started among the people of Sumba and this also influenced the Christian leaders.

Towards the end of 1945 the foreign missionaries were preparing their return to Sumba. They wanted to rebuild the missionary institutions that were destroyed by the Japanese but they had not followed the new developments in Sumba. They thought that as many foreign workers as possible should be sent to Sumba, at least some twelve persons. In the first years after the Japanese capitulation 18 foreign workers arrived, more than ever had been working in the island before the Japanese period. The missionary leaders estimated that still some 20–25 years were needed in order to prepare the church for self-reliance, but things developed more quickly than expected.

After the Japanese capitulation the congregations started to nominate their own evangelists and ministers. The congregations in Central Sumba (Kambaniru, Payeti and Waingapu) were already establishing their own *classis*. Kambaniru and Payeti already had Sumbanese ministers, Mb Ratubandju and S.J. Piry. In 1946 a *classis* of East Sumba was established and Melolo nominated its own minister. This was the reality that was found by the returning and new missionaries. Whether they liked it or not, they had to accept this situation. They soon agreed and found their new role as advisors. This resulted in the formation of the synod of the GKS, *Gereja Kristen Sumba* in Payeti, 15–17 January 1947.

The Protestants Sumbanese church after autonomy

The autonomy of the GKS did not involve a breach with the foreign mission. The GKS remained financially dependent and its top leadership was still in the hands of expatriate missionaries. These foreign ministers were no longer confined to their congregations, but they also had a function as advisor of a *classis*, especially for missionary work. Their role remained for the time being very decisive. At the time of the first Synod in 1947 the foreign personnel were six foreign ministers, five specialists in the field of education, two medical doctors and three nurses. The GKS soon developed: the two ordained ministers

of early 1947 had grown to a number of 15 one year later. At that time there were seven *classes* and 22 congregations. The general meeting of missionary workers was transformed into a Missionary Council in 1953, with an advisory function only. More and more tasks were transferred to the Sumbanese themselves. Because of the conflict between Indonesia and the Netherlands about the status of New Guinea (Papua), the full responsibility for education was taken over by Sumbanese. The Batak W.H. Siregar became the director of the teachers' training college, succeeding W. Duker. The Dutch ministers were succeeded by missionaries from the *Altreformierte Kirche* in Germany, which sent B. Alsmeier (construction engineer), and the ministers H. Alsmeier and H. Baarlink. The first Sumbanese principal of the theological school was M. Jiwa, as successor to P. Luijendijk.

From 1955 on the Communist Party had a branch in Sumba and attracted quite a good number of Christians who became members and even took local leadership. The GKS held a firm position and opposed the party at the 1956 Synod in Petawang, where Christians were asked not to join this atheist party. After the failed Communist coup of 1965, membership of the church increased sharply, because of the government policy of recognising only five religions. Marapu was not recognised as a religion and GKS membership rose to 38,075 in 1969 and 43,1231 in 1971.

The movement towards formal membership of Christianity continued during the 1980s and until the end of the century. As a consequence the practice of communal baptism could not be prevented, although there was much debate about large groups who were baptised at one ceremony. Many ministers of the GKS had the feeling that harvest time had come and that they should not hesitate to reap the fruits. In 1994 the statistics showed a membership of 180,000 for the GKS, that increased to 256,094 in 2004. At that time the church had 151 ministers, 230 evangelists, 27 assistant evangelists, 428 active lay people (see below) and 38 temporary lay people. This movement caused the GKS to begin a course for lay evangelists, that soon had to be upgraded to a somewhat higher level to meet the standards of modern people.

Several GKS activities, 1947–2004

Since the autonomy of the GKS, the church has been active in many fields, in a holistic way, in fact covering all aspects of the life of people in Sumba. This broad focus was already established in the period of the foreign missionaries, but was intensified during the last half century. We may discern the following fields:

EVANGELISATION. This was the first concern of the GKS. The foreign missionaries in the various *classes* considered assisting of local ministers for

evangelisation was their first duty. In order to enhance this field, the education of evangelists was continued. In 1950 the school moved from Karuni to Lewa and in 1973 it was closed because of the merging of several institutions into the newly developed Theological Academy of Kupang that was founded by the GKS in cooperation with the Protestant Church of Timor, GMIT. This academy has already produced evangelists who are working all over Sumba. Because of the shortage of evangelists, the GKS also appointed assistant evangelists who had followed a shorter theological course.

The GKS was in the 1950s and 1960s not yet able to pay for all these workers and therefore the Dutch ZGKN paid them until 1972. Since then the GKS has taken responsibility for the remuneration of the evangelists. The category of assistant evangelists was changed into Active Lay People (*Kaum Awam Aktif*) who did not receive a salary from the central board of the church, but nowadays they receive some payment from the local congregations where they work. Their number is double that of the evangelists. The statistics for 2004 showed 24 classes in the GKS, 74 central congregations, 492 affiliated congregations and 124 evangelisation posts.

EDUCATION. The activities of the foreign mission society were continued by the autonomous church. Until 1957 the foreign teachers were still the directors of education. They opened a junior high school in Waikabubak, led by R. Wybenga (1947–1952) and W. Popma (1952–1957). At the initiative of the Protestant political party *Parkindo*, a junior high school was opened in Waingapu, and a GKS foundation opened a senior high school in Waikabubak in 1960. A vocational school was started in 1949 in Melolo, led by D. Zwitser (1949–1959). This school later moved to Payeti and was finally taken over by the government.

Education for girls also received more attention. The United Christian Women's Organization started a vocational school for girls in Waikabubak in 1948. Also, this school was later taken over by the government. For the management of the GKS schools a special foundation was set up, YAPMAS, *Yayasan Persekolahan Masehi Sumba*. An agricultural school in Lewa, East Sumba, was put up by another foundation, also established by the GKS, the *Yayasan Kesejahteraan Keluarga GKS*. This school is still under GKS management.

The GKS not only organised formal education but also informal courses like training in the field of agriculture and car maintenance. In 1948 the engineer B. Abels came to Sumba to lead the development of agriculture training. In 1967 a Christian Agricultural Training Centre (PLPK, *Pusat Latihan Petani Kristen*) was opened in Lewa, East Sumba. Also a repair shop for cars and agricultural machinery was opened. For the set-up of the PLPK in Lewa ZGKN sent two Dutch engineers. As is often the case with development projects that are sponsored by foreign money, after the Dutch support was halted the centre

soon discontinued its activities. In the period after 1965, when the relations between Indonesia and the Netherlands were restored, the Reformed mission sent seven more workers for Sumba. For general social needs the GKS itself established the White Horse Foundation for Prosperity (YKPS, *Yayasan Kuda Putih Sejahtera*) that gave training, information and economic help.

HEALTH CARE. Missionary planning gave attention to health care from its very beginning. After the autonomy of the GKS a special foundation was founded for this field that after some changes was called the YUMERKRIS (*Yayasan untuk Menyelenggarakan Rumah sakit-rumah sakit Kristen Sumba*) in 1971. Several foreign doctors and nurses came to Sumba, to work in the Lende Moripa Hospital of Waikabubak and the Lindi Mara Hospital of Waingapu. The name of both hospitals means: 'Bridge of Life,' in two dialects.¹⁵³ After the last foreign worker left the hospitals in 1972, this work was continued up to the present by local personnel.

There was a strong wish from the side of the parsons of the Dutch Reformed mission to make the GKS a strong and well-provided Sumbanese church. This effort, and foreign generosity, also caused a mentality of dependency. There were no strong efforts to make the GKS really independent. This tendency was re-enforced by the new stream of money that came from the development aid given by European governments from the mid-1960s. Therefore it appeared as if the foreign mission planned and executed many projects, with the people of the GKS only as 'helpers.' Many activities were brought to a standstill after the European partners left the country and stopped their financial support. For many projects there were also no Sumbanese personnel available. Only when the Dutch Reformed mission stopped financial support in 1972, could the GKS really become an autonomous church.

The GKS and ecumenical cooperation

The GKS had many partners, national as well as international. The closest cooperation on the national level was with the Timorese Protestant Church, GMIT. In 1971 the two churches set up a Theological Academy in Kupang, that later became the theological faculty of another common endeavour, the Artha Wacana Christian University. Since 1950 the GKS has been a member of the Indonesian Council of Churches (see chapter seventeen). The relationship with the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands, whose mission was most important for the start of the GKS, also continued and GKS also became a member of international Protestant bodies such as the WARC, REC and WCC.

¹⁵³ For the names of doctors and nurses: Van den End 1988:22.

Challenges for the GKS

Quite a few problems are not yet solved for the GKS. This is partly related to the fact that traditional religion has remained much stronger in Sumba than in various other regions of Indonesia.

POLYGAMY. Sumbanese society was and partly still is polygamous. This has been an important factor that prevented a quick growth of the GKS. The position taken by the foreign missionaries was that a polygamous man could be baptised together with his wives, but had to divorce them all, except one. He was also prohibited from taking another wife in the future. In practice, however, not only former adherents of the Marapu religion took more wives, but also many baptised Christians. The GKS took a strong position in this matter, by applying church discipline for the rest of their life. There were many debates on this matter at the yearly meetings of the synod of this church. Those who were affected by a disciplinary measure quite often remained loyal to their church and asked that the penalty should be lifted. In the synod there were two viewpoints: hardliners versus those who proposed a softer policy. In 1976 the Synod of Wai-Wei decided that the decision for measures against polygamous men could be left to the local congregations, but an agreement of the *classis* was needed. This synod also stressed that the church should continue preaching against polygamy. The acceptance of polygamous people should not be understood as a token that the GKS endorsed polygamy. This caused some congregations to lift the measures against polygamous people, while this was not done in other places.

TRADITIONAL CUSTOM. It has already been repeatedly stated that Sumbanese people like to remain loyal to the old traditions. At the beginning of the preaching of the Gospel in Sumba the missionaries considered Sumbanese tradition to be an adoration of the devil. After the foreign missionary ministers had learned more about language and tradition, this attitude changed. They found also many positive elements in Sumbanese traditional customs, besides aspects that were clearly opposed to the Christian faith. The positive aspects should be maintained, the negative ones should be removed.¹⁵⁴ There was no agreement in this respect among the various ministers. In the 1930s the strongest hardliner was Rev. S. Goossens. This difference of opinion caused a schism within the missionary body and a free church was started in Sumba by Rev. Goossens in 1938. The GKS continued on the path towards contextualisation.

¹⁵⁴ A list of negative and positive aspects by Rev. P.J. Lambooi in Wellem 2004:203.

AUTONOMY. In 1947 the GKS became an autonomous church. This involved ideally a self-governing, self-supporting and self-propagating church. But the practice was different. Like other young churches in Indonesia, the GKS remained for several decades dependent upon its mother church in the Netherlands and GKS leadership was still 'eclipsed' by the missionary ministers from abroad. This could be seen most clearly in the financial dependence of the GKS. Until 1962 all salaries for GKS ministers were paid by the Dutch mission and for evangelists (*guru injil*) and assistant evangelist this continued until 1972. In that last year, however, the Dutch partner really wanted the GKS to become financially independent. At that time the GKS designed a five-year-plan and every year the foreign partner reduced its subsidies by 20%, until that period when GKS would no longer receive financial help from their Dutch partner. There was a strong protest within the GKS against this plan, but the Dutch side was very strong in its decision. We have to acknowledge, however, that the GKS has not yet succeeded in attaining full financial autonomy. There is still a strong need for foreign help. This is most clearly felt at the level of the synod: its expenses were in the period 1991–2002, 92.7% funded by foreign gifts and only 7.3% came from Sumbanese donations. Factors that caused this continuing dependence are the lack of capacity to find local resources and management, the poor economy of the island, a low understanding of what a church should be and do, and finally a crisis of faith.

GROUP BAPTISMS. We have already discussed at various places the tremendous increase of GKS membership that took place by group baptisms, especially in the late 1960s. This pattern of group baptisms was adopted because of theological and non-theological motives.

ECUMENICAL RELATIONS. We have seen that the GKS is the largest church in Sumba, but it exists besides various other Protestant denominations and side by side with the Catholics who had their first entry already between 1889 and 1898 as sketched above. In 1921 the Catholic clergy returned. This time it was not the Jesuits, but the SVD order, succeeded in 1957 by the Redemptorist Congregation. It should be openly acknowledged that the relations between Catholics and Protestants are not warm. This has been the case from the very beginning. Only in 1974 was an official ecumenical meeting arranged, with the signing of the Guidelines on Ecumenical Affairs by the GKS and the Catholic Church in Sumba.¹⁵⁵ This cooperation has started in the field of health care, social work and education. The two churches agreed on a common *Writing*

¹⁵⁵ *Pedoman Gereja Kristen Sumba dan Gereja Katolik di Sumba Mengenai Gerakan Oikumenis.*

on *Mixed inter-church Marriage* that was accepted by both churches in 1974, but the ecumenical relationship was halted because the GKS considered that the Catholics did not keep to the text of the agreement. Sheep stealing is still a common practice and this makes the ecumenical relationship very precarious. The relation of the GKS with the other denominations is also very problematic. Also between these churches the many cases of sheep stealing affect the relationship.

1975–2002: East Timor as a special challenge in Indonesian Christianity

During the 19th century the political division of Timor in a western Dutch and eastern Portuguese territory was consolidated, as we have seen above. In the 20th century relations between the two regions remained poor. This small remnant of a great empire developed into a region where the elite spoke Portuguese, was baptised as Catholics, and were separated from the common population who mostly lived in a subsistent economy. There were several periods of strong anti-clericalism in the colony, but after 1926 the Portuguese Minister and President António Oliveira de Salazar supported Catholicism.

In January 1967 José Joaquin Ribeiro (1918–2002) became the new bishop of Dili. He represented the Catholic Church when in April 1974 the government of Salazar had to step down due to the Carnation Revolution, after which the remnants of the Portuguese colonial empire also collapsed. Ribeiro, who had lived in Portugal until 1965, never learned Tetun. He rather supported the Portuguese officers of the UDT, the Timorese Democratic Union, than asking for compromises and a harmonious solution between conflicting parties in the political vacuum. He sharply disagreed with the Jesuits who were critical of the colonial system and supported Timorese nationalism. He saw in the other major party, Fretilin, only anti-religious communists. In later years Bishop Belo would comment: “How can the Church say in such circumstances that it won’t offer to mediate?”¹⁵⁶ UDT was quickly defeated by Fretilin (early September 1975), but an anti-Fretilin lobby in the international forum, especially also amongst Catholics in Indonesia and the Catholic-dominated CSIS, *Centre for Strategic and International Affairs* in Jakarta, suggested the Indonesian government to intervene and seize power after Fretilin had declared East Timor independent on 28 November 1975. There are good arguments to accept that neither Soeharto nor his vice-president Adam Malik were eager to attack East Timor. It had never been on the Indonesian nationalists’ radar. It may have been Catholic Chinese (anti-communist) tycoons and Catholics in the army and politics that wanted the ‘integration.’ The Indonesian invasion took place on 7 December 1975. Soon afterwards Ribeiro showed himself an

¹⁵⁶ Kohen 1999:11.

outspoken opponent of the Indonesians who “came down from heaven like angels, but then turned into devils,” according to his words.¹⁵⁷ He resigned in May 1977.

With Martinho da Costa the first native priest was nominated to the leadership of the diocese after Gregório Barreto, of the mid-nineteenth century. Da Costa (1918–1991) originated from Manatuto, for a very long time the most thoroughly Catholic region of the country. Initially he took the strategy of quiet diplomacy with the Indonesian army, discussing the atrocities and their effects, starvation, distress and poverty, in private talks with army generals and political leaders. In 1981 he was convinced that this had no effects and he started to write letters to international media, asking for attention to the dark fate of his people. He criticised the conscription of 50,000 men (of a population of a mere 600,000) to form the human chain to help crush the Fretilin guerrilla resistance. He also made public the massacre of 500 women and children at the shrine of Saint Anthony in Lacluta, September 1981. He could, however, not communicate the precise details of the major assaults of the Indonesian army in 1976 and 1979 through which the population was reduced from over 700,000 to about 540,000. The Catholic leading army general, Leonardus Benny Moerdani, was suspected of persuading the Papal Pro-Nuncio in Jakarta to advise the pope to request the resignation of Da Costa Lopes, who was never formally nominated as bishop but only as Apostolic Administrator. Da Costa Lopes resigned in May 1983 and went into exile to Lisbon where he died as a lonely fighter for his far homeland in 1991. The religious of East Timor, in a statement of 1981 said:

We do not understand why the Indonesian Church and the Universal Roman Church have up till now not stated openly and officially their solidarity with the Church, people and religious of East Timor. Perhaps this has been the heaviest blow for us... We felt stunned by this silence which seems to allow us to die deserted.¹⁵⁸

Carlos Filipe Ximenes Belo became the fourth bishop of Dili. Born in 1948 in a village on the north coast of Timor in a pious Catholic family, he enrolled in the minor seminary, where local languages were forbidden and Portuguese was the only means of communication. From 1969 until 1981 he was in Portugal and Rome for the study of theology, apart from short periods of practical training in Timor and Macao between 1974 and 1976. From a beginning as a young and inexperienced priest, considered rather timid and shy, he developed soon to become a true advocate of his people. He was educated as a

¹⁵⁷ Durand 2004:89.

¹⁵⁸ Smythe 2004:1. Smythe took the title of his book, *The heaviest Blow* also from this quote.

very traditional sacrament-oriented clerical ecclesiastic who was “catapulted” in a public role. Even the Vatican, though not recognising the “integration” of East Timor into Indonesia, gave its priority to the much larger number of Indonesian Catholics. A representative from the Vatican is quoted to have said to assistants of Belo, in the course of the preparation before the papal visit of 12 October 1989: “We are not going to sacrifice all of Christendom on account of 400,000 Catholics in East Timor.”¹⁵⁹ At Belo’s inauguration as administrator in 1983 (he was only nominated and ordained as a full bishop in 1988) the majority of the Timorese priests did not attend the ceremony because of his supposed submissiveness, but five months later he protested vehemently in a sermon in the cathedral against the brutalities of the Kraras massacre. In early 1989 he published worldwide a call for a UN referendum for the East-Timorese “who were dying as a people and a nation.”

In October 1989 Pope John Paul II visited Indonesia and he was also in Dili for a few hours where he said Mass and attended the first widely publicized demonstration against the Indonesian occupation. While looking for more opportunities to draw the attention of the international community, Dili activists seized the opportunity of the visit of some international observers to organise, on 12 November 1991, a funeral procession for a student, Sebastião Gomes who had been shot by Indonesian troops the month before. This procession commenced like a peaceful demonstration, with students who unfurled banners calling for independence. As they entered the Santa Cruz cemetery of Dili the Indonesian troops opened fire. 271 were killed, 382 wounded and some 250 disappeared. The presence of two American journalists and a British cameraman made it possible to gather information about the event that made the Timor case known worldwide. In later years Bishop Belo recorded that he must have been the only person in East Timor who had not known what was planned. But it was logical that he did not know: in his difficult position as Catholic leader he would have tried to stop it.¹⁶⁰

In the mid-1990s the Indonesian government tried to smooth the feelings of the East-Timorese by building a giant new cathedral in Dili, the largest church of Southeast Asia, and by constructing the world’s second colossal statue of Jesus, 46 metres high and placed on top of a hill overlooking the harbour and bay of Dili. Bishop Belo did not really welcome either of these monuments that were not given *lulik* or sacred character from the side of the local population. Ten years after construction the statue was already neglected. It was neither a shrine nor a monument and was in a state of disrepair.

¹⁵⁹ Kohen 1999:174.

¹⁶⁰ Kohen 1999:194.

In December 1996 Belo received the Nobel Peace Prize, together with José Ramos Horta “the leading international spokesman for East Timor’s cause since 1975,” according to the committee. They received the prize in Oslo, 10 December 1996. Since the Noble Peace Prize was announced, in October 1996, the Catholic establishment of Indonesia felt embarrassed: there were no hearty congratulations from the Indonesian Bishop’s Conference for their colleague in East Timor. At the ceremony in Oslo only one representative of the Indonesian Catholic Social Office, and the architect, novel-writer, activist and Catholic priest Mangunwijaya, were present as the personal guests of Bishop Belo. Mangunwijaya wrote a column with the title: “Are religious leaders allowed to be active in politics?” Seeking an answer, Mangunwijaya distinguished between the politics of power and politics in the meaning of concern for the common welfare. In the second meaning, religious leaders not only should have the right, but even the obligation to be active in public life, but certainly without violence.¹⁶¹ The money from the Nobel price was spent for the building of a new seminary.

In November 2002 John Paul II accepted Belo’s resignation as Vicar Apostolic of Dili, after the bishop himself had asked for the end of his term “due to health problems.” Belo had already several times offered his resignation, in disappointment with the lack of support from the Vatican. After seeking to regain his health in Portugal, Belo went to Mozambique, but was very much hoping to return to East Timor again from 2003 on, thinking about becoming a candidate for the presidency of the Catholic University.

The East Timorese suffering did not have a great impact on the majority of the Indonesians. First, there was a heavy censorship in Indonesian newspapers until the end of the Soeharto regime in 1998. Until the mid-1990s special permits were required to enter the territory. Therefore, the general public in Indonesia, also amongst Catholics, were not conscious of the tragic fate of the East Timorese. Then, Indonesia is a vast country: from East Timor to Java is a long and expensive flight, more than 2,000 km, and people of Java, Sumatra of Kalimantan seldom feel united with the far away territories like Papua, Timor and other islands.¹⁶²

In the late 1960s the great majority of the East Timorese still belonged to their traditional religion. There were 5,300 Chinese traders, just 490 Catholics among them. There were also only 380 Muslim traders (some of Arab descent like Mari Alkatiri, President of independent Timor Lorosae from 2002–2006) and a mere 100 Protestants in the capital Dili. Around 1970 the statistics showed only 20% of the population as Catholics, most of them among the rich and the officials, because to be baptised was more or less similar to be *assimilados*, to have become culturally Portuguese. There were 44 priests, 30

¹⁶¹ Mangunwijaya, *Politik Hati Nurani*. Jakarta: Grafiarti Mukti, 1997:90–94.

¹⁶² For these and other statistics: Prior 2003, besides *Buku Tahunan 1997*.

diocesan, 9 Salesians and 5 Jesuits. Of these only seven were Timorese. There were 37 sisters, only six of them Timorese, and 12 Brothers.

After the 'integration' the number of Catholics rose quickly due to the strict obligation imposed by the Indonesian government to fill in one of the five recognised religions on official documents and civil registration. But Catholicism soon became also a shelter for the population against the new colonizer. In 1996 official statistics showed 83% Catholics. There was also a quick rise of Muslims and Protestants, arriving as military or government officials, or just small-business people, but relatively much less than the Catholics. Therefore, some people even stated that "Soeharto made them Catholic." In 2004 statistics even showed 94% of Catholics for the country, because many of the recent migrant Muslims and Protestants had left the country. Many of the Portuguese clergy left the country, but Indonesians often replaced them. The Divine Word Missionaries came in 1980, joined by Franciscans, Carmelites and other orders.

After the 5 September 1999 referendum, when 78% of the population voted for independence, foreign troops under UN supervision had to rescue part of the population from the devastating action of 'pro-integration' hired militias. The new government of independent East Timor of 2002, however, brought together many of the former anti-clerical leaders of Fretilin, and the position of the Christian religion, especially the Catholic Church, became uncertain again. Apparently there is not yet an end to the turbulent development of Christianity in East Timor.

John Prior with Eduard Jebarus (Flores 1950–2000); Karel Steenbrink (Flores until 1950; Catholic sections of Sumba and Timor), Frederik Djara Wellem (Protestant sections of Sumba and Timor)

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CHAPTER EIGHT

CHRISTIANITY IN PAPUA

Christianity in Papua (successively called Papua land or Tanah Papua, Nieuw Guinee, Nederlands Nieuw Guinea, Irian Barat, Irian Jaya, West Irian Jaya/Papua and West Papua) represents the response of Papuans to the introduction of the Christian faith by missionaries, mainly from the Netherlands, Germany and the United States. To understand this response we must provide some introduction to the characteristics of Melanesian and Papuan culture and religion. The history of Christianity in Papua is quite different from that of most other parts of Indonesia. Until the last decades of the twentieth century there was hardly any active political role by Muslims. Missionary work started in the 1850s and has continued slowly since then. About the early 1960s Christianity was the dominant religion of the people and of the government. Papua still is the province with the highest percentage of Christians in the population.

Christian mission began in Papua in 1855, almost half a century before the Dutch colonial government entered the territory to establish its first permanent government posts there. Systematic external interference in Papuan indigenous political and social institutions came late and has been, until recently, quite limited. Traditional ways of life could be preserved, especially in the Highlands, where 40% of the Papuans live. Only in the early 1960s did the Indonesian Government and army begin to intervene intensively, often using considerable violence, in the culture, religion and economy of the Papuans. This was strongly resisted by the Papuans, who used Christian values and concepts in their struggle for freedom. Since the 1990s Papuans have used mainly non-violent methods, aiming at reconciliation and dialogue as means to solve their conflict with the Indonesians. The movement is nevertheless harshly suppressed by the Indonesian army and police. From 1970 until 1998 Papua was designated a Military Operational Territory (*Daerah Operasi Militer, DOM*). This means that the security forces exercise supremacy in society, in politics and in the economy.

Papua is the western part of the island of New Guinea. Its area is 420,000 sq. km, the size of California or one quarter the size of Indonesia without New Guinea. It had in 2004 about 2.5 million inhabitants of whom an estimated 1.6 million (about 65%) are Papuans. The remainder are 'newcomers' (*pendatang*), who came after the incorporation of Papua into Indonesia in the 1960s. There are three categories of these: a. the transmigrants, who have been settled in Papua by the government as peasant farmers, b. the 'free'

migrants, who came as traders, taxi drivers, craftsmen, shopkeepers, salesmen and women at the market, miners and so on, and c. government officials and army and police personnel, who were sent there on a tour of duty. Some of them bought property and stayed after their retirement. Most of the migrants are from Java and by religion Muslim.

The Papuans are Melanesians who have probably lived there already some 30,000 to 40,000 years. The origin of the Melanesians is uncertain. They may once have occupied the whole of Indonesia. In Indonesia there are still a few pockets of people who are ethnically and linguistically similar to the Papuans, e.g. in Timor, the interior of Seram, Tanimbar and other islands in East Indonesia. The local myths of the Sentani people and the Me of Paniai tell that the Papuans came from the East. However, when arriving at the place where they settled they found people or remains of people who lived there before them. The enormous linguistic diversity of Papua is evidence of a long history of scattered settlements without much contact. Papuans speak more than 250 vastly differing languages. Some people on the North coast like the Biak and Numfor people speak Austronesian languages, which are members of the large language family to which also Malay, Malagasy and the Polynesian languages belong. Most Papuan languages are grouped together as "Papuan languages." These language groups are small or very small with at times no more than 100 speakers. The largest language groups are: the Dani (229,000), the Me (also Kapauke or Ekari, 100,000), the Asmat (59,000), the Biak-Numfor (40,000), the Sentani (25,000) and Moni (Paniai, 20,000). Smaller groups include the Yali, the Marind-anim, the Amungme and the Ayfat.¹

The peoples on the North Coast and in Biak, the people from Numfor and Yapen (islands in the Cenderawasih Bay), as well those of the South coast of the Bird's Head, live from cassava, fishing and hunting. The Highlands, unexplored until the 1940s and 1950s, is twice the size of Switzerland. The people of the Highlands practice a fairly sophisticated form of agriculture, with terracing and the making of stone fences. The Papuans were among the first cultivators in the world. Their main crop is the sweet potato (*batatas*), a crop originating from Middle America and brought to East Indonesia by the Portuguese in the early sixteenth century. The introduction of the sweet potato, replacing the yam (*keladi*), enabled the Papuans to settle in the Highlands, which are too cold for other crops. The sweet potato is here the main staple food for the humans and for the pigs. The pig has a very important role in society. It is used to pay a bride price, to compensate for damages and to

¹ Peter J. Silzer and Helja Heikkinen Clouse 1991. These figures may be dated. Moreover, in education and public life Indonesian (*Bahasa Indonesia*) is becoming dominant. Indonesian is used in church services, except for most churches in the highlands.

establish peace between rival groups and villages. Someone who is able to organise a pig feast enhances his status. In regular pig festivals a large number of pigs are slaughtered and eaten. Here, traditionally, the archetypal pig is honoured, as a saviour hero who sacrificed himself in order to provide the food crops humankind needs for survival. The ethnic groups in the South, in the Merauke and in the Mimika regencies, were traditionally hunters and food gatherers, though also cassava is cultivated. Among these, the Asmat and Marind-anim are famous for their woodcarvings. Their art is of a religious nature and closely connected with their headhunting raids. The *magnum opus* of Van Baal, *Dema*, demonstrates the complexity and range and depth of the traditional religion of the Marind-anim.

Papua is rich in minerals like copper, gold, oil and nickel. The exploitation of fragrant wood (*kayu gaharu*) and logging in the vast forests also brings considerable wealth to some individuals. In 1967 an American company, Freeport McRohan, built the world's largest copper and gold mine in the Amungme area, near Timika, on the South coast. In the 1990s huge deposits of LNG were found near Bintuni, in the Bird's Head. From the early 1970s onwards the Indonesian government introduced the policy of transmigration, in part financed by the World Bank, which brought poor and landless, mainly Javanese, families to Papua. They were given five acres of land (20,000 sq. m.), a two bedroom wooden house with a well and a pit latrine and just enough rice to survive until the next harvest. After five years the land became their individual property. The vast majority of these migrants are Muslims. Only very few of the plots were made available for Papuans on the same conditions as the outsiders. Of the other migrants, those who come on their own, an estimated one third, comes from Java, one quarter from the Moluccas, while others come from North and Middle Sulawesi (Manadonese, Sangirese and Toraja), South Sulawesi (Buginese, Butonese, Macassarese), Sumatra (Batak and Minangkabau) or Flores and Timor. There is also a small number of Hindu Balinese and Buddhist Chinese.

Generally speaking Papuans were left out of the development (*pembangunan*) of the New Order government of Soeharto. The land given to the transmigrants free of cost has been taken from the Papuans, often without proper compensation. In the modern sector of the economy where private companies have created employment and pay in cash, preference is given to migrants. Migrants from South Sulawesi (Buginese, Butonese and Macassarese) have virtually monopolised the local open-air markets (*pasar*). Papuans are heavily underrepresented in the government service, in the police and in the army. Only since 1998 has the provincial government had an affirmative employment policy to favour Papuans (known as *putra* and *putri daerah*). This Papuanisation is a slow process. Of all the modern institutions it is only the church and church related institutions that are controlled and dominated by Papuans.

Before 1855: Early encounters?

There is no concrete evidence of Christian mission to Papua before the nineteenth century. However, Christianity in East Indonesia may still indirectly have influenced religion in Papua. Portuguese and Spanish missionaries, Franciscans and others, were, from 1520 onwards, active in the Moluccas and established mission posts in Tidore, Ternate, Seram, Ambon, and Banda. All these places already had trading relations with the Raja Ampat islands and the Bird's Head of Papua. Spanish Jesuits were, in the same period, active in the Philippines and tried, from there, to get a foothold in the Moluccas and West New Guinea. Augustinians were also involved in mission work in the area. In 1538 Antonio Galvão, the Portuguese governor of the Moluccas, ordered a journey of exploration to the Papuan Islands (Raja Ampat), to visit the rajas or rulers of Viaigue (Waigeo), Quibibi (Gebee) and Mincimbo. Nothing is known of the result of this enterprise. A later Jesuit report mentions that a delegation from the Papuan Islands asked for priests. There is a report from 1550 stating that there are Christians on the Papuan Islands. Freerk Kamma, a Dutch Reformed missionary who worked in the Raja Ampat and the Bird's Head from 1931 until 1962, found a *Summa Theologica* of Thomas Aquinas, used by a Papuan shaman as a tool for divination. This find could be seen as an indication of some form of early cultural contacts between Papuans and Portuguese and/or Spanish missionaries.

At the beginning of the seventeenth century Portuguese and Spanish influence was replaced by that of the Dutch with the entry of the Dutch East India Company (VOC or *Kompeni*) into East Indonesia. The Dutch did not give Christian mission a priority as the Spanish and the Portuguese had done. However, it is possible that casual visits and information about Christianity since the early sixteenth century, through trading contacts, led to the emergence or transformation of local myths. Biak, Raja Ampat and large areas of the Cenderawasih Bay have myths about a self sacrificing Saviour, who left or died, but promised to return, when he would establish a kind of a millennium. The Biak people call this millennium *Koreri*. This is announced by a forerunner of the messiah, a prophet, the *konor*. The messianic figure itself is called in Biak and Numfor the Manseren Mangundi. The Me of Paniai, South-East of Nabire, have a similar myth of the return of Koyeidaba, who gave his life to create new life to help humankind in a concrete way, with new food crops. According to the Me anthropologist and church leader Dr Benny Giay, the Me of Paniai themselves perceived the close similarities of their religious myths with the Gospel. They even thought that the missionaries had come from America not to bring the Gospel, but 'to steal' the Me myths by giving cues about traditional Me religion. Several tribes have similar stories about a millennium, which will be brought about by the advent of a messiah figure. The existence of these myths helped

the Papuans to accept the Gospel. There is for them some continuity when converting to Christianity.

From 1828 till 1836 there was an effort to establish a Dutch settlement, Merkusoord, with Fort du Bus, on the Triton bay on the South Coast of New Guinea. This failed, as many settlers died of diseases. The local population continued to attack the settlers, encouraged by Muslim traders from Ternate who feared the loss of their trading monopoly. This was a Christian presence, although there is no evidence of any influence on the conversion of the Papuans of the area. There was an expansion of Catholic mission work in the Pacific directed toward New Guinea, coming from the East (Hawaii, 1825). Early Catholic jurisdiction over the whole of the island of New Guinea, including Papua, was from the Prefecture of the Sandwich Islands. The Marists entered the eastern half of the island in 1848. The Jesuits opened a station in Tual, in the Kai Islands, in 1888, and in 1889 founded a station at Langgur, which became the main staging post for Catholic missions in the Moluccas and the south coast of Papua. The Catholics began their first mission reconnaissance tours in Papua only in the 1890s.

Injil Masuk (the gospel enters): 1855–1898

The first systematic mission effort in West Papua was an initiative of the German minister Johannes Evangelist Gossner (1773–1858). He was supported by the Dutch minister Otto G. Heldring. Heldring was the founder of institutes for destitute women and girls (*Heldring-gestichten in Zetten*) in 1848, but also of a Dutch branch of the Gossner tent-making missionaries. Heldring was also involved in the revival movement in the Dutch churches, called the *Réveil*, the 'Awakening'. Spokesmen for the *Réveil*, like Da Costa, Bilderdijk, De Clercq and Groen van Prinsterer, linked a messianism with the idea that Holland was a nation chosen by the Lord, the nation "on which Christ had laid His hand." The *Réveil* saw a link between the loss of faith and the decline of the nation. These ideas have a close similarity with Christian beliefs now common among Papuans.

Gossner and Heldring shared ideas about mission. For an effective Christian mission one needs no more than a great faith, showing itself in action. A missionary only needs a Bible, a hymnbook and "a heart filled with a living faith." Simple craftsmen were the right missionaries as they would be able to make a living at their mission post by working. In their free time they could go out and preach the Gospel. This concept of mission is not unlike that of David Livingstone for Central Africa in the same period. Livingstone advocated mission work by Christian settlers, to combine Christianity with 'commerce.' Evangelisation had to be combined with economic development, with the

introduction of new crops and modern technology. There was, possibly, a chiliastic aspect in the choice of Papua for Christian mission, an area that was not even brought under colonial rule. Jesus had promised after his Resurrection that He would return as soon as the Gospel had reached to “the ends of the earth.” There were not many areas in the world as remote as Papua; so the area was selected, bypassing other areas, which were not yet evangelised.

It was Protestant missionaries who were the first to establish permanent mission posts in West New Guinea. This was quite decisive in the view of present-day Papuans. According to them the Gospel entered Papua land on Sunday 5 February 1855, when Carl Ottow and Johann Geissler set foot ashore at Mansinam, a small island near Manokwari. They knelt on the beach and prayed, claiming the whole island for Christ. The whole of Papua was, as it were, baptised. This story is now used to claim Papua for (Christian) Papuans against the (Muslim) Indonesians of other islands. In 2001 this date of 5 February became a public holiday in the province.

The Papuans in the area where Carl Ottow and Johann Geissler began their mission work were not easily converted. They were not prepared to change their customs, a precondition of conversion. Ottow and Geissler started with language study and soon produced a word list and a grammar of the Numfor language. In recognition for this work the Government supplied the missionaries each with a monthly allowance of 50 Dutch guilders (€22.70). They proposed a grand scheme to the Government to involve the Papuans in a tobacco plantation on the Kebar plateau, with the help of Christian farmers from Java. The scheme also included the supply of 20 guns with ammunition “to strike awe into robbers,” and the presence of some retired European or Ambonese soldiers. The government rejected the plan, but still gave the missionaries half the 10,000 guilders (€4,500) budgeted for the scheme and two Javanese farmers with an expertise in tobacco cultivation. With these grants the government recognised the pioneering effort of the missionaries in opening up a new and unknown territory, only nominally part of the Dutch East Indies. The government expected pacification ‘on the cheap.’ This is evidenced by a remark made by a government official, a former Resident of Ternate, who said that the Mission had to be considered to have failed, as the Papuans did not show much enthusiasm about his arrival in Doreh! The financial support of the government enabled the missionaries to devote most of their time to mission work. However, they remained involved in trading. They bought food cheaply when it was in abundance and sold it at a profit when it was scarce, which Papuans considered unfair. Geissler also bought tortoise shells, *teripang* or sea cucumber, birds of paradise, copra and mother of pearl shells and exchanged these for cotton, iron, knives, beads, sarongs, mugs, plates and so on. Alfred Russel Wallace, who visited the Ottows in

1858, mentioned the difficulties arising when the missionary is a pastor and at the same time a trader who is seeking a profit from his flock. This was, in his opinion, in contradiction with the Christian message.

In 1863 the Utrecht Mission Society (*Utrechtse Zendings Vereniging*, UZV) joined the Heldring initiative and began work in New Guinea with the sending of full time and well-trained theologians and artisans as missionaries. J.L. van Hasselt, his wife S. Hulstaert, Th.F. Klaassen, his wife C. Aarsen and W. Otterspoor were the first of the new type of missionary.² The UZV forbade their missionaries to participate in trading. To prevent Muslim traders filling the gap, and to help the Papuans to get inexpensive and useful commodities, the UZV established a special trading committee. This functioned until 1900 when it was made independent of the mission. There was no trading done on the first day of the week, to help Papuans to respect the Day of the Lord. From the beginning the mission did not sell alcoholic drinks or guns to the Papuans. To bring Papuans into their fold, missionaries began to encourage young children to go to school. The curriculum stressed instruction in the Christian religion, as well as reading and writing. Only by giving presents to the parents could children be kept at the mission school. In order to secure attendance at church services, the missionaries, initially, had to supply the congregation with tobacco, *gambir* (*Uncaria* plant) and *sirih* (betel). This was stopped by Van Hasselt. There were two services on Sundays, a one hour service at 8.00 a.m. and another one at 5.00 p.m. There were also daily services at 6.00 a.m. A common method to get converts, though this was not uncontroversial, was to buy slave children to be raised in the household of the missionaries as their step children (*anak piara*). The wisdom of the method was debated, as the buying of slaves could create a new market. In 1880 Mrs Van Hasselt bought a girl for Nfl (Dutch guilder) 60. On the other hand, the freed slave often saved his or her life by becoming incorporated in the household of the missionary. Here they did household chores, participated in the house services of the missionaries and were given the opportunity to go to school. Even as late as 1900 Jens defended the method as the only one possible. Another problem of former slaves becoming early converts and then church leaders was that the fact that they had been sold put them in a class of their own, even if they returned to their home village. The church could not grow until it had non-slaves leading it. The first non-slave to be baptised was Timoteus Wirie in 1874.

² J.L. van Hasselt (1839–1930) and his wife established themselves with Jaesrich in Doreh. In 1871 they went to Mansinam, where they remained till 1907 when J.L. van Hasselt retired. Th.F. Klaassen and his wife left in 1864 for Halmahera. W. Otterspoor returned to Holland in the same year.

The message of the missionaries in this period was that the life of the Papuans was dominated by fear for the spirits of the deceased and all kinds of secret powers. The Gospel of Jesus Christ liberates from all these powers and fears, "because He is more powerful and can protect those who belong to Him." The missionaries, generally speaking, had a low view of the Papuans and their traditional religion. The Papuans were considered degenerated (*ontaard*). They were considered as having only nebulous ideas, while their energy was seen as limited. The missionaries were not aware of the existence of a class of priests, which would keep the old traditions. Also intellectually they saw the Papuans as being at a low level. Their main occupation was "feasting and once more feasting." By 1880, 25 years after the arrival of the pioneers, only 20 people had been baptised, including those Papuan children adopted by the missionaries. Ten years later, in 1890 Mansinam had 42 full members, 44 baptised children, an average church attendance of 175, school attendance was 60 and there were 32 catechesis students. In 1892 the mission sent two Papuan students, Petrus Kafiar and Timotheus Awendu, to the Depok Seminary for native missionaries, near Batavia (Jakarta). They later became teacher-evangelists (*guru*).

Mass conversions and education: 1898–1940

In 1898 the Dutch colonial government established the first two permanent posts in New Guinea, in Manokwari and Fakfak, and in 1902 also one in Merauke. The mission welcomed the establishment of government control. In the words of one missionary, "The cruel game is over. Dutch government authority now determines what is lawful. And with it one of the major pillars of paganism has been destroyed." The Dutch initiative was forced by the threat that Britain, Germany, the United States and even Spain claimed West New Guinea. Spain claimed the Mapia Islands, North of Biak, as part of the Caroline Islands. On Mapia an American copra company had established itself and it had raised the Stars and Stripes. The Dutch intervened by sending a ship to haul the flag down. The government posts mainly had the function of 'showing the flag.' The establishment of these posts, two small settlements only in an area slightly smaller than France, could not hide the fact that Papua remained largely neglected. There was only slight interference with local customs and traditions, which the government wanted to replace, like tribal and clan wars, headhunting, witch hunting and capital punishment. It was only the Christian missions that provided rudimentary services in health care and education.

The UZV and the Indische Kerk, 1898–1942

After almost half a century working with very little result, the UZV on the North Coast, finally, began to see some success. Many Papuans at the beginning of this period began to ask the missionaries for resident teachers and missionaries. Often people converted by way of group conversions, especially around the Cenderawasih Bay (Geelvink Baai). The first wave of conversions began on 1 January 1907 at Roon. Here Yan Ayamiseba, a former slave, died after an accident when cutting a tree. A few days before his death he told that he had a dream where he was allowed entry into heaven, where people with long hair, dressed in white, were seen when passing a door of gold. A dream is an acceptable and authoritative means of communication between the spirit world and the concrete world we live in. Gold replaces iron, which is associated with slavery. Long hair is also a symbol of the free Papuans. The abode of the dead, according to the dream, is not, as in traditional cosmology, under the ground, but high up. This dream proved to be an effective form of contextualisation of the Christian message as brought by the Dutch and German missionaries.

Pamai, a Papuan from Ormu, west of Jayapura, brought the gospel to the people in the Sentani area at the end of the 1920s. He was himself illiterate, but taught the people to destroy their Kariwari-masks, after these had been shown to women, which was a taboo. He then taught the people the Lord's Prayer and the 12 Articles of Faith. Pamai had been sick, was convinced that he had died and then had appeared before the Lord, who told him that he could not yet enter heaven before he had brought the Gospel to other people.

The 1920s had seen the opening up of Papua economically. Copra, the dried meat of the coconut, fetched then very high prices, of up to twelve guilders a *pikul* (62 kilograms). Moreover the demand for birds of paradise was so high that many young Papuans left their villages to hunt for them. In the 1930s the world economic crisis led to a decline in demand. The price of copra fell to only two guilders a *pikul*. The crisis also led to financial difficulties for the mission which then changed its policy of working with salaried local staff. It decided to work with local Papuans, working as evangelists (*penginjil*), who were given only a minimum of training. They were given extensive responsibilities for the evangelisation work. They received a small allowance, but not a regular salary. The village where they settled had to provide for their livelihood. The evangelists would also have their own gardens and take part in hunting. The advantage was that the Gospel was preached in the local Papuan language instead of Malay. The evangelists were taken up in the tribe and lived among the people. By the early 1930s the UZV had extended the area where it worked to the Humboldt Bay. By 1934 the mission counted more than 50,000 Christians, most of them in North New Guinea.

Table 1. *The UZV and the Indische Kerk in 1934*

	Mission	Missionaries	Native Pastors	Teachers	Christians	Schools	Pupils	Hospitals and beds
South Papua	Indische Kerk	1						
North Papua	UZV	12	42	153	45,384	131	7,397	1–30
West Papua	UZV	3	2	16	5,869	26	1,253	–
Total 1934		16	58	169	51,253	157	8,650	1–30

When F.J.F. van Hasselt (1870–1939, son of pioneering missionary J. van Hasselt) retired in 1932, after serving 38 years in Papua/New Guinea, he complained that increasingly he had to fight on a front that he did not like, “I mean the Roman infiltration and penetration.” Rivalry and conflicts between the Protestant mission and the Roman Catholic mission, that did not recognise a separation of mission areas, was till the 1950s a common pattern in Papua. The UZV expanded its educational system in this period. The guru’s often had the dual role of teaching the school children during weekdays and leading the church service on Sundays. There were, from the 1930s, about 30 *classes* (presbyteries) and twelve *resorts*. Between 1924 and 1942 the number of village schools with a three years’ program increased from 71 to 300. The number of congregations was the same. Areas were opened by sending an evangelist or guru, who opened a village school and at the same time a candidate congregation or a congregation. In 1937 the schools had about 10,000 pupils. There was one upper primary school (grades 4 and 5) with 50 pupils and one vocational school with nine students. For more advanced education the most promising pupils were sent to Java. The Moluccan Protestant Church (*Gereja Protestan Maluku*, GPM), created two presbyteries in the South, the South Papua presbytery covering most of the Merauke area and the West Papua presbytery covering the areas of Mimika and West Merauke. By 1937 there were 76 congregations in north and west Papua, but only three in south Papua where the Catholics dominated.

Medical work was limited. The missionaries provided elementary medical care from their mission posts. Serui had a mission hospital with a trained nurse in 1910, but it was closed in 1914. Only in 1932 was a doctor sent to the hospital in Serui. Korido in Western Biak had a smaller hospital. Since 1936 there was also a hospital looking after leprosy patients.

The Roman Catholic Mission, 1902–1942

Roman Catholics had been discriminated against in the Dutch East Indies. In the VOC period Catholic missions were seen as linked with Portuguese claims to East Indonesia and Catholic mission was forbidden outside the island of Flores. The situation changed about 1854, when the Dutch government allowed the Roman Catholic Church in the Netherlands to re-establish its Episcopal hierarchy. In 1860 the colonial government urged a Catholic priest to establish a parish in Larantuka, related to a new treaty with Portugal. In 1888 a post in Kai was opened by the Jesuits. Roman Catholic mission work expanded again in 1894 when the Jesuit Cornelis le Cocq d'Armandville came from Seram to Fakfak, where he baptised 73 people after staying there for only ten days. In 1895 he established a mission station in Kapaur, Ajer Besar, east of Fakfak, with a school that hired the Protestant Chr. Pelletimu as a teacher. The station was closed after the sudden death of Le Cocq the next year. All mission work needed the permission of the government and Papua/New Guinea became divided into spheres of demarcation. The governor general did not allow the Catholics to establish themselves in Fakfak, Inanwatan and in Berau, as this was a 'Protestant area.' This decision was based on article 123 of the Governmental Regulations (*Regeeringsreglement*, since 1925 Article 177 of the Indies' Government Regulations or *Indische Staatsregeling*), which stipulated that the establishment of mission posts needed the permission by the governor general. In 1912 a separation line had been established between the Roman Catholic and Protestant missions. The Catholics were not allowed North of the 4.30 southern meridian. The Catholics considered the rule unfair and continued to claim Fakfak and parts of the Bird's Head, based on the visits by Le Cocq between 1894 and 1896. They referred to an agreement between the Netherlands and the Holy See of 1847 that gave the Catholics the right to move freely in Ambon and other places of the Moluccas.

In 1902 the Catholics established the Vicariate of Netherlands New Guinea, separated from the Apostolic Vicariate of Batavia, with Dr. Matthias Neijens as Prefect Apostolic, based in Langgur in the Kai Islands. It included, apart from South and West New Guinea, Biak and Numfor, the Kai and Tanimbar Islands, Banda, Saparua, Seram, Halmahera and other islands of the Moluccas. The Jesuits had worked for 14 years with success on the Kai Islands and the Kai remained an important source for teacher-catechists (guru). The missionaries of the Sacred Heart of Jesus (MSC) based in Tilburg, the Netherlands, provided the pioneer missionaries for the Southern part of Dutch New Guinea. In 1905 the MSC lay brothers Melchior Oomen and Dion. van Roessel and the priests H. Nollen and Phil. Braun came to Merauke. Br. Oomen died the next year, while van Roessel and Braun left Merauke for Kai in 1906. Fr. Nollen also left for the more promising Kai in 1909. Fr. Vertenten served the longest period

in the area. From 1910 to 1915 he served in Okaba, which is situated 60 km west of Merauke, and from 1915 to 1925 in Merauke.

At the constant pressure of the mission, the government began action against headhunting. In 1907 the south-eastern Marind-anim (Merauke region) had been punished by the Government for headhunting, but this was not effective as they again made headhunting raids on a large scale in 1911. In 1913 the government took stern action against head hunting, acts of revenge, burying people alive and infanticide. In the same year Fr. Jos van de Kolk developed the idea of a model *kampung* (village) in Okaba. In 1914 Merauke also got its model *kampung*. The aim of this idea was to enforce a radical change in the life of the Marind-anim, in order to save them from extinction by the venereal disease granuloma. Fertility rituals like the *otiv bombari* which implied the sexual promiscuity of all the men of a tribe with only a few women, were forbidden by the government as well as by the mission, because they spread the disease. This venereal disease had only recently been introduced, most likely by Australian workers who helped build the Merauke government station and who had casual sexual relations with Marind-anim women. It was tradition that many male members of the husband's clan had the duty to have intercourse with the bride on the first night after the marriage. The venereal disease, distributed through this ritual, led to infertility due to a rupture of the uterus. Life in the model kampong, which could be easily controlled by the mission, would make these practices more difficult. In 1914 World War I broke out. This made the funding of the mission more difficult and as a consequence all mission stations were closed except Merauke, where Petr. Vertenten MSC and Brothers J. Joosten and H. van Santvoort worked.

The Spanish influenza pandemic of 1918–1919 proved another disaster for the people of the south coast of Papua. Almost one in five people died because of it. Soon after this disaster Father Vertenten began a publicity campaign to press for an active and intensive interference of the government in the life of the Marind-anim in order to prevent the total extinction of the tribe. The government gave in and began to support the establishing of 'model villages' by the mission and the building of mission schools. The young Marind-anim were completely taken out of their natural environment and raised under strict mission control in boarding schools. Here they were also, initially, forced to wear Western clothes. The German anthropologist Paul Wirz strongly criticised the policy of the mission as it could only be implemented by using considerable violence. In 1922 and 1923 the mission posts of Okaba and Wendu were re-established, while a new post at Wambi was established. In 1926 the mission opened the Mimika area from Lunggu. In the same year the Government established a post in Kokonao. The Catholics established a mission post there the next year.

In 1925 the Catholic mission asked for a permit to settle again in Fakfak, a move that led to a serious conflict with the Protestant mission. According to the Catholics, a village near Fakfak, Sakertemin, had asked to become Catholic, on the basis of the visit of Le Cocq almost three decades earlier. Action by Roman Catholic politicians in the Netherlands, informed by the mission about the issue, led in 1927 in principle to the abolition of the separation line to prevent rivalry between the missions. At a conference in Ambon between UZV and the RC Mission, the governor of the Moluccas conceded the mission post in Fakfak but still objected to the Catholics moving to the Bird's Head, Waropen and the area around Hollandia (Jayapura) for security reasons. The Protestant mission delegate, based in Batavia, was also present at the meeting. He argued that if the Catholics moved into Protestant areas the Protestants would have the right to move into the Catholic areas of South Papua/New Guinea. Not much later, in 1928, a teacher from the Protestant Church of the Moluccas (GPM) arrived in Kokonao, where the Catholics had just opened a station. This led to a strong competition in the building of schools. Finally, in 1928 Fr. E. Cappers got permission to move to Papua, with the exception of the Bird's Head. By that time the UZV already had seven schools in the Fakfak area. In that year the MSC got help from the Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart. Two years later the UZV handed its mission work around Fakfak, Kaimana and the Arguni Bay over to the GPM. In 1931 there was a conflict in the Bintuni Bay, where a Roman Catholic teacher was removed by police after working there for five months. In 1932, at the educational conference at Tual, the Protestants proposed that the GPM would leave Merauke if the Roman Catholics would be prepared to leave the Bird's Head. This was unacceptable to Bishop J. Aerts. In 1936 the Roman Catholic Mission obtained the right from the governor general to establish missions anywhere, and the next year they established their first school in the Bird's Head, in Manehui. In that same year the Dutch Franciscans began to work in New Guinea. Five Franciscans priests and one brother settled in Fakfak, Babo, Ternate and Manokwari. Fakfak had then 700 baptised Catholics and fifteen schools. Babo is the place where the New Guinea Oil Company (*NG Petroleum Maatschappij*) found oil. It built houses, offices, a hospital and a laboratory. The company employed one hundred people from Kai, who had their own resident priest. From Babo he served eight villages. In 1937 the GPM had to withdraw from Mimika because of a shortage of funds.

The race between Protestants and Catholics has continued since then in the highlands that were still unknown territory until the late 1930s. In 1938 the commander of the field police, J.P.K. van Eechoud, one of the few Roman Catholic civil servants, organised a government expedition to the high lake-district of Paniai, which Fr. Tillemans also joined. On the basis of this visit

the Catholics claimed the Me area and the area of the Moni. In 1940 the Franciscans established a mission school in Arso, east of Jayapura, with Otto Suarabun as a teacher. 50 children went to school there. The area had been opened by the government in May 1939. In 1942 the first school children were baptised there.

By 1940 the Catholic mission in South Papua was established in Merauke and five other stations, with 16 sub-stations, and it had built eight churches, 30 elementary schools and a Papuan community of about 2,800. In West New Guinea and Mimika there were then two hospitals, two dispensaries, 173 schools and 10 other institutions serving about 1,600 Catholics.

World War II and post war development: 1942–1962

In May 1940 the German armies occupied the Netherlands. This led to the disruption of communication with the mission headquarters. In April 1942 the Japanese landed in Papua and soon conquered most of it, except Merauke and Upper-Digul. In May 1943 the Japanese occupied the area of Paniai, where Dr. J.V. de Bruyn still had continued his work as *controleur* (district officer). All European missionaries and other Europeans, except those with German nationality, were interned and forcibly moved to POW camps in East Indonesia. On 30 July 1942 the Japanese executed 15 missionaries of the MSC in Langgur, Kai, including the Vicar Apostolic Johannes Aerts. Earlier a Franciscan priest, A. Guikers, was executed in Ransiki near Manokwari. The missionaries in Merauke Regency, which was never occupied, continued to do their work.

The Christians had now to stand on their own feet and increasingly became self-sufficient. The Japanese occupation led to hardships for the Papuans as they were forced to work to build air-fields and roads without compensation. The Japanese dealt harshly with any real or supposed opposition. Angganita Menufandu, born in 1905 and baptised in 1932, led a salvation movement on the North Coast. She must have been an uncommonly gifted woman and had a reputation as a poet. Later, in the great movement, the texts of her songs were used in dancing and singing. She had appointed herself as Queen of Papua and also had an army. She was arrested and decapitated by the Japanese in 1942. Her movement, like the consecutive Simson movement, led by Somlena from Tablanusa in the Depapre area west of present day Jayapura, had some Christian elements, but it also practised communication with the spirits of the deceased in graveyards. This last movement was equally harshly repressed. Its leader was arrested and probably executed by the Japanese in Jayapura. Gurus were sometimes forced to join the Japanese police. The Japanese language replaced Dutch in the schools. In April 1944 the Americans landed at Jayapura (Hollandia). From

September 1944 to March 1945 General Douglas MacArthur had his headquarters for Papua/New Guinea and the Philippines in Hollandia, at Ifar Gunung. By July 1944 the Japanese were defeated after several fierce battles. Under the aegis of the Allied command the Dutch government returned as NICA (Netherlands Indies Civil Administration) with its headquarters in Kampung Harapan (Kota Nica) halfway between Sentani and Abepura. The rest of Indonesia remained occupied by the Japanese till 15 August 1945. The Dutch government was not able to return there until the beginning of 1946.

The Dutch colonial Government had until the 1940s not been very active in developing Papua and the Papuans. In 1947 Dutch New Guinea became a residency, separated from Ternate (the North) and from Ambon (the South). After the transfer of authority over Indonesia to the Federal Republic of Indonesia (RIS) in December 1949 Papua was kept outside the Indonesian Republic. The Dutch government now began in earnest to develop the area and to assist with the advancement of the Papuans, considering itself a mandatory of the United Nations. The Papuans were being prepared for self-determination. The Christian missions received large subsidies in order to enlarge the educational system and to initiate medical work, and hundreds of teachers and medical staff were recruited in the Netherlands. From 1938 onwards Papua had known a so called 'civilization school' (*beschavingsschool*), a simple three years primary school. The aim was 'to civilise' the Papuans with subjects like order and hygiene, sports, flute playing, singing, the preparation of parties, dancing, school gardens, basket weaving and also reading, writing and simple arithmetic. From 1945 onwards 'people's schools' (*Volksscholen*) were founded with a more elaborate curriculum of Malay, reading, drawing, writing, singing, flute playing and handicraft. After seven years *Volksschool* the best pupils could continue to a *Vervolgschool* (VVS), which provided in a three-year course of basic secondary education. The Protestants were at an advantage as they had more and better schools. Therefore more of their pupils could continue to further education. At the VVS a Papuan elite was being formed. Here Papuans were selected for further studies to become teachers, police officers or government officials, and also those Papuans were trained, who represented the territory at international conferences like those of the South Pacific. In the 1950s there was a strong effort by the Catholics to catch up with the Protestants in the area of education.

Between 1956 and 1962 the relations between the Netherlands and Indonesia heated up on the issue of New Guinea, which Indonesia claimed as Indonesian territory. The Dutch Mission Board of the Netherlands Reformed Church (ZNHK or 'Oegstgeest'), the post-war successor of the UZV, was ambivalent on the issue. By and large it supported the Indonesian claim to New Guinea as the mission still had many interests in Indonesia. Moreover, some leading Dutch theologians with an Indonesian work experience, like Johannes Verkuyl

(Salatiga), Hendrik Kraemer and Henk Visch (Bali), strongly identified with the nationalist case of the Indonesian Republic, which claimed Papua in order “to bring the revolution to an end.” Their views were strongly opposed by most Papuans and by the Dutch missionaries and teachers working in Papua, who supported the Dutch government in its effort to grant, in the long run, independence to the Papuans, separate from the Indonesian Republic. The Indonesian economy worsened in the mid 1950s and democracy declined when in 1957 Soekarno proclaimed Indonesia a ‘guided’ democracy, and had himself appointed as president for life. The Indonesian army began to play a more prominent political role and it became even less attractive for the Papuans to join the Indonesian Republic.

*From mission to the independent Protestant Gereja Kristen Injili,
1945–1962*

In the Protestant mission there was a minority that was pro-Indonesian. They came from Serui where Dr. G.S. Sam J. Ratulangie, an Indonesian nationalist politician from the Minahasa, had spent his period of exile from 1946 to 1948. Here he could easily influence many future leaders of the Papuans, as Serui was an educational centre. The GKI as it was established in 1956 under Rev. Rumainum, the first chairman of Synod, began to support the ‘integration’ of West New Guinea into the unitary Indonesian Republic. On the other hand, a leading missionary like Freerk Kamma gave up his position as a missionary in April 1961 to join full-time the New Guinea Council, the forerunner of a Papuan parliament. Kamma represented the inhabitants of the eastern Highlands. Rev. Izaak Samuel Kijne, the educationalist, had written a number of school books, in which the Papuan identity was stressed, like *Itu Dia*. His reading book *Kota Mas* (the Golden City) became very popular, as it linked a Christian story with elements of basic Papuan myths. Kijne also composed *Hai Tanahku Papua* (Oh My Land Papua) that became the Papuan national anthem in 1961, published in the booklet *Seruling Mas* (the Golden Flute).

In the post-war period the Dutch Reformed Mission came back with more and more responsibilities being handed over to the Papuans. In 1954 a theological school was established in Serui by Rev. Isaac Kijne to train Papuans as ministers. In 1956 the Evangelical Christian Church (*Gereja Kristen Injili di Nederlandsch Nieuw-Guinea*, GKI) was inaugurated, independent of mission control. It was symptomatic that at the inauguration of the new church only the Moluccan Church (GPM) recognised the new GKI. The Roman Catholic Church recognised it later, but the other Reformed and the Evangelical missions did not recognise the GKI. This means that they also would not object to doing mission work among GKI adherents. The conservative Reformed mis-

sions considered the GKI “not faithful to the Bible.” The Evangelical missions considered the GKI in fact pagan or at most syncretistic. Both missions were also very anti-Catholic. This attitude did not change until Papuans secured positions of authority in those churches in the late 1990s. The Catholics became more ecumenical under the influence of the Second Vatican Council. In 1969 the Roman Catholic Church and the GKI made an agreement on the mutual recognition of the sacrament of baptism, signed by Bishop R. Staverman and the Protestant ministers Mamoribo and Pelamonia. From 1995 onwards almost all churches have cooperated in the area of human rights advocacy and in the propagation of non-violent ways of political and social change in West Papua.

Table 2. *The GKI when founded in 1956*

Ressort	Presbyteries	Congregations	Candidate Congregations	Members	Ministers	Guru Jemaat	Evangelists
Hollandia	4	100	25	24,000	8	100	23
Sarmi	3	37	18	5,663	4	35	18
Yapen-Waropen	5	70	20	26,000	6	110	20
Biak-Numfor	6	122	–	34,000	8	130	–
Manokwari	6	56	29	5,436	3	60	30
Miei-Nabire	5	60	–	10,000	2	56	–
Sorong-Bintuni	14	60	70	17,000	4	100	70
Teminabuan	2	55	20	2,655	3	50	20
Inanwatan	2	12	5	3,655	2	17	5
Dutch speaking	1	8	–	3,000	8	–	–
Total	48	580	187	131,409	48	658	186

The Catholic Mission 1942–1962

Most of the colonial civil servants were Protestant. Roman Catholics felt at times that they were treated unfairly. When the Catholic Jan van Eechoud became Resident (Governor) in 1947 the Protestants accused him of favouring the Catholics by allowing them to move into the newly discovered highland territory, the Baliem valley. There were again Protestant protests when in 1951 the Catholics established a higher secondary school (*Hogere Burgerschool*, HBS) in Jayapura, the first of that kind in the territory. Many considered this form of education too advanced for the Papuans. In 1957 this school became a joint Roman Catholic and Protestant venture.

In Sorong, where the discovery of oil had brought many migrants, among whom were Catholics, the mission opened a primary boarding school and a lower secondary school. In 1948 the Mission Sisters of the Precious Blood, also called the Sisters of Tienray, in the Netherlands, went to Sorong and Fakfak to help in opening boarding schools for girls there. The next year the mission went to Sausopor, though several villages already had a Protestant church. In 1949 the Franciscan mission was separated from the Vicariate of New Guinea to form the Apostolic Prefecture of Hollandia, with Fr. A. Cremers as Prefect Apostolic. Ternate and Halmahera became part of the new Vicariate Apostolic of Amboina. In 1950 the Vicariate of Merauke was separated from the Vicariate of Amboina. The Vicariate of Merauke, with Fr. H. Tillemans as Vicar Apostolic, served South Papua/New Guinea, while the Vicariate of Hollandia served North and West Papua/New Guinea, which included the Bird's Head. By 1952 there were priests in Enarotali, Waghete, the Kamu plains, Mappi and Epouto on the Tage Lake, where the Sisters of the Franciscan Third Order, a lay institute, from Brummen in the Netherlands, established a boarding school for girls. Catechists from Mimika and Paniai assisted in this mission work. In 1953 the Vicariate of Jayapura had 39 Franciscan friars. There were 102 Catholic village schools, with 130 teachers and 3,500 pupils. Three quarters of the schools received government subsidies. There was a General Primary School that used Dutch as the medium of instruction. Sorong and Fakfak also had such a Dutch-language *Algemene Lagere School* with 400 pupils. In that year five Sisters from Heerlen came to work in Enarotali, Biak and Jayapura. The same year the Augustinian priests began work in an area South of Jayapura. In 1958 the Catholics opened a lower secondary school (*Primaire Middelbare School*, PMS) in Hollandia, which already had a Protestant PMS.

The Brothers of Our Lady of the Seven Dolours or 'Broeders van Voorhout' (CSD), established themselves in Kepi and in the Mappi area in 1956. They introduced a regional project with an agricultural centre in Mappi. This Welfare Plan of Mappi and the Regional Plan, which encouraged the cultivation of cocoa and rubber, were joint ventures of the mission and the government. Efforts were made at contextualisation of the Gospel. There was a collective planting day, which was a religious festival with a Eucharist in the gardens, the blessing of oil palm nuts and coconuts, the receiving of guests and singing and dancing. The tribe of Yah'ray (or Yaqay), however, refused to take part in the project as in their opinion it only benefited the mission and the government. In 1957 the Brothers established a *Vervolgschool* in Muyu. In 1958 the Dutch MSC handed over the area of Asmat to the Crosier Fathers and Brothers (the Canons Regular of the Order of the Holy Cross) from America. In 1969 the Asmat Mission became the Diocese of Agats with Alphonsus Sowada OSC as its first bishop. The Crosier Fathers concentrated on the preservation of the Asmat culture and the contextualisation of the Gospel. Without headhunting,

which was forbidden by the government, the traditional culture was doomed to extinction. The Mission encouraged woodcarving independent of headhunting. A museum of Asmat art was built in Agats and the marketing of the art was promoted. This provided a livelihood and pride in the work to the artists and to the Asmat in general.

To the south of Waris the Franciscans opened two stations, one in Amgotro and another one in Ubrub in 1952–1954. Between 1957 and 1959 the Franciscan Mission in Paniai expanded its work into the Moni area in Kemandora and Dugiundora, among the Amungme in Tsingga, Nuemba, towards Ilaga, the Dani area of the Baliem Valley and towards Sibil in the Star Mountains. In this period the Catholic mission began to build its first airstrips. The Association Mission Aviation, AMA, was founded, which bought its first aircraft in 1958. In 1959 Manokwari became an Apostolic Prefecture with Dutch Augustinians in charge. Fr. Petrus van Diepen OSA (1966–1988, died 2005), was its first Prefect Apostolic. Ten fathers worked in five stations in Manokwari, Sorong, Ayawasi-Fuog, Tintum-Ases and Bintuni or Steenkool, which had replaced Babo as the main population centre in the Bintuni Gulf. The area then had 4,000 Catholics, half of them Papuans.

The Evangelical and conservative Protestant missions

The Christian and Missionary Alliance (CAMA) had begun work in Paniai highland already in 1939, when it established a post in Enarotali. In August 1942 it experienced its first conversion of 16 Me people. In May 1943 Walter Post, Einar Mickelson and Zakheus Pakage, one of the early converts, were airlifted out of the Paniai region to Australia, just before the Japanese entered the area. The Japanese destroyed mission property and church buildings. In 1947 the first Me were baptised. In 1952 the first Me left the Bible school to be ordained as ministers (pendeta). In 1954 CAMA began work in the Baliem Valley among the Dani. In 1956 CAMA moved to the Ilaga Valley and to the Beoga valley to work among the Moni and Damai people. In 1962 130 Danis were baptised in Pyramid Mission.

In this period we also see the emergence of several messianic or salvation movements. The concept ‘cargo cults’ explains in an unsatisfactory way the interaction between traditional religious attitudes and Christianity. In a way these new religious movements form a specific Papuan response to the message of the Gospel. These movements may promise immediate and concrete rewards of conversion. However, the churches are doing something similar, enticing Papuans with small gifts, like tobacco and betel nuts. The Papuans get education and health services only through the mission. They can get paid jobs and new responsibilities and positions of authority. Through the church

they also get the chance to travel and meet other people and they can also meet marriage partners outside their own clan and language group. These are all concrete benefits of conversion. During the period under review numerous religious movements emerged inside and outside the established churches. Some of these movements were an expression of protest, while others tried to re-establish a group or tribal identity. This was the case of the *Wege Bage* movement, established by Zakheus Pakage, in the Paniai area. Zakheus Pakage had studied in Macassar from 1946 to 1950 to become a minister, sponsored by the CAMA, which was active in the Paniai area. On his return to Paniai, the people of Tigi, in the southern part of the Paniai regency, asked CAMA to send Zakheus to teach them, although this area was given exclusively to the Catholics in 1939. Zakheus attracted great crowds of people. It led to a great revival and to fetish burnings. In 1951 he began, however, to experience opposition from those people who had accepted Catholicism, especially from the chiefs who felt their position threatened. In that year also tribal wars took place. According to some people it was the Catholics who started spreading false rumours about Zakheus, as he was working with success in “their” area. He was several times arrested, accused of stirring up people against the government. In October 1951 Zakheus was arrested, accused of instructing his brother Jordan Pakage to burn houses and to kill pigs. Much of the local opposition came from Weakebo, a leader of the Mote clan, a rival of the Pakage clan of Zakheus. In 1951 Zakheus began to ask his followers to make a complete break with their non-Christian past by moving to separate villages, the so-called *Wege Bage* communities. *Wege Bage* is a nickname given to the Zakheus communities as it means “the disruptors of peace and order,” “those who bring chaos.” In 1952, after a conflict with CAMA missionaries, Zakheus was declared mentally ill. He was taken to the mental hospital in Abepura. Only in 1958 could he return to Paniai, but he was sent back to Sentani in 1963. He died there in 1970. Though Zakheus has passed away the movement still exists and it is still growing. It considers itself to be the national church of the Me people of Paniai. The *Wege Bage* followers try to reconcile their traditional Me religion with the Gospel. In their understanding knowledge of God already existed before Christianity came to Paniai. The teachings of Zakheus are seen as the lost Bible of the Me. Zakheus is Koyeidaba, the Me Messiah, who has returned. There is, basically, in their view, no difference between Me traditional religion and Christianity.

Conversion to Christianity in the Highlands often took place in the form of mass conversions, going together with an apparently complete break with traditional religion, as amulets, holy stones, masks and other sacred objects were destroyed. Missionaries had an ambivalent attitude towards this phenomenon. Was this really inspired by the Holy Spirit? What could have been the motivation for conversion even before the most elementary principles of

Christian doctrine had been taught? The type of conversion shows similarities with that of the *koreri* and independent church movements mentioned above. Conversion can be related to elements in the social structure of traditional society. In Paniai, conversion was the result of a strategy by local elite to settle their conflicts with leaders of rival clans. For instance, the conversion of Weakebo, a chief of the Mote clan, was in the context of a rivalry with the Package clan about land use in the Tigi district. In the same way particular clans choose to join the Roman Catholic Church, the independent Wege Bage movement, or the Evangelical Tabernacle Church (*Gereja Kemah Injil di Indonesia*, GKII). In one such move one chief could have many of his sons trained as ministers or teachers, and his daughters married to ministers. In this way he could, through the mission and the church, enormously increase his power of patronage.

Confrontation, appeasement and freedom, 1962 to 2004

Under strong political pressure from the Kennedy administration the Dutch government concluded the New York Agreement in August 1962, when it was on the brink of war with Indonesia that had mobilised an army to attack what it considered to be a last Dutch colonial remnant. Papuans themselves did not participate in this agreement. The Dutch handed over the administration of the territory by 1 October of that year to the United Nations. The UN, in turn, handed its administration to Indonesia on 1 May 1963. Not later than 1969 the Papuans were to get an opportunity to express their opinion about the integration with Indonesia in a UN supervised "Act of Free Choice."

Adaptation to Indonesian rule

From the very beginning in October 1962 the Indonesian army behaved more like an army of occupation than like one that had liberated the Papuans from an oppressive colonial power. The army claimed the land and its people by right of conquest. It tried to wipe out completely any traces of the Dutch presence in government and education. All schools had to destroy their textbooks in Dutch. From one day to the other teaching and examinations had to change from Dutch to Malay (Indonesian or *Bahasa Indonesia*). All textbooks of the Dutch period were replaced by those used in the rest of Indonesia, though the stories were in no way appropriate to the culture and scenery of Papua. Papuan children had to learn about a Javanese boy named Ahmed, and about volcanoes, trains and railway stations. The educated Papuans in the church, the educational system, commerce and government were suspected of being pro-Dutch and, by implication, anti-Indonesian. In the security approach of

the Indonesian army this meant that these were people declared to be 'enemies.' In December 1962 there was a night raid on the dormitories of the Teacher Training College, the Civil Servants' school (*Bestuursschool*), the Agricultural College and the Christian schools in Kota Raja in Jayapura, led by Indonesian soldiers using pro-Indonesian groups. Students were beaten up and then transported to the military camp at Ifar Gunung, where they were imprisoned. A considerable group of respected Papuans ended up in prison or were killed. Among them were Eliezer Jan Bonay, the first governor, Rev. G.A. Lanta, the former vice-chairman of the Synod of the GKI, Rev. Silas Chaay, secretary of the GKI, Rev. Osok of the Moi tribe of the Bird's Head, Saul Hindom, who had studied at Utrecht University and was the director of the Shell Oil Company in Biak, Hank Yoka, the former secretary of the New Guinea Council, Alfeus Yoku, a leader from Sentani and David Hanasbey, inspector of police in Jayapura. Permenas Yoku, a teacher in Sentani, was killed at the end of 1963, because he refused to sign a pro-Indonesian declaration.³ Johan Ariks, former chairman of the Papua delegation at the Round Table Conference in 1949, died, at the age of 70, in Manokwari prison, after a speech he gave on 1 July 1965, which was considered to be anti-Indonesian. It was a policy of the intelligence department to eliminate in a secret way anybody suspected of having links with people who wanted to overthrow the Indonesian Government.⁴ According to conservative estimates about 100,000 Papuans have been killed by the Indonesian army and police since 1962.

Dutch missionaries and teachers were allowed to stay. However, almost all Dutch Protestant missionaries and teachers left before the end of 1962. This meant a considerable loss. In 1956 of the 31 ministers 13 were still Dutch missionaries. In 1961 there were still 137 Dutch teachers, while the theological college had four Dutch lecturers. Rev. Tjakraatmadja from West Java was sent and supported by the mission to teach in the college. The Dutch-speaking presbytery of the GKI was abolished at the emergency meeting of Synod in 1962. The Dutch Franciscans, the Augustinians, the Crosier Fathers and Brothers, the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart and the Dutch Sisters persisted. All Catholic bishops and the archbishop were then Dutch. Most Dutch Catholic

³ Sawor 1969:40–45, quoting a Report by Silas Papare, member of the People's Congress, Jakarta, 13 March 1967. Zacharias Sawor studied tropical agriculture in Deventer, the Netherlands, till 1962. He was treasurer of Parkindo, West Irian Section, from 1963 till 1965. He was in prison from August 1965 till August 1966. In June 1967 he fled to Australian New Guinea. Since October 1968 he has lived in the Netherlands.

⁴ Sawor 1969:49, quoting a Report of the Command of the Regional Police XXL, West Irian, First Quarter 1966, by Drs. Soejoko, Chief of Staff Secret Intelligence Service, Soekarnopoera, 26 June 1966. The quotation is: "...ditembak mati dengan tjara yang tidak kentara oleh anggota2 dari daerah Indonesia sendiri. Hingga hal ini tidak dapat dimengertikan oleh pihak penduduk daerah Irian Barat sendiri."

missionaries later opted for Indonesian citizenship when it was offered. Bishop John Philip Saklil from Kampung Umar, Mimika Regency was consecrated bishop of the new diocese of Timika, separated from the diocese of Jayapura, in April 2004. Though born in Papua, he is not an ethnic Papuan. Up to now no ethnic Papuan has been ordained a bishop.

The churches had to adapt to working under an Indonesian government that had clear Muslim sympathies in the way it spend government grants to religions. 80% of the government grants to religions went to the Muslims, though in Papua they were only a tiny minority. The transmigration program of the government led to an influx of Muslims who also occupied the senior posts in government and administration. There is also the iron-fisted approach of the army and police towards any, even innocent, opposition to Indonesian rules and regulations. Any feeling of a separate identity, like 'Papuaness', was discouraged or even punished. Arnold Ap, director of the Museum of Anthropology of the Cenderawasih University, introduced Papuan hymns in Christian worship. He was accused of introducing war songs in order to lead the GKI against the Indonesian army. He was killed by the Indonesian army on 26 April 1984 together with Eddie Mofu, his fellow musician of the group Mambesak.⁵ Another Papuan intellectual and leader, Thomas Wanggai, died in 1996 in a Javanese prison, after being convicted and sentenced to life imprisonment for raising a home-made flag of the fictitious 'Republic of Western Melanesia.' Theys Eluay, chairperson of the Presidium of the Papua Council (PDP), who used Christian metaphors in his peaceful struggle for Papuan freedom, was killed in November 2001 by 'special security,' or *Kopassus* soldiers.

The police and army kept a close watch on the leadership of the Church. Not even the slightest criticism of the conduct of the Indonesian army was acceptable. When the synod complained in 1963 that the Indonesian army took away almost everything, even empty bottles, to Java, the synod council was strongly reprimanded and accused of anti-Indonesian activities. Critical voices from the Roman Catholic Church were also silenced. The Jesuit father Haripranoto, for instance, had to leave West-Papua in 1970.

The GKI

The GKI, the largest church, was in fact more or less the established and dominating church in the Dutch period. Many of the Dutch government officers were members, while most of the Papuan civil servants and police

⁵ His father, Baldus Mofu, a teacher and former member of the *Nieuw Guinea Raad*, died in 1979 while in military custody.

were also members. Now the GKI had to develop a theology of adaptation and collaboration to survive. The fifth synod meeting of 1968 in Jayapura was crucial as Indonesia wanted to collect support for the Act of Free Choice in the following year, which at all costs had to go in favour of Indonesia. Rev. Tjakraatmadja, said at the opening that everybody is united in Christ, (Col. 3:11) because Jesus Christ has died for everybody. Christ has endured the free choice, which is the cross of Golgotha. In this cross he was already the implementer of the “act of free choice” for the salvation of all the faithful. That the Church obeys and accepts the government is based on Romans 13. Illuminated by the Word of God it rejects the idea that the voice of the people is the voice of God, because satanic qualities have overpowered humankind.⁶ The implication seems to be that participation in the act of free choice will bring the cross, that is suffering, for the Papuan people. Rev. I. Mori was then the chairman of synod, succeeding Rev. F.J.S. Romainum who had served more than eleven years as chairman. At this synod meeting one of the chairpersons of the DGI, the Indonesian Council of Churches, Lieutenant-general (ret.) T.B. Simatupang, explained the advantages of the Pancasila ideology for the protection of religious minorities. With this chairman, who was still considered to be a member of the military, the conduct of the army in Irian Jaya since 1962 could not be discussed. Synod delegates who criticised the stand of Simatupang at the synod meeting were later visited at home by soldiers who threatened them as they had shown disrespect to a former army officer. The Military Commander of Irian Jaya-Maluku, also present at the synod meeting, told the synod that the Dutch were to blame because it was their heritage that made the Papuans afraid of the Indonesians, by making them believe that the Indonesians would make the Papuans poor, communist, and expose them to Islamisation!

Within this context it is clear that the GKI at synod or diocesan level hardly had the possibility to criticise the government or the army. This is probably also because in the official, compulsory, ideology of Pancasila the state, that is the government, was identified with society. Religion was viewed as a branch of government. All five recognised religions had to include respect for the Pancasila as their sole foundation (*azas tunggal*), notwithstanding the feeble protests of the Communion of Churches in Indonesia (*Persekutuan Gereja-Gereja Indonesia*, PGI, the formal successor to the Indonesian Council of Churches, DGI) that they already had Jesus Christ as their foundation (1984).

⁶ GKI 1968:37–42. Rev. Tjakraatmadja was a member of staff of the General Meeting of Synod of the GKI. (BPSU). He later became the Rector of the Theological College I.S. Kijne of the GKI. He was a Sundanese or West-Javanese. He is said to have protected GKI ministers when they were under suspicion by the army after many Papuans had expressed disappointment with the way the Act of Free Choice was organised.

The only realistic way to survive was to support the Indonesian effort at integration of the Papuans with the risk of the loss of one's identity. According to Hermann Saud, chairman of Synod of the GKI since 1996, Papuans as Christians, willingly, had to sacrifice their aspiration for independence, because their desire for independence legitimised a military presence in West Papua, which in turn led to the killing of Papuans. "As Christians we have to sacrifice in order to get life. The church cannot change the Indonesian reality that the government owns the people, and not, as in western countries, that the people is the owner of a government. The harsh reality is that Papuans are considered the property of Indonesia."⁷ Church leaders who for pragmatic reasons supported the Indonesian government and army policy in Papua were rewarded with appointments in government. Rev. Romainum, synod chairman from 1956 until 1968, was a candidate for the governorship at the time of his sudden death in January 1968. Rev. Malayalam, synod chairman from 1971 until 1977, became Chairman of the provincial parliament for the party of the Indonesian Soeharto-government, Golkar. Rev. J. Mamoribo became chairman of the provincial council and deputy governor. Rev. D. Prawar became chairman of the council of the Sorong regency, while the ministers N. Apaserai, Z. Rumere, Lukas Sobarofek and F. Ondi became members of a district council (*kabupaten*). Rev. Wim Rumsarwir, synod chairman from 1988 to 1996, was a member of the national parliament for Golkar from 1997 to 1998. The ambivalence of these ministers turned politician is clear as Rev. Rumsarwir was also a member of the 'Team of 100' which demanded independence from Indonesia in February 1999. He was an active member in the committee that demanded a far-reaching form of autonomy from parliament in 2001, including control of the army and prosecution of human rights violations in Papua.

In activities in the context of the struggle for freedom, like the *Musyawaharah Besar* (Mubes, the 'Great Debate') in 1999 and the Papua Congress in 2000, Protestant ministers played an important role. In the early 2000s, ministers could only maintain their independence, more or less, as they were paid by their congregations, and not by the government. The church, especially the GKI, became more and more involved in politics. In October 1999 the GKI, encouraged by the new freedom of the 'reformation' period after the fall of Soeharto, made a political statement when it rejected the division of the province into three provinces. It spoke on behalf of 'the people of West Papua.' The statement was signed by Rev. Herman Awom as vice-chairman of synod. At the parliamentary elections of 2004 as many as 80 candidates in Papua were ministers. To maintain its distance from the state those elected

⁷ Rev. Hermann Saud in a meeting with Prof. Gerrie ter Haar and the author of this chapter at the synod office, October 2001.

were suspended from their office as a minister, although they did not lose the right to preach.

By 2002 the GKI claimed to have about 800,000 members in over one thousand congregations, served by 400 ministers. It had an annual budget of Rp 4 billion (Euro 400,000), which made it a fairly poor church in financial terms. The poor presbyteries in the interior receive generous support from the few rich congregations, where a majority of members were migrants, in the urban areas of Jayapura, Abepura, Sentani, Timika, Biak and Sorong.

The Catholics

The 're-integration' of West Papua into Indonesia in 1962, confirmed by the formal decisions of 1969, caused hardships also for the Catholic Mission. There was a conflict about the Indonesian demand to hand over its schools to become government schools. The Catholic mission successfully resisted an effort to take-over the Teacher Training College in Merauke. However, when on 25 January 1965 Fr. J. Smit in Agats refused to hand over his schools, he was executed on the spot, by Fimbay, the Indonesian district officer. In 1964, all missionaries had to go to Java, for what they called an 'indoctrination course.' They were taught there the official state ideology of Pancasila.

In 1963 Fakfak joined the Apostolic Prefecture of Manokwari. The Sisters from Tienray established policlinics and a hospital in Senopi and Ayawassi. In 1969 a Catholic Academy for Theology (ATK) was established in Abepura with a four year course for pastoral workers and a seven year program for priests. It was not the classical major seminary, but a theological course that gave much attention to anthropology. In 1972 it had 38 students. In 1972 six Indonesian Franciscan friars joined the Dutch. They began work in Wamena together with two Papuan Franciscans. In that year also two brothers of the Society of the Divine Word (SVD), from East Flores, joined the mission to work in Merauke and in Manokwari. Javanese priests worked as Director of the Roman Catholic Centre and as army chaplains. When Herman (Yanuaris) Munninghoff OFM became bishop of Jayapura (1972–1997) the diocese had 31,560 Roman Catholics of which 23,000 were in Paniai, Mimika and Akimuga. The diocese of Manokwari had then 10,753 and the diocese of Merauke about 90,000 Catholics.

Other mission activity and the search for 'unreached' tribes and peoples

In this period there was an increased activity by American, Australian and conservative Protestant Dutch missions. These, generally speaking, have a vertical view of salvation. They try to abstain from political involvement.

Table 3. *The Roman Catholic Church in West Papua (2004 figures)*

(Arch)diocese	(Arch)bishop-birthplace	Catholics	Population	%
Merauke	Nicolaus Adi Septura MSC (Purwokerto, Java)	135,000	220,000	58
Jayapura	Leo Laba Ladjar OFM (Bauraja, Flores, NTT)	45,000	840,000	5
Manokwari/Sorong	Datus Lega (Kupang, West Timor, NTT)	55,000	560,000	10
Agats	Aloysius Murwito OFM (Sleman-Yogya, Java)	50,000	71,000	70
Timika	John Philip Saklil (Kokonao, Papua)	72,000	520,000	14
West Papua		357,000	2,568,000	14

(source: <http://www.catholic-hierarchy.org/diocese/djaya.html>)

They moved into areas not yet served by the Reformed and the Catholic missions. They originated from America: CAMA, the Regions Beyond Missionary Union (RBMU), The Missions Fellowship (TMF) and The Evangelical Alliance Mission (TEAM), and from Australia the Unevangelised Fields Mission (UFM), the Australian Baptist Mission Society (ABMS) and the Asia Pacific Christian Mission (APCM). Many of these missions were strongly anti-Catholic, which led to several religious conflicts. TMF was established in 1963 as a practical co-operation between CAMA, UFM, RBMU, ABMS and MAF, while ZGKN, ZNHNK and APCM became associate members. The Mission Aviation Fellowship (MAF) provided, since 1954, air services for these missions to reach the remote places where they had started work. Without MAF the expansion of so many missions into very remote areas would not have been possible, as often the air connection is virtually the only way to reach these places. MAF also established a radio network, connecting the various mission posts with each other and with the coast. By the 1980s it served 230 airstrips of which 175 were visited regularly. It employed 14 pilots and technicians. The Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL) entered Papua in 1972 with the purpose of studying Papuan languages, helping with literacy work, agricultural development and the translation of the Bible. SIL worked together with the state Cenderawasih University (Uncen) in Jayapura. It is active in 26 languages. In 1994 it employed 84 expatriate missionaries from America, South Korea, Germany and Holland, half of whom worked as translators.

In 1963 a group of Christians became independent of the CAMA mission as the Tabernacle Gospel Christian Church, *Kemah Injil Gereja Masehi di Indonesia* (KINGMI), later renamed *Gereja Kemah Injil di Indonesia* (GKII) when it joined

the sister churches in other parts of Indonesia. This new church sent its own evangelists to the Wolani and Moni tribes. In 1964 the New Testament appeared in the Me language. In the 1970s, however, came the real breakthrough with mass conversions. In 1977 and 1978 there was a rising of the Dani in the Baliem valley. 50,000 Dani warriors armed with spears and bows and arrows marched on Wamena. They were met by Indonesian soldiers armed with machine guns, who pursued the Danis into the Western Dani area. Those who fled to the mountains and forests were machine gunned from the air using Bronco aircraft. The Indonesian army also used traditional believers to attack Christian villages to suppress the rising. Thousands were killed in this rebellion. This was a traumatic experience with foreign intrusion into the ancient culture of the Baliem valley.

Table 4. *The GKII, 1961–1998*

	baptised members	Papuan ministers
1961	8,319	82
1971	23,261	523
1988	59,382	1,200
1998	150,000	1,616

In 2007 the GKII in Papua withdrew again from the Indonesian GKII to establish its own Tabernacle Church in Papua (*Gereja Kemah Injil* or Kingmi). It consisted in 2007 of 47 presbyteries and 8 Synod coordinators. This move was heavily contested by the headquarters in Jakarta and by the expatriate missionaries.

The Australian UFM entered Papua in 1950, and worked in Sengge and the Habifluri valley near Lake Archbold, where it established the Bokondini mission post in 1956. In 1962 it had its first baptism in Kelila. The American UFM established a mission post in Wolo in 1957. In 1966 it began work among the Ilukwa population and in 1968 among the Nggem. It established a hospital in Mulia, with a school for nurses. Here, also, many mission posts were destroyed by people opposing Indonesian occupation. The RBMU started work in 1957 in Karubaga in the Swart Valley. In 1961 it worked in the eastern highlands in Ninia and Karopun and in the southern coastal area among the Yali of Seng (Yalimo area). In 1972 there were 21,000 converts, 100 congregations, over 30 missionaries and 176 Papuan church leaders. The UFM, the RBMU and the APCM worked closely together. They formed the Evangelical Church in Irian Jaya (the *Gereja Injili di Irian Jaya*, GIDI), in 1973. In 1998 the GIDI had 178,000 members, 364 churches and 1,144 ministers or evangelists.

The ABMS began mission work in 1956 in Tiom. From there it extended work to Magi in cooperation with local Papuans. Mission work included, besides the bible school, literacy work, medical training and carpentry training. In 1976 the Baptist Church of Irian Jaya (*Gereja Baptis Irian Jaya*, GBIJ) became independent of the mission. In 1998 it had about 75,000 members, 110 posts and 86 Papuan teachers or ministers.

The Mission of the Reformed Congregations in the Netherlands and North America (*Zending der Gereformeerde Gemeenten in Nederland en Noord-Amerika*, ZGG, also called the Netherlands Reformed Congregation, NRC) began work in Pass valley or Abenaho in the Yali area with Rev. Gerrit Kuyt, a nurse and a teaching couple in 1962. In 1971 it extended work to Nipsan. In 1973 the APCM transferred the Tri valley to the NRC. Here Jan Louwse opened the post at Langda in the Una speaking area. The Una people in the Eastern Highlands experienced a sudden conversion in the period 1973 to 1980, similar to that of the Danis in the Baliem valley in the same period. The Una people associated the European missionaries coming into the area with the spirit world because of their pale skin. The newcomers who brought the Gospel used supernatural means of transport (a helicopter) and tools like steel axes, machetes and knives that were perceived as superior. Finally, some authoritative Una people had dreamt that pale skinned people would come to them and do well. These factors played a role while there was at the same time a spiritual crisis. The first village to be converted was Langda. The people in this village were considered the underdogs in the war with the village of Loryi in the Northern Ei valley. The frequent earthquakes in that period may also have had an impact.⁸ Out of this mission work, the Protestant Congregational Church in Indonesia (*Gereja Jemaat Protestan di Indonesia*, GJPI) emerged. From 1986 the GJPI worked in the Momina area. In several of these areas conversion took place in the form of mass burnings of fetishes.

In 1958 Rev. Meeuwes Drost opened, on behalf of the Mission of the Reformed Churches (*Zending van de Gereformeerde Kerken*, ZGK), a mission post in Kouh in the Bomakia area of the Upper Digul River, in the Merauke Regency. In 1968, 20 adults and 7 children were baptised. In 1971 they started work among the Citak people on the river Ndeiran and among the Kombai on the Wanggemalo river. The ZGK also worked in South Digul where the Roman Catholic Mission has stations in Butiptiri, Kaisah, Getentri, Merauke and Semaligga. In 1972 a Central Bible School was established in Boma. In 1976 contacts were made with the Reformed Churches in East Sumba, and together they established the Reformed Churches in Indonesia (*Gereja-gereja*

⁸ I am indebted to Dr. Dick Kroneman (SIL), NRC missionary and SIL translator, for this analysis.

Reformasi di Indonesia, GGRI). Since 1980 all the medical and educational work has been done by the Foundation for the Building of Reformed Service, or *Yayasan Pembinaan Pelayanan Reformasi*, YAPPER). In 1982 the first Papuan minister, Rev Rumi, was ordained. By 1984 there were 2,086 baptised members, 56 places of worship with Papuan teachers and two Papuan ministers. In 1986 the first church elders were inaugurated in the congregation of Kouh.

In 1962 the GKI, encouraged by these mission activities and aided by the German Rheinische Missions Gesellschaft (RMG), began mission work in the Yali area of Kurima and Mugwi. Rev Siegfried Zöllner and medical doctor Wim Vriend acted as the pioneer missionaries here. The GKI also established a congregation in Wamena to serve their members working there as policemen, army personnel and civil servants. All these missionary initiatives made of Papua Christianity a really scattered, divided and unrelated network of opposing and often hostile Christian communities. And above are noted only the major denominations related to different and often competing foreign missions.

Independent churches and the development of a people's theology

A number of independent church movements were active in this period. In Sorong lives Ambrosius Fatie who calls himself Tuan Jesus or Lord Jesus. He has 12 female disciples and about 50–100 followers. He is preaching West Papua as the place where the Garden of Eden used to be. The Papuans have a special place in God's creation order. In West Yapen there is a congregation that calls itself New GKI, and which also has associations with the messianic *Koreri* movement. By 2000 Micha Ronsumbre had started, in Biak, a church with the name *Koreri*, characterised by many prayers and much singing by church choirs. Micha is a woodcarver, who also carves *korwar* wood carvings to honour the ancestral spirits. These movements can be seen as a legitimate response by Papuans just as the African Initiated Churches are now seen in this perspective. The government has been very rash in accusing these movements of political rebellion, separatism or treason. In April 2004, for instance, Mathias Furima, who has established himself as a prophet ("Jesus") in the Bintuni area, was shot by the police, accused of being a member of the Papuan Freedom Army (*Tentara Papua Merdeka*, TPM). Two of his female disciples were also killed.

From the grassroots a true liberation theology developed. Political events were interpreted using metaphors from the Bible. The Papuan people were identified with the people of Israel, in the Old Testament. As Israel had been for 40 years in the desert, so the Papuans had to be 40 years in the desert of the Indonesian occupation (from 1962 on), before they would enter the

Promised Land, that is obtain *Merdeka* (freedom or independence). When a team of a hundred Papuan elite went in February 1999 to President Habibie to demand independence they were like Moses demanding freedom for Israel from pharaoh. They Eluay, the Chairman of the Presidium of the Papuan Council (PDP), who had worked for the Indonesians in the 1960s and 1970s to identify anti-Indonesian Papuans, and to realise a pro-Indonesian vote in the Act of Free Choice, was like Moses, who also at first had worked for pharaoh, the enemy of Israel, but who later turned against pharaoh and worked for the liberation of his people. The Papuans are compared with Jonah, who is swallowed by a big fish, which is Indonesia. In the end the fish will spit out Jonah. Jesus is seen as the King of the Papuans, who will deliver them from evil and bring them freedom. The Lord gives special blessings to the Papuans as they remain faithful Christians in a country with a Muslim majority. The Muslims are punished with a financial crisis, with disasters like earthquakes, forest fires and plane and boat accidents. During the protests at the funeral of Thomas Wanggay at the beginning of 1996, when the army did not allow students to carry his coffin from Abepura to Jayapura, the road was blocked by laying large stones in the form of crosses on the road. Students sang the hymn, *Onwards Christian Soldiers*. Many shops in the centre of Abepura and the market were burned. However, shopkeepers who could show a copy of the Bible, were safe.

With the fall of Soeharto on Ascension Day 1998 (*Yesus naik, Soeharto turun*, "Jesus rises, Soeharto goes down," according to the Papuans) and the establishment of more democratic institutions and a greater freedom of opinion in the whole of Indonesia, the churches also gained more freedom, together with the challenge to give spiritual guidance to the Papuans in their movement for freedom. The churches were challenged to define a new role of leadership in society, relatively independent of the government and the Golkar Party. The movement for freedom is called the movement for *aspirasi M*, the longing for freedom, *Merdeka*. Papuans claim their right to exist and their right to freedom and independence. Real people's theologies emerge. Papuans have a black skin, curly hair, they are Christians, and have a separate identity, separate from the 'Indonesians', who are called 'amber' or people with a 'white' skin, straight hair, who practice the Muslim religion.

Flag raising ceremonies with the forbidden Morning Star flag, introduced in 1961 for the new state of Papua, started in Biak in July 1999. This was severely suppressed with numerous casualties. In December 1999, initiated by Theys Eluay, there were flag raising ceremonies all over Papua, all peaceful, to celebrate the first raising of the Morning Star flag on 1 December 1961, and to remember the victims of Indonesian oppression. All of these ceremonies, including the later ones in the course of 2000 at Timika, Nabire, Sorong, Manokwari and Wamena, and other places, were at the same time religious

ceremonies, with prayers, hymn singing, and sermons. The ceremonies on 1 December 1999 were allowed, but from that time on the army and the mobile brigade of the police began to suppress very severely all these manifestations of the desire to be free. There were so many casualties each time the police or the army intervened that Papuans began to speak about 'Bloody Biak,' 'Bloody Nabire,' and 'Bloody Timika,' as each time there were human casualties when the army or the police tried to lower the Morning Star flag.

To establish peace and order, and to prevent the outbreak of religious conflicts as in neighbouring Ambon in 1999, Theys Eluay introduced the idea of the *Pos Komando Papua* (Posko Papua). These Command Posts were distributed all over the province and manned by Papuan youth dressed in a black T-shirt and black trousers, so called Satgas (*Satuan Tugas* or task force). These effectively took over the maintenance of law and order in the province, until December 2000 when they were forbidden by the police. Christian prayers and hymns were part of the rituals of the flag raising and of the activities of the Satgas Papua at the Posko.

When in 2001 Rev. Bennie Giay, lecturer at the Theological College Walter Post, and the Franciscan Brother Theo van den Broek tried to mediate in the kidnapping of two Belgian travellers in the Star Mountains they were received as representatives of the Tabernacle Church and the Roman Catholic Church. In an official ceremony the Papuans there gave them back officially the Gospel, symbolised by the Bible. In their opinion the Gospel had only brought them misery. With the Gospel also the Indonesian army and the Freeport mining company had entered and taken away their freedom. In their view these were one complex entity. They saw that the chairman of the Evangelical Tabernacle Church (GKII) received large sums of money as an advisor to the Freeport Company. Freeport gave visiting missionaries money to convert the Papuans to make them acquiesce with Indonesian rule and to give up their resistance. By rejecting the collaboration of the church the Papuans showed an exegesis of the Gospel consonant with that of liberation theology.

Already, before the relatively greater freedom experienced since 1998, the churches had protested in a quiet and careful way against the human rights violations taking place in Papua. In April 1992 the Evangelical Christian Church (GKI) published a report, based on observations by church members, elders and ministers, of serious human rights violations. This so-called Blue Book, because of its cover, was handed to the Community of Indonesian Churches (PGI) for inclusion in the assembly papers of the Assembly of the PGI to take place in Jayapura in 1995. However, the PGI refused to take action on the report and, when the government got wind of it, the board of synod was severely reprimanded. In December 1992 the military commander of Papua/

Irian Jaya and the Moluccas branded the Church as an organisation that wanted to break the unity of Indonesia and did not want to see progress.⁹ In 1995 Bishop Herman Munninghoff of the Diocese of Jayapura, courageously made an official complaint about serious human rights violations in Timika, addressed to the newly established National Committee for Human Rights (Komnas HAM), established by Soeharto. This made it difficult to accuse the bishop of separatism or treason. Komnas HAM took up the issue and Munninghoff's report received international attention.

Interchurch cooperation

Following the report of the Jayapura Diocese of the Evangelical Christian Church (GKI), the Roman Catholic Church and the Evangelical Tabernacle Church (GKII) established, in January 1996, Elsham (*Lembaga Studi dan Advokasi Hak Azasi Manusia*) which in a professional way investigates human rights violations and reports on them. It also has build up a network of people it trained to report human rights violations all over the province. The Evangelical Church established a separate department of Law and Human Rights (*Hukum dan HAM*), which also makes its own investigations into human rights violations. The Roman Catholic Church established the Justice and Peace Department, headed by Br. Theo van den Broek OFM, succeeded in 2003 by J. Budi Hernawan in 2003.

In July 1998 the three largest churches, the GKI, Roman Catholic and the GKII, set up Foreri, the Forum for Reconciliation in Papua/Irian Jaya.¹⁰ This was charged by the Indonesian Secretary of State under President Habibie to organise a national dialogue. This in turn led to the meeting of the "Team of 100" asking *merdeka* or independence from President Habibie in February 1999. Elsham employees, as well as the board of the GKI synod, have been threatened when they made critical reports on activities of the army and the police. The army and the police threatened to bring them to court on the accusation of defamation (*fitnah*). When reporting on human rights violations of the army and police they were said to have blemished the good reputation of the security forces, a crime according to Indonesian law. The director of Elsham was interrogated for 24 hours after making a report on the police attack on the dormitories of students from Paniai and the Baliem in Abepura in December 2000, which led to a great number of casualties, three of them fatal. The chairman and the secretary of the synod of the GKI were interrogated by the army after a report on the Betaw case by the Legal and Human

⁹ See the weekly *Tifa Irian*, December 1992, quoted in Giay 2005:215.

¹⁰ There is a wink at the concept of *koreri*, which denotes the salvation offered in the traditional religion of the people of Biak, Numfor and other places around the Cenderawasih Bay.

Rights Department of the synod. In Betawa a teacher was kidnapped, who then 'disappeared'. The commander of the *Kopassus*, special command of the army, forced the GKI to change the word *Kopassus* as the likely perpetrators into 'an unidentified group'.

Some oil companies are aiming at 'co-operative security' or 'community security'. By investing in community facilities and involving local people in decision-making companies can get the people living and working around a facility onto their side, reducing the risk of raids on their pipelines, and providing early warnings of potential threats. Using this concept Beyond Petroleum (BP) invited church leaders, among others, to a conference and offered them appointments as paid advisers of the company. Rev. Hermann Saud, the synod chairman of the GKI from 1996 until 2005, accepted the offer. This strengthened his bargaining position as he could now play the company out against the Indonesian government and the army, which exerted strong pressure on him. He pleaded with BP for a privileged treatment of the Papuans, for special educational and training facilities for local people, and for a moratorium on migrant workers from other islands.¹¹

Table 5. *Some data on religion in West Papua*¹²

<i>Religion</i>	1971 ¹³	%	1980	%	1992	%	2002	%
Protestants	414,515 ¹⁴	56	708,279	61	961,466	56	1,300,000	56
Catholics	140,639	19	256,279	22	408,574	24	531,700	23
Muslims	162,845	22	132,930	11	335,412	20	440,900	19
Other	22,206	3	67,711	6	5,561	0	n/a	2
<i>Total</i>	<i>740,205</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>1,165,199</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>1,711,013</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>2,300,000</i>	<i>100</i>

Conclusion

The Christian Churches have been a major factor in the developing of a Papuan identity. They helped to open the territory and to mediate in the influences that shaped the future of the Papuans in the areas of education, health services and political development. The churches are, however, in an ambivalent position. After the forced integration with Indonesia the churches helped to ease

¹¹ Personal communication to the author, Abepura, March 2002.

¹² Source: *Irian Jaya Dalam Angka*, Kantor Statistik Irian Jaya, Jayapura. These figures are based on the national census and on samples. The figures differ from the statistics the churches themselves keep about membership, as they may define membership in a different way.

¹³ Based on a census of 150,786 people in urban areas only.

¹⁴ Of these 331,376 (76%) GKI.

the difficulties of the transition, seen by a majority of Papuans as the stealing of their legitimate right to self determination. In the new dispensation there was a great influx of migrants. It can be estimated that one quarter of the new migrants, that is over 200,000, are Christians. The churches have helped the integration of these newcomers into Papuan society.

However, after the fall of Soeharto in 1998 and the beginning of the era of *reformasi* and democratisation, the churches entered a precarious position as the military and the police did not want to give up their privileged position and hand over power to elected bodies. The churches are threatened by the army and the police when they plead for peace and reconciliation and when they call for an end to human rights violations. They are pressured to move to a very vertical, non-political, theology, ignoring the problem of an unbalanced form of development, and of the progressive disenfranchisement of the Papuans. If the church leaders follow such a 'security theology' they are rewarded with posts in parliament or government. However, threats, including anonymous death threats, continue. The murder of Theys Eluay on 10 November 2001, Heroes Day, was traumatic, as Theys was considered very close to the Kopassus 'elite' troops and the top brass of the army and police. If even Theys could not save himself by extensive collaboration who else could be saved? No promise of protection or reward from the side of the army and police could be trusted. Since that fateful day the government and paramilitary groups have stepped up their action to counter the political aspirations of the Papuans and to protect Indonesian economic and political interests in the region. In the middle of 2002 the Muslim militia of *Laskar Jihad*, notorious for its use of violence in furthering its aims for the Islamisation of Ambon, Halmahera and Poso (Central Sulawesi), opened an office in Timika. *Laskar Jihad* operated in agreement with members of the security forces.

The churches have responded by supporting fully the idea of the Papuan nationalists, of creating a Papuan peace zone and restricting themselves to non-violent action methods. The churches have also tried to find more unity in view of the threat of a provocation similar to the violence that took place in Ambon, in the Moluccas, in the beginning of 1999. In February 2003, on the occasion of the celebration of the coming of the Gospel, the churches decided to form a Papua Chapter of the Communion of Churches (PGI), with Rev. Hermann Saud as its chairperson. This includes Baptists, Evangelicals and Pentecostals, but not the Roman Catholics. With the Catholic Church there is cooperation in the area of human rights action.

At Ipenburg

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CHAPTER NINE

MOLUCCAN CHRISTIANITY IN THE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY BETWEEN AGAMA AMBON AND ISLAM

During the nineteenth and twentieth century the Moluccas were no longer the economically very attractive region of the two previous centuries. Java and Sumatra became the important regions. The period of very high prices for spices was over. The revolt of Pattimura on Saparua (1817) also made clear that the age of cruel measures and colonial oppression could not be continued. The close relation of various parts of the Moluccan islands with Dutch colonial authority became more and more expressed in a very strong involvement of the region, especially Christian Ambonese, in the colonial army. Because of the relatively high level of education in Ambon many Christian Moluccans went to others parts of the archipelago as teachers, police, or administrative officials. The city of Ambon, no longer a centre of the spice trade, became a major administrative centre for East Indonesia.

Between 1794 and 1815 there were no ordained Dutch Protestant ministers in the region, except for a few visitors, serving for one or two months only. As before, Christianity survived thanks to the local teachers who had also functioned as leaders of the congregations. They directed Sunday services with singing of Psalms, prayers and readings of sermons in the High Malay of the Leydecker translation of the Bible. Observers praised the congregation coming to the service for the neat, all-black clothing. Especially at the Lord's Supper those who were admitted were very earnest and serious. But this seriousness was also coloured with joy when the congregation did what they liked most: melodious singing, often in parts. Some local teachers preached by themselves during Sunday service but most of them read sermons written by Dutch ministers. In the course of the nineteenth century the former structure of the Christian church was restored again, with ordained Dutch ministers at the top of the hierarchy, and with better qualified Moluccan teachers at the local level. Notwithstanding the introduction of some elements of individualistic, pietistic spirituality, inspired by the missionaries of the NZG who served congregations until the 1850s, the Christian minority (never more than 45% in the whole region) remained closely connected to the colonial administration. This government orientation had not only financial consequences, but also it fostered the specific Christian-Moluccan identity.

In this contribution we will first focus on the organisation of the Protestant Church, its personnel and the education of the faithful. History shows that

these aspects received the highest priority in the process of consolidation and rehabilitation in the life of the church. The strategy of pioneering leaders like Joseph Kam in Ambon (1815–1833) and his colleagues was to seek a rehabilitation of the life of the church as a consequence of not only the financial but also the moral bankruptcy of the VOC. This was an effort that had to be continued until the twentieth century. In the second half of the twentieth century, besides discussing the three classical 'self-s' of self-propagating, self-financing, and self-governing, we will seek attention for the ecumenical relationships with other denominations, relations between church and state, with Islam and finally for the role of the Christian church in social-economic development.

During the last decades of the VOC the level of the church's service had declined drastically, most of all in its Dutch personnel. During the 1780s there were still three ministers for the Ambon congregation, but between 1801 and 1815 no minister was serving the congregations in this region. The last minister had left Saparua in 1801. In Banda and Ternate the situation was similar. On the level of the villages the native leaders continued their duties. They had not received the full theological education of the Dutch ministers and they were not entitled to administer the sacraments, nor could they provide a full service to their congregations. But they sustained the local congregations and they prevented the return to tribal religion. Thanks to their commitment the Christian church survived, although instruction to the faithful was on a low level and there was no administration of sacraments.

In 1817 the Dutch returned after the British interregnum (1812–1816/7). This was the beginning of a new consciousness of the responsibility for the congregations that had been entrusted to them during the VOC centuries. Through several royal decrees the *Protestantsche Kerk in Nederlandsch-Indië* (commonly called *Indische Kerk*) was founded as a union of the various denominations that were present in the colony (Reformed, Lutheran, Baptist, Arminian and Mennonite). This was not only a sign of royal superiority over the Protestant Churches, it was also a proof of the king's firm wish to give intense and coordinated guidance to the local congregations that were often in decline. For the Protestants in the Dutch East Indies this policy meant that their church was under generous subsidy, but also under the bureaucratic and political supervision of the colonial administration. For much of the 19th and first half of the twentieth centuries there were not enough ordained and qualified ministers in the Moluccas. Therefore the government and the leadership of the *Indische Kerk* asked European missionaries who were sent by the missionary organisations to serve the Moluccan congregations. After Jabez Carey, Joseph Kam was the first to work under this constitution. Between 1819 and 1832 not less than 14 missionaries followed him to the Moluccas. Most of them, unfortunately, died soon or were not fit for this difficult work.

After the death of Joseph Kam the role of the missionaries was brought more and more under the control of the ministers of the *Indische Kerk*. But the role of European missionaries, besides the ordained ministers of the *Indische Kerk* remained important, also after the formal breaking of the contract with the Dutch Missionary Society (NZG) in 1864, as we will see below.

The strong emotional ties of the Moluccan Christians to their religion became evident in the major uprising of this period, the Pattimura revolt of 1817. Thomas Matulesia, alias Pattimura, a Christian born about 1787, became a soldier in the British colonial army. In 1817 he did not accept the restoration of Dutch rule. Among the complaints of Pattimura was the fear that the payment of local Christian teachers by the central government would be discontinued again (as was already the case in 1810 when Daendels ordered the villages to collect money for the payment of teachers). This was seen by Pattimura as an effort of the Dutch to “dismiss the teachers and to destroy the Christian religion.” He also complained about the new paper-money, replacing the old coins. The paper money could not be used for the alms-box in the churches, because tradition (*adat*) only validated gifts in coins. This could endanger the care for the poor. There were also rumours, that in this region of a mosaic of Christian and Muslim villages, the Muslims would be forced to embrace Christianity and that the liturgy would be changed. The Dutch were really surprised that religion was so prominent in the causes of the revolt. When the centre of the revolt was reconquered, the village of Saparua on the island of the same name, the Bible was found open on the pulpit of the church at psalm 17, “Hear, O Lord, my righteous plea.” The head-teacher of Saparua, John Sahetappy, an orthodox Protestant, had defended the uprising. While Thomas Matulesia was executed, teacher Sahetappy was sent into exile to Java with many others, among them several teachers. In 1828 they were allowed to return and Joseph Kam wrote on that occasion, “our good Ambonese were released from exile and immediately after their arrival here presented themselves to me.”¹ The story of this revolt demonstrates the affection of the Moluccan Christians, living among Muslim villages, to their religion. It also shows the gap between the faith of the village communities and the official teaching of the ministers who were nominated by the central government. Much of the history of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries has to do with the tenacity of traditional Christianity (also labelled *Agama Ambon*) and the wish for purification and restoration, from the side of expatriate ministers and missionaries.

¹ Enklaar 1963:48–56.

*The dream of Joseph Kam (1815–1833):
a purified and committed Reformed Church*

Because of the shortage of ordained ministers, the government had to ask help from the missionary organisations. For the Moluccas this was done with the nomination of Dutch missionary Joseph Kam (a member of the NZG) who had arrived in Indonesia thanks to the help of the *London Missionary Society*. Between 1815 and 1864 the NZG provided the most important support in personnel for Protestantism in the Moluccas. The first of them was Joseph Kam.

Joseph Kam, born in 1769 in the Netherlands in a Reformed milieu, studied for some time with the Moravian Brothers in Zeist, where he was deeply imbued with a pietist spirituality. As an adult he worked some twenty years in the leather trade. He married in 1804, but when his wife died in March 1806, he decided to follow his vocation as a missionary. After being accepted by the Netherlands Missionary Society in 1808, he received some individual tutoring with learned and pious ministers. In 1812, still in the midst of the Napoleonic wars, he went to Britain for further missionary training, and to look for a way to enter mission territory. The London Missionary Society helped him to travel to Java in 1814, where the British government assigned him to work as a minister for the Moluccas, based in Ambon where he arrived on 3 March 1815. Kam was the first ordained Reformed minister in the whole of East Indonesia since 1801. He combined the ideas of pietism (organising revivals, prayer meetings and evangelism) with elements of the Reformed Church (the service of preaching and the sacraments, application of church discipline, and church organisation).

In Ambon, Joseph Kam was preceded by Jabez Carey, son of the famous Baptist missionary in India William Carey. Jabez Carey arrived in Ambon in 1814, at the request of the British Resident of Ambon, Byam Martin, but had to leave the country in 1818 because, after the end of the British rule in 1817, the Dutch government did not permit a British minister in the Outer Islands. Besides, as a Baptist missionary, Carey was not suitable for a blend of Christianity that connected ethnicity and religion as strong as the Ambonese did. Jabez Carey rejected the baptism of children, while Joseph Kam saw it as one of his first duties to baptise all those born in Christian families since the last minister had left the region in 1801. Their number was so great that for many months Kam introduced a maximum of 120 children per Sunday.²

² In 1815 Joseph Kam baptised 2919 in Ambon, 1290 in Haruku, 2538 in Saparua and 650 adults in Seram (Enklaar 1963:179). Carey worked later for a long time in North India. (Müller-Krüger 1968:134) In 1823 the Swiss J. Bär arrived. He was sent by the Dutch Missionary Council, NZG, and stayed in this region until his death in 1851. Like Joseph Kam he received a government salary. (De Jong & Van Selm 1999:54).

As the principal minister for the Moluccas, Kam made yearly extensive travels, partly in his self-built schooner.³ In 1821 there were, outside the town Ambon, schools and congregations in 28 villages on the island of Ambon; Haruku had 7 congregations, Saparua 13, Nusalaut 7, and Seram 13 and there were small congregations on Buru, Manipa and Boano. This was only the Central Moluccan region. During some of his trips Kam went as far as Ternate and the Minahasa in the north, or to Tanimbar and Aru in the south.⁴ The ceremony attached to such pastoral visits was already established during the past centuries, when most remote villages also were only visited by an ordained minister once a year at the most. After arrival at the coast the minister was greeted by the whole congregation, including the village head and his council. While singing psalms and hymns, the group went in procession to the village church, where a service was held as the beginning of a series of consultations, sermons and services that could take a few days. Local teachers were inspected and if not available they were sought from the capital.

Soon after his arrival in Ambon the 45 year old Joseph Kam remarried with a Eurasian lady Sara Maria Timmerman, the daughter of a rich Eurasian merchant of Ambon, at that time 18 years old. She had a good education and was of great help to her husband.⁵ Kam held no formal school, but he kept some 10–16 promising young men in his house, where they received, for several years, regular instruction from his wife and the *Meester Besaar* or head teacher of Ambon. The course was officially called “Institute for the Education of Qualified Assistants.”⁶ One of the largest elementary schools of the residency (that counted about 77 schools) was established within the compound of Kam’s house in Ambon and these candidates also did some work in this school. Besides, they had to work in Kam’s printing press and on his schooner. After some five years of training they could be sent to one of the vacancies to become a teacher in the regency.

Kam was active in the propagation of Christian reading (bibles, psalm books, catechisms, collections of sermons for places where no ordained minister was settled) and he printed these in his own office or ordered them from outside. Occasionally Kam noticed that members of the congregation knew the hymns and psalms by heart and held the hymnbooks upside down! Instead of the very formal Reformed Christianity of the previous century, Joseph Kam introduced a warm and much more personal piety in the revival style of the Moravians. The main agents of this reform were the teachers who were educated by him

³ His 1826 pastoral trip is described in De Jong & Selm 1999.

⁴ List of the travels in Enklaar 1963:72–74. List of the schools and congregations: *ibid.* 175–178.

⁵ A sympathetic picture in Enklaar 1963:43–44.

⁶ *Instituut voor de Opleiding van Bekwame Medehelpers*; Enklaar 1963:114. De Jong 2002: 79–80.

in person and sent out by the colonial government, with a salary and with the authority of the resident of Ambon. In his 1825 trip to the south-eastern islands of the Moluccas, Kam visited seven of them and the resident who had organised this trip where he was the main inspector, ordered eleven more to be stationed on various islands.⁷

After Francis Xavier and Justus Heurnius, Joseph Kam has been called “the third apostle of the Moluccas.”⁸ He was by far the most successful in his own lifetime. Like his predecessors he brought the European Christianity of his time. He was a severe fighter against idolatry and pagan remnants. In 1819 he launched in several places on Ambon a special action against statues, jars and sacred items related to the ancestor cult. Some of these objects were thrown in pieces in front of the population of villages or tied to heavy stones and cast in the sea. In the island of Seram, the tribal religion was even more evident. Only some coastal villages had accepted Christianity or Islam. The visiting minister Sytse Roorda van Eysinga saw in the early 1820s that schoolboys up to the age of 14 years took off their cloths when they came out of class and went naked in the Christian village of Kamarian. Therefore he considered the place not suited for a Dutch minister with his wife. This remained so for several decades: only in February 1858 missionary A. van Ekris settled in Kamarian. After some time his garden was destroyed, many things from his house stolen; people refused to sell food to him, and he was cheated in many ways.⁹ In another place on the south coast of Seram, Elpaputi, there were in 1818 still many skulls, a result of the still continuing head-hunting, placed in the *baileo*, the town hall.¹⁰ On the level of the central administration, it was resident and staff as well as the missionaries and ministers who promoted the sole and uncompromising adherence of orthodox Christianity. But on the local level the raja, the hereditary village chief, still fostered, besides formal confession of Christianity, many aspects of traditional Moluccan religion. The village teacher often had neither the authority nor the education to make drastic changes. In the villages the teacher (in most cases coming from another place) was not only recognised by the central administration, but was among the local elite, very often second only to the hereditary village chief or raja.

Joseph Kam was, above all, the reorganiser of congregations that were guided by teachers who gave instruction and said their prayers in traditional Malay. Some people gave him the nickname *Tukang Sakramen* or ‘Sacramentalist’ for his frequent and sometimes easy administration of sacraments, especially

⁷ De Jong 1999.

⁸ H.J. de Graaf 1977:208.

⁹ Coolsma 1901:693.

¹⁰ For some examples see Enklaar 1963:79–80; there also 34–39 for various judgments about Moluccan Christianity in the early nineteenth century.

in places he could visit no more frequently than once per year. In his period of duty 14 more missionaries arrived, but most of them died quickly or were unfit for the difficult task. The best were for some time instructed in Ambon by Kam himself and then sent to other places, like Reynt le Bruyn who, between 1819 and 1829, restructured the Protestant Church in Kupang, Timor, and the missionaries Johann Schwarz and Johann Riedel who, in 1831, began the very successful mission in Minahasa. In 1837 the Central Moluccan Christians totalled 35,877 baptised, not a dramatic increase on the 30,435 of the 1821 statistics. After the turbulent period of the collapse of the VOC and the English rule, they had found their place again in the state administration.

*Bernhard Roskott and the organisation of the teaching of the
Ambonese Church (1835–1864)*

Bernard Roskott, was a qualified teacher, not a minister. He was in 1834 sent by the NZG to Ambon where he arrived in March 1835. He started a much better training for teachers, the *Teachers' Training School* of Batumerah, 30 minutes walk from the town of Ambon, where he was the principal until 1864. From 1843 he had P. Picauly as his major assistant. Together they ran, besides the teachers' training, also a primary school, where the older students could practice their skills. Roskott was a full-time teacher who maintained a severe daily schedule for his pupils. A school day started with prayers, four-part singing and instrumental music (flutes and the small organ, played by Roskott himself). After formal prayers and singing, pupils of the first form were stimulated to write their own short compositions and to practice such new music using verses of the bible. Picauly then took the preliminary students to his classroom for the basic subjects that should be taught in the elementary schools: Malay language, handwriting, arithmetic, general and especially biblical history and geography, singing and flute-playing. Roskott took the older students himself. In the afternoon students had to work in the garden, because Roskott's estate looked like a small plantation, where the pupils could train in agricultural skills. The students practiced some carpentry, often worked in the printing shop, already set up by Joseph Kam, and were trained in housekeeping according to European tradition, in this respect supervised by Mrs. Roskott.

Bernhard Roskott gave much attention to the proper understanding of the classical Malay used in school and church. He wrote a Malay reader and a special book explaining the high-Malay words of the Leijdecker translation of the Bible. Visitors praised his school for its very disciplined and efficient teaching, but criticised the content. Biologist Dr. P. Bleeker was disappointed to see that only a little natural history was taught, although this could make

the Moluccans “into industrial and more practical people.” Roskott himself found it sufficient that he explained natural phenomena in a general way “to cure the children of the native population from superstition and popular fears and prejudices.”¹¹ Roskott’s teachers’ training school started with 12 students in 1835, and counted 18 students in 1855. At that time already 82 teachers were sent to various places in the region, most of them (61) in Ambon, but also three in Manado,¹² one in Ternate and six in the Aru-archipelago. He was at that time more and more seen as a producer of the best native teachers one could find in the region, but he also realised that his institute was not keeping pace with the progress of the period. His students were not the best he could imagine. For some time he even thought of going to Java to start a much larger training institute under much better conditions.

Roskott was not a tireless and frequent traveller like Joseph Kam. Between 1836 and 1850 the villages outside Ambon town were only visited twice. In 1851 Roskott was formally nominated inspector of the government schools and this pushed him to make trips for inspection, but in fact he limited his travelling as much as possible. Already in the 1840s he realised that the graduates of his school needed continuing supervision. Roskott trained his students to become champions of orthodoxy. In their villages, however, they had to deal with the established traditions of the *Agama Ambon* and the village chiefs. Roskott proposed about 1840 that the civil administration should be withdrawn from the traditional rulers and put in the hands of the teachers. This would have involved some kind of Protestant theocracy for the Christian villages. In 1842 this proposal was not only rejected by the resident but at the same time it was decided that the NZG should gradually withdraw from the Moluccas. Missionaries should be accepted within the *Indische Kerk*, the Protestant Church of the Indies. In 1850 a formal decree was issued that missionaries should not interfere in the management of the schools, and in 1867 the last more or less independent missionaries who worked under formal authority of the NZG were accepted as Assistant Ministers (*hulppredikers*) in the *Indische Kerk* in the Moluccas. Besides the fully ordained ministers, the European missionaries would continue to play a role in the Moluccan Protestant Church. Their number also would remain small and never exceeded the total of 13 for the whole of the Moluccas. Due to the lack of ordained ministers (who had to be trained at Dutch universities) the *Indische Kerk* had to rely in this way on the personnel of the missionary societies, but the situation caused more

¹¹ For detailed descriptions of Roskott’s boarding school: Kroeskamp 1974:65–85 and Chr. G.F. de Jong 2006, I. For the visit by Bleeker, see p. 72.

¹² One of these was W. Hehanusa (1799–1887) who later became one of the first ordained Indonesian ministers, Van den End 1980–I:165.

and more tensions.¹³ Roskott with his institute remained the backbone for the training of native teacher-preachers, but because of the many conflicts among the missionaries he could not give the same level of inspiration as Joseph Kam. After his wife had died he married a young woman with whom he already had a child and for this reason (besides growing criticism on his style of education) he was dismissed by the NZG, in 1864. He stayed on in Ambon until his death in 1873.

The Moluccan Christians were proud, convinced, but certainly not specifically missionary Christians. We have already seen above the case of the Pattimura revolt in 1817, where one of the objections against the return of Dutch rule was the fear that they would try to convert the Moluccan Muslims. Another case occurred in the 1840s in the island of Buru. The government official, the *posthouder*, a native Ambonese, wrote in 1846 to the governor of the Moluccas in Ambon, J.B. Cleerens (1846–1850), that he had made propaganda among the population and had found a number of people who were willing to embrace Christianity. In Ambon, however, minister A. van Davelaar and Bernhard Roskott were not so enthusiastic. They were not yet sure about the level of education of the candidates for baptism and also suggested that possibly these people had tried to escape obedience to their Muslim chiefs by becoming Christian. The governor even sent the zealous *posthouder* a reproach “because he had lost sight that conversion is an ecclesiastical affair and his views did not go along with the rulings of the institution.” Only some decades later did both church and state become more active in sending Christian teachers to regions where the race between Islam and Christianity was still undecided.¹⁴

The pastoral and missionary strategies of the Indische Kerk, 1864–1935

For the period after 1864 we see two conflicting tendencies among the Moluccan Christianity. With the return of the full authority of the *Indische Kerk* the Christian community and its leadership was again brought under the supervision of the civil administration. Against this policy was the movement towards separation of state and church that resulted in the establishment of an autonomous Protestant Church in the Moluccas (*Gereja Protestan Maluku*, GPM) in 1935. The first realm where this separation was attempted (but never fully accomplished) was education.

¹³ In 1854 the number of ordained ministers for the ‘resort Ambon’ was reduced from four to two; besides there was a minister for Ternate and one for Banda. Quite often, however, even these four positions were not occupied. Van den End 1989–II:59.

¹⁴ Enklaar 1947:64–66.

The newly appointed first national inspector for native education, J.A. van der Chijs, made in 1867 a tour of inspection to the Moluccas. His conclusion was that the Muslim schools concentrated on the study of Arabic and the Qur'an (reading first, understanding came much later or never). In the Christian schools he saw the same pattern. Another more or less foreign language was the subject of education: the classical high-Malay of the bible, the biblical stories and the prayers and sermons for church use. Geography lessons were restricted to the map of Palestine and the travels of Paul (if schools had a map at all) and history was identical with biblical history. Van der Chijs concluded, "The social position of these teachers is until this day so ambiguous that it is impossible to discern whether they are schoolmasters or teachers of religion. Their common name is, indeed, schoolmaster, but we could also call them catechist or comforter for the sick."¹⁵ This inspection by Van der Chijs was the beginning of a great reorganisation of education in the Dutch East Indies. It was the start of a continuing cleavage between Islamic and Christian education. Islamic education stayed outside government influence and support, while Christian education became the starting point for a development towards a broader national system of education. However, this development also involved the strategy that a school-teacher could no longer automatically be the preacher for the local congregation.

The number of ordained ministers and their location (two in Ambon, one respectively in Ternate and Banda) was more related to their pastoral service for Europeans than for native Indonesian Christians. In fact, since the arrival of the VOC, it was the local teachers who had given guidance and leadership to the native congregations. After the separation of school and church, that started in the 1860s, besides the *guru midras*, the school teacher, the *guru jemaat*, the teacher of the congregation was assigned the task of preaching and leading the service on Sundays and several occasions during the week, catechesis, pastoral visits to the sick, burials and further pastoral tasks. The same government decree of 1867 that formulated the position of expatriate missionaries as 'assistant ministers' also stipulated that one of their duties was to give personal tutoring to the *guru jemaat*, who could become an *inlandsch leeraar*, literally a 'native teacher' but in fact to be understood as a native minister. They would have the right to administer the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper. In 1880 the first of these native ministers passed his examination and he was ordained in 1881. In 1885 special theological schools were founded for native ministers, STOVIL (*School tot Opleiding van Inlandsche Leeraren*), the first two in Ambon and Tomohon. In 1935 nearly all 347 native

¹⁵ Steenbrink 1974:3-4.

ministers within the *Indische Kerk* served congregations in the Moluccas, who were assisted and controlled by their own church councils.

The development towards a fully recognised native minister did not run as smoothly as suggested above. During the first decades after the 1880s the native ministers could exercise their duties only under strict supervision of the few expatriate full ministers of the Protestant Church in Ambon, Ternate and Banda. The hierarchical system still survived, for rather a long time, with the consequence that administration of the Lord's Supper was separated from the administration of baptism. As we will see below, for strategic reasons, in quite a few cases baptism was administered quickly also to people with very little knowledge of the Christian faith. But in the matter of church discipline and admittance to the Lord's Supper the Moluccan church kept to very strict rules both for the receivers and the administrators. From the ordination of the first native minister onwards there were limitations to their jurisdiction. Only in 1916 was it decided that native ministers after 10 years of service would have the power to administer both sacraments, and even the implementation of this rule was delayed for a few years. This regulation applied in the regions of East Indonesia where the *Indische Kerk* had many native members, in the Moluccas, Papua, Timor, and the Minahasa.

On 29 January 1821 Joseph Kam had founded an Auxiliary Missionary Society in Ambon, the *Hulp-Zendelinggenootschap*. Its purpose was to give support in the Moluccas to incoming missionaries from Europe but it should also prepare native Moluccan workers for missionary activities among pagans and slaves. For these purposes Joseph Kam also organised weekly prayer meetings.¹⁶ These missionary activities were not directed to Ambonese Muslims. As we have seen above in the discussion of the Pattimura revolt, there was a strong feeling among Ambonese that the division of society among Christians and Muslims had become part of the Moluccan identity. In 1926 Hendrik Kraemer noted that several ministers and evangelists said with pride, "Relations between the two groups [Christians and Muslims] are excellent. They leave each other completely alone."¹⁷ This static situation of living side by side, according to Kraemer, was some kind of *apartheid*, where the Christians felt their situation as a privileged and higher status (*pangkat*) compared to that of Muslims or pagans. They used also the expression *pangkat serani* or 'Christian status' to indicate their special position. Efforts to bring Muslims to this status and to convert them to Christianity would disturb the social balance.¹⁸ It was a quite usual practice that Christians would receive a child of a Muslim branch of the same clan into their house for school education, because Christian villages had

¹⁶ Enklaar 1963:125.

¹⁷ Kraemer 1958:22.

¹⁸ Kraemer 1958:14.

much better schools than the Muslims. These children were called *anak piara*, foster child. In this case they would take care that these Muslim children would never eat pork. Christian sections of a mixed clan helped the Muslims of the clan at the restoration of a mosque and vice-versa and there are examples of ritual utensils, like an offertory-box in a church, that were donated by Muslims. Christians and Muslims descending from one ancestor were bound together in the *pela*-relations. They were obliged to give mutual assistance also in religious matters, to socialise at Christmas or the end of Ramadan, and to defend each other. Every few years big celebrations were held to intensify the *pela*-relations with ceremonies, often still resembling pagan rituals and therefore criticised by orthodox Muslim and Christian preachers alike.

Around 1900 several missionary organisations were founded in the Central Moluccas, like the *Fonds Indjil* (Gospel Fund, Ambon, 1880s), *Eltheto* [Come!], *Biji Sesawi* [Mustard Grain], and *Ora et Labora* [Pray and Work]. These organisations show the role of the better-educated ministers and their flock, because of the use of Greek and Latin terminology. The Central Moluccan Christians, while reluctant to preach to Muslims, were still quite supportive of missionary work among pagans in remote areas, as we will see from several examples below. These were not only activities by professional missionaries. Many initiatives were taken by Ambonese who worked in the civil administration as teachers or as policemen. Wherever they lived they often tried to establish a small community interested in Christianity and to find support for these people from the Central Moluccan churches.

Their long relationship with Dutch colonialism, and some kind of pride for their affinity to the ruling class, did not prevent the rise of nationalism among the Central Moluccans. The *Sarekat Ambon* or Ambonese Union was the first outspoken nationalist organisation outside Java. It was started by the journalist A.J. Patty who became suspected of communism, like many of his colleagues at the time. In that same period some efforts were made to give the Moluccan Christians an organisation independent from the *Indische Kerk*. It was the Rev. T.J. van Oostrom Soede, minister in Ambon between 1926 and 1932, who initiated this way to a more outspoken Moluccan Christian identity that led to the erection of a distinct Moluccan Protestant Church (GPM) in 1935. He nominated the first Moluccan, the Rev. J. Loppies, to become director of the school for the training of evangelists (*guru jemaat*) and another, the Rev. W. Tutuarima to become director of the STOVIL, the College for Native Ministers. In 1928 a drastic revision was made in the institution of the local church councils. Until that year their members were nominated by the ministers, as most things were done from the top down in the *Indische Kerk*. Since 1928 larger and better developed local congregations could already elect their church councils and many more would follow later. In 1932 the Rev. H.H. van Herwerden made the draft for the constitution of the future

GPM in a Presbyterian style giving preference to the autonomy of the local congregations, governed by ministers, elders and deacons. Still, in its constitution some link with the national Reformed *Indische Kerk* remained intact. In 1933 a proto-synod was held and on 6 September 1935 the new GPM held its first constitutive synod. For the financing of the Church this new constitution had no direct consequences. This was for a larger part still the responsibility of the colonial government.

The independent Protestant Moluccan Church in a new society, 1935–2000

Between 1950 and 1965 the Moluccan Protestants had to find their position in the new social-political situation. Dutch colonialism was abolished, and this meant that the privileged position of the Protestant church, already diminished since 1935, came to an abrupt end. Instead of being close to a national government the GPM had to find its own way. In some way the colonial identification between Protestantism and government was continued by the dominant position of Protestants in the administration of the province of the Moluccas, but on the national level (that also influenced the provincial situation) GPM started to develop the more prophetic style of a major social organisation outside and sometimes also opposite the government. Church leadership hesitated between the two extremes and we will see more examples of this in this section.

The general principle of the GPM became the separation of church and state with recognition of the autonomy of both institutions. In this structure the church has its own obedience to the word of God and in various situations the church may have the duty to witness to God's Word to society and the state. But the church, living within society, cannot take a position far away from the government and should try not to enter into strenuous relations with the government.

This had already become clear during the Japanese occupation of the Moluccas, 1942–1945. In the Reformed tradition churches obeyed the biblical principle of Rom. 13:1, "Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God." Therefore the GPM felt obliged to acknowledge and to honour the authority and power of Japanese rule. But on the other side the church was conscious of its prophetic role, like to prophets of the Old Testament. This became clear in the protests against the Japanese elements that were introduced in society and church, such as the ritual honour to be given to the Japanese flag before the beginning of Sunday services in the churches. The GPM also protested against censorship of the sermons that were to be delivered at Sunday services. This position was not

accepted easily by the Japanese authority. Among the members of the GPM 32 ministers (among them 4 Dutch citizens) and 47 *guru jemaat* were killed. Several of them were beheaded by the *Kempetai*, the Japanese secret police. This was a much higher number than in comparable regions, like Minahasa. It may have been related to the forthright attitude of the Moluccans, different from the more quiet Minahasans.¹⁹

A similar conflict, although on smaller scale, occurred in 1957, when the GPM made an official statement against several members of the military authority who urged members of the GPM to work for them on Sunday, at the very hour of the church service. This measure was considered to be against the fixed tradition of the GPM to hold service at that particular time. This tension between the GPM and the local government, controlled by the military, increased when the printed statement of the church was confiscated by the police at various places (among these on Saparua). Finally, this matter could be settled only after negotiations between the military and representatives of the Protestant Church.

During the Japanese period the most important leader of GPM was Rev. Simon Marantika, born in 1909 and a graduate of the police academy (1934) and the theological school of Jakarta (1940). In 1942 he became chairman of the GPM Synod, a function he occupied most of the time until 1967 when his activities moved to ecumenical positions in the National Council of churches of Indonesia and within the CCA, Christian Council of Asia. Even more prominent in the early decades of GPM was Rev. Thomas Pattiasina (1916–1980), born in Saparua and after his education in Jakarta minister in the GPM, since 1946. He was an outspoken nationalist and therefore in 1948 dismissed from his position in the church until his rehabilitation in 1954. As chair of the GPM Synod between 1961 and 1976 he was most important in the process of leading the young independent church to maturity. His role for GPM is compared to that of contemporary Protestant leaders like Sihombing in the Batak Church HKBP, Wenas in Minahasa, Rumainum in Papua and Aniroen in West Java.

In the period 1960–1990 there were not many problems between the church and the local authorities. During this period the church received many subsidies for its schools, from elementary schools to secondary schools and colleges. Even the theological faculty received government subsidies. From its side the church also gave public support to many government programmes in the field of development like programmes for Planned parenthood, birth control. In its Synod of 1976 the GPM stated, “The presence of the Church through its mission to this world cannot be separated from the discussion of the many

¹⁹ Marantika, 1989:30–32; *De Protestantische Kerk* 1946:8.

problems in people and society because the Church has been sent for the benefit of this world and in the midst of the problems of this world.”²⁰

At the dissolution of the Royal Dutch Indies Colonial Army in early 1950 some 4,000 Ambonese soldiers rejected the choice between inclusion in the new Indonesian army or dismissal. The majority were Protestants but among them there were also some 300 Catholics and 150 Muslims. In the Moluccas at that time local Christian separatists rejected the formation of the unified Indonesian Republic in April 1950 and pleaded for the formation of an independent Moluccan state, *Republik Maluku Selatan* (RMS). Because of the political unrest in their homeland the Moluccan ex-soldiers of the colonial army were for some time registered as soldiers of the regular Dutch army. In this situation they were brought to the Netherlands, together with their families, in total some 12,500 people. Initially it was thought that this was a temporary measure, but this Moluccan group has since then remained in the Netherlands. Especially the Protestants among them fostered a ‘theology of exile,’ dreaming of a return to Indonesia in order to live in an independent Ambonese state. In the Netherlands the tradition of the *piring natzar* was stimulated from the 1990s on by young Moluccan ministers who tried to eliminate the ‘exile theology’ and the outspoken nationalism of their Christian compatriots. The *piring natzar* is a ‘plate of vows,’ put on a table together with the hymn book and the bible. This sacred place was traditionally for offerings in memory of the ancestors. But now most often food and money, is put on the plate and after the intention of the prayers has been realised, the gifts are put in the hands of the ministers. The continuation of the separatist RMS ideology by a number Moluccan Christians, both in Indonesia and the Netherlands, has caused much trouble in Indonesia and we will see below how the subject became an important issue during the inter-religious fighting of the period 1998–2003. The introduction or rather the official promotion of the *piring natzar* by a group of young Moluccan ministers in the Netherlands has also caused a conflict between church leadership in the Moluccas and the Moluccan Protestants in the Netherlands. In the Moluccas the practice of *piring natzar* has long been considered one of the remnants of the ancestor cult of the *agama Ambon*, and since the nineteenth century orthodox ministers had tried to eliminate this pagan practice that now became stimulated and propagated as acculturated Protestantism by some young ministers abroad. Because the Moluccan community in the Netherlands continued the dream of this independent Ambonese Christian nation they rejected the idea that they would become part of the Reformed Church in the Netherlands, but they

²⁰ “Kehadiran Gereja dalam tugas pengutusannya ke dalam dunia, tidak dapat melepaskan diri dari setiap permasalahan yang menyangkut seluruh aspek kehidupan bangsa dan negara, karena gereja diutus untuk dan di dalam kesulitan dunia.”

founded a Provisional Moluccan Church in the Netherlands. Due to several conflicts and schisms, there were about six Moluccan Protestant Churches in the Netherlands in 2000 with some 50,000 members. They were present at the meetings of the synod of the GPM and had also the status of observers at the assemblies of the Indonesian Council of Churches (PGI).²¹

Before Independence, GPM was organised in a very centralistic way. All rulings were established in a top-down structure. In order to counteract this undemocratic system by a more egalitarian approach, it was decided at the 1978 synod that three church centres were to be opened, besides the central office of the church in the town of Ambon: Ternate for the Northern Moluccas, Masohi for the Central Moluccas and Tual for the Southeast Moluccas. In the daily management of the synod also three visitors for the three regions were nominated. Their function was to communicate between the central office and the *klassis* (the ecclesiastical district, presbytery). The Catholic Church had the seat of its diocese in Ambon, but erected also regional centres in Ternate, Langgur (close to Tual) for the Kai islands, and Saumlaki for the Tanimbar islands.

Until Independence, education was the basic social activity of the Christian churches. The fast growth of the population and the need for more graduates from secondary schools and specialised universities put a great challenge to the educational institutions of the churches. In the 1950s many schools were taken over and numerous new ones founded by the Indonesian government, but still many schools continued under the responsibility of the churches as private schools, most often with partial subsidy from the Indonesian government.

During the colonial period the education provided by the church was mostly at primary or secondary level (besides the theological education at STOVIL), but after the 1950s vocational schools, a large variety of colleges for nurses, teachers' education and a fully equipped university, UKIM, *Universitas Kristen Maluku*, were opened. In the early 1970s GPM had the responsibility for 330 elementary schools in the Moluccas. Only in a few other regions had Protestant churches erected more schools (in the Minahasa 367, in Papua under GPM responsibility 551 and Timor 452, but all the other Protestant churches had considerably fewer schools). There were 18 secondary schools and three vocational schools under the supervision of this church. At that time the GPM had 607 local congregations, served by 364 ministers, 95 evangelists (*guru injil*) and 26 assistant teachers for the congregation (*guru jemaat*).²²

²¹ Antje van der Hoek 1994. Piring Natzar 1995.

²² Ukur & Cooley 1979:135 and 228.

During the period of Japanese occupation, 1942–1945, the new colonising rule had instituted an enforced unification of the Christian churches in this region. The *Ambon-Syu Kiristokyo Rengokai* (AKR, the Ambonese Union of Christian Churches). After the surrender of the Japanese army this body was terminated, but it was not the absolute end for cooperation between churches. With the increase of churches who played a role in many regions in the Moluccas, some types of ecumenical cooperation continued or were initiated. Especially the common celebration of Christmas became very popular, and in general common celebrations were the most successful expression of ecumenical activities. On the official level, there remained strained relations between the established churches like the GPM and the GMIH (for this Halmahera church see below) with churches that were considered as intruders or new-comers like the Salvation Army, Seventh Day Adventists, Pentecostals and the Roman Catholics. GPM and GMIH were born in a tradition where each was the sole acknowledged Christian religious body in a specific region. They had grown in the tradition of the prevention of ‘double mission’ and considered other denominations as intruders in ‘their territory.’ As a state-funded church, GPM also had a strong idea of being the more or less official public religion, at least until the end of the colonial period. It took some time before these churches were willing to accept other churches as their equals in this region. Especially the cooperation within the Indonesian Council of Churches (DGI, later PGI) was very helpful for a better ecumenical mentality. The Full Gospel Church (*Gereja Bethel Injil Sepenuh*, GBIS) in Halmahera finally won much respect in the Northern Moluccas. These two churches, GMIH and GBIS, organised common bible studies and lectures that were frequently attended by women from these churches. On 25 May, the anniversary of the foundation of the Indonesian Council of Churches it has become common practice that GMIH ministers deliver sermons in the GBIS churches and the other way round. Also at celebrations of mixed marriage the cooperation of ministers from both sides has become a quite usual practice, even with the Roman Catholics. This has been a good means to reduce tensions that often occur between Christians of various denominations especially in many remote regions of the Moluccas.

Notwithstanding various improvements of the ecumenical climate, still many aspects of the former rivalry between the Christian denominations can be observed. In the atmosphere of the increased religious enthusiasm during the New Order regime of General Soeharto (1966–1998) there was much resentment related to the physical appearance of church buildings, schools and offices. All churches wanted to show their strength and growth through prestigious buildings. On the national level the Indonesian Council of Churches (PGI) is uniting the mainstream or classical Protestant Churches, but in the Moluccas there are also some more Evangelical-Pentecostal churches united in the provincial branch of the PGI. This *Persekutuan Gereja-gereja Wilayah*

Maluku united not only the GPM and GMIH but also the more Evangelical-Pentecostal *Full Gospel Church* (GBIS, already mentioned above), besides the Indonesian Bethel Church, the *Gereja Tuhan di Indonesia* (Church of the Lord in Indonesia), the *Central Surabaya Pentecostal Church*, the Salvation Army, the *Gereja Kalam Kudus* (Sacred Word Church) and the *Gereja Perjanjian Baru* (the Church of the New Testament).

The Northern Moluccas: Halmahera, Sula and some other regions

The largest island of the Moluccas, the mountainous and not easily accessible Halmahera, and the remote Sangir and Talaud islands had in the nineteenth century no longer any remnants of the period of early Portuguese missions. Especially the coast of Northeast Halmahera had come more and more under Islamic influence. However, from 1866 there was the beginning of the mission of the *Utrechtsche Zendingsvereniging* in Halmahera. The most prominent missionary during the first decades was Hendrik van Dijken, who had arrived in the Indies as a Gossner missionary: a farmer without much formal education but with a strong body and a keen interest in many things, who came to the Indies to do missionary work besides his major job of manual work and earning his own income. He arrived in July 1866 in Galela. Initially Van Dijken and two missionaries of the UZV did not receive a permit from the Sultan of Ternate to settle among the inland people on the borders of Lake Galela, but in 1867 he founded a new village, called Duma after Isaias 21:11 where an oracle against Dumah (lit. 'silence') is pronounced ending in, "Morning is coming." A flood that occurred a few months after Van Dijken settled in this region, was seen by him as a divine punishment for the stubborn people who refused to accept his message. This interpretation brought the first seventy converts for Van Dijken. They moved to the Christian village of Duma where they received a thorough introduction to Reformed Christianity. Before moving they had to promise to renounce pagan practices, not to work on Sunday and to attend catechism and church services. To their great surprise they were not obliged to cut their long hair (as in the case of conversion to Islam).

Van Dijken was a clever and industrious man who did much reading and in 1873 he was ordained to become a full minister of the Reformed Church. His work proceeded very slowly, not in the last place because of the strict conditions he set for conversion: a thorough knowledge of Christian doctrine and faultless lifestyle. Only in July 1874 were the first five men and two women baptised and also immediately admitted to Holy Communion. In 1879 the first two elders for the church council were nominated as well as a Christian head of the village of Duma. After this, the raise of baptisms grew more quickly, but there were still cases where people had to follow 12 years of catechism classes before they were allowed to receive baptism. In 1895, after thirty years

of work, Van Dijken had baptised 62 adults and 138 children. His flock in Duma was then about 150 people. Van Dijken died in June 1900.²³

Van Dijken wanted to establish a small but pure and committed Christian village that lived quite isolated from the surrounding world. People who entered his village after firm promise to keep to the Christian law were prevented from continuing to have contacts with their former villages. In cases of marriage and burial Van Dijken was prepared to pay the fines for people who refused to fulfil the obligations to their relatives. Also for girls who could have produced a bride price for their families compensation was paid by the missionary village. Van Dijken tried some new food and cash crops for Duma in order to enhance its independence. But he proved to be a better missionary than a farmer. The chocolate plantation that he started was no great success.

In 1896 another missionary arrived, who would be the leader of the small but steadily growing Christian community for a decisive period of its existence. A. Hueting worked until 1915 in Northeast Halmahera and later continued his work in Buru. He settled at Gamsungi, somewhat to the south of Duma and Galela, in the region of the Tobelo tribe. Within one year of his arrival Hueting experienced a great opportunity for mission work. The chief of the Tobelo—the only tribe of Halmahera that was still in majority pagan—had come into conflict with the Sultan of Ternate, and was sent into exile. Thereupon the tribe revolted against the sultan, the nominal head of all the natives of Halmahera. In protest against the measures of the sultan there was a strong movement in favour of conversion to Christianity that resulted in about 3,000 baptisms between 1898 and 1900. Hueting had a quite different approach compared to Van Dijken. He divided the process of becoming a true Christian into three stages. People who applied for catechism lessons and expressed their wish for membership in the Christian congregation received immediately a *surat murid*, a written proof that they were trainees. After they had followed the catechism classes in a disciplined way for several months, they were baptised. Only after a longer period of catechism lessons and disciplined life as a Christian they were admitted to the Holy Communion as the final stage of initiation to Christianity.

At baptism the converts had to bring the material remnants of their pagan religion, like amulets and ritual objects, and these were burnt on a special place that was already destined to become the place for the church of this new congregation. In this way it was already, before the building of the church, a sacred place (*keramat*). The Tobelo Christians were not gathered in one village, but continued to live among their relatives, their own tribe and even among some Muslim families. Hueting also did not foster a drastic

²³ Van den End 1989:127; on Van Dijken: H. Reenders 1991:336–339.

break with traditional customs. Traditional marriage was considered valid for Christians as well. No new Christian names were suggested at baptism. In this case the converts were sometimes more radical than the missionary. Quite a few converts of the Tobelo tribe wanted to have a biblical or more specifically Christian name. They also started to cut their hair, and short hair became the outer sign of being a Christian. The bride price was not abolished but the amount was severely reduced. In 1901, 1903 and 1905 the missionaries stimulated great meetings of all tribal people of Halmahera (both pagans and Christians) and many aspects of Halmaheran traditional law and practice were debated during these meetings.

After Van Dijken's death in 1900 the village of Duma became more open. It remained the centre of the Halmahera mission by virtue of its teacher's training school. Teachers who were trained in Duma were at the origin of many schools in Northern Halmahera and they also started new congregations. In the other centre of the mission, Gamsungi, a small hospital was erected. Until the Japanese occupation of 1942 the mission saw a steady growth but no spectacular results. There were not yet ordained ministers of Halmahera origin when the Dutch missionaries were confined in the Japanese concentrations camps in 1942. Out of the five ministers who were ordained in 1946 only one was a Halmaheran, three originated from Ambon and one from Sangir. In 1949 the Christian community that was born from the missionary initiative was formally transformed into the GMIH, *Gereja Masehi Injili Halmahera* (Evangelical Christian Church of Halmahera). This was just in time, because the foreign missionaries had to leave Halmahera in 1952 due to conflicts between the young Indonesian Republic and its former coloniser The Netherlands about the status of nearby West Papua. In 1980 about 105,000 or 45% of the population of Halmahera was Christian, the majority living in the most densely populated north-eastern region of Halmahera.²⁴

As in other regions of Indonesia, also in Halmahera, it became obligatory to adhere formally to one of the five major religions in the wake of the anti-communist coup of General Soeharto in 1965. For Halmahera there is a quite curious report from the late 1960s which indicated that it was government officials or political parties who finally urged the last group of adherents of tribal religions to choose a religion, in fact to choose between Protestantism and Islam,

In Jailolo, the head of the Religious Administration, Christian [= Protestant] Sector, J. Manipa, asked the village chiefs, district heads and other officials to bring together all people who were known as adherents of tribal religions in that region. They were summoned to his office and were asked which religion they

²⁴ Besides the work by Van den End and Reenders, see James Haire 1981.

would like to choose. If someone opted for Christianity, then he or she would be handed over to the evangelist (*guru jemaat*) of the Protestant congregation, because there were no Catholics here. If someone opted for Islam, he or she would be given to the Imam. In this way there were formally no longer adherents of a tribal religion in Jailolo.²⁵

In a similar way also in the districts of Buli and Kau action was taken to register the last adherents of tribal religions to one of the five major religions of Indonesia. In Kau there were some problems, because older people objected to Islam as well as to Christianity. They finally were registered as Christians "because their children were already Christian."

A quite spectacular movement towards Christianity took place in the Sula archipelago, west of Ternate, in the 1910s. As we have seen above, until the beginning of the twentieth century the authority of the sultan of Ternate was recognised for native affairs within the framework of the colonial rule. Especially in religious matters he sometimes wanted to show his authority, but he had also traditional rights in taxes and income from forest. In 1910 the colonial government introduced a poll tax for the population of the Sula islands. The coastal population were the first to obey this new tax. In fact they were quite willing to accept the new rule, because they considered this as a recognition of their status as citizens of the colonial state and at the same time saw themselves no longer as citizens subjected to the Ternate administration and taxes. The Ambonese *posthouder* of Sula thereupon suggested that they should reorganise their society by living together in villages along the coast (which would facilitate the collection of taxes) and that they should become Christians. This suggestion was taken as a *perintah halus*, a gentle but clear command. In 1912 the *posthouder* notified the resident of Ternate about the 'wish' of the population to become Christian. The resident had already seen that some people of Sula had embraced Islam and he was happy with the strategy of the Ambonese *posthouder*. But the resident had to remain neutral in religious affairs and even the assistant minister M. Birkhoff, who served the congregation of the *Indische Kerk* in Ternate, was only allowed to visit existing Christian congregations. He could not preach and administer baptism to pagans. The resident of Ternate therefore made a trip to Sula together with assistant minister Birkhoff. During a short stop in Taliabu 185 people were baptised. This was enough to add five 'well-establish congregations' to the statistics and to allow the Moluccan Church to send teachers to these places who would be paid by the government.²⁶

In September 1914 a small revolt started in Jailolo against the tax collectors of the sultan of Ternate who asked from Muslims and non-Muslims the

²⁵ A.L. Fransz (ed.) 1976:79.

²⁶ Enklaar 1947:68-71.

same amount of money. The revolt was quickly crushed, but it provided an opportunity to arrest Sultan Usman for lack of cooperation with the colonial government. An additional argument against his rule was that he opposed the introduction of compulsory basic education. Sultan Usman was sent into exile to Java and in fact the sultanate was abolished.²⁷ This political move reinforced the position of Christians in the region. There was no triumphant comment, as if the siege over the Muslim sultanates was complete, some four centuries after the arrival of the first Iberian vessels. During the period 1945–50 and more powerfully even during the difficult period of 1998–2002 the sultanate of Ternate attempted a revival, but until now without clear success.

Moluccan Christians (mostly Protestants) ²⁸	Ca. 1720	Ca. 1823	Ca. 1897		1937	
Ambon + Lease	24,216	25,556	50,083		72,000	
Banda	2,000	1,289	1,355		4,537	
Ternate	1,500	700	1,141		1,912	
Seram			4,869		27,915	
Buru	151	171			823	
Wetar	121		325		1,475	
Kisar	409	200	2,537		3,533	
Roma		9	200		228	
Damar	378	200	1,605		1,862	
Leti	233	150	975		3,615	
Moa	112		740		2,548	
Lakor	?				273	
Luang	?	200	396		946	
Sermata	?				2,468	
Babar	80				1,132	
			Prot.	RC	Prot.	RC
Tanimbar	?	?	65	–	22,014	11,637
Kai	?	?	–	743	12,163	17,579
Aru	274	400	2,062	–	6,505	–

Protestants and Catholics in the Southeast Moluccas: Aru, Kai and Tanimbar

Since the 1880s the arrival of steamships resulted in a more intense trade and travelling in many of the outer islands, including the various quite extended archipelagos of the Southeast Moluccas. In the wake of more intense trade, the colonial administration followed with permanent posts, and in this same

²⁷ Van Fraassen 1987–I:60.

²⁸ Adapted after Van den End 1989:65.

stream of intensifying contacts there was the spread of the major religions of Islam and Christianity. Islam and Protestantism, both already active in the region during the preceding centuries, did not develop outspoken and planned missionary activities that caused the spread of their religion, but the growth of Christianity first of all should be seen as a consequence of more intense contacts of trade and administration. As to the Catholics, because of their absence in this region, it was a clearly planned action that caused the expansion of their religion. This started in 1886 with a request by a German Lutheran businessman in Tual, the major harbour for the Kai islands, Adolf Langen, to Bishop Adamus Claessens of Batavia that missionaries should be sent to convert the population of the Kai islands who in majority would be willing to accept Christianity. In a letter of October 1887 Langen mentioned that already four Protestant teachers from Ambon had tried to open schools, but had failed and two had left already. He thought that a solid Catholic action could be more successful.

The first Jesuit missionaries arrived in Tual on 1 July 1888 and discovered that this major harbour of the islands was in majority Muslim. Neighbouring Langgur, however, was still pagan and in 1889 the first baptisms took place after missionary Jan Kusters had stopped a malaria epidemic by distributing medicine. The first baptism was preceded by a meeting of the village council where the three possibilities, Islam, Protestantism and Catholicism were discussed and the latter was chosen. This became a common pattern in the Kai islands, where conversions were collective rather than individual.

Notwithstanding the fact that Kai was part of a region with a strong Protestant tradition, the Resident of Ambon, D. Heyting (1883–1891) had sent a letter to all chiefs with the order that nobody should put obstacles in the way of the Catholic mission. The same is found in a later of recommendation of his successor as the Ambon Resident, G.W. van Hoëvell, who regretted that Christian mission did not start some years earlier. He estimated that of the 20,000 inhabitants of the Kai islands about one third had already embraced Islam “in its most fanatic form.”²⁹ During his first visit to Langgur this Resident even examined the schoolboys about their knowledge of the catechism and ordered them to sing the new Catholic hymns. In a conflict with the raja of Tual (when the new Catholics refused to pay taxes or forced contributions for the pilgrimage to Mecca of some elite of Tual) the Resident sided with the Catholics and made the village head of Langgur a chief in his own right with the same status as the Muslim chief (raja) of Tual. In 1902 there were already 1,170 baptised and 17 villages were declared ‘Catholic’ on the island of Kai Kecil.

²⁹ Steenbrink 2003–I:185.

Elat, on neighbouring Kai Besar was in the first decade of the twentieth century the major centre for Protestantism, but about 1915 the native minister of the Protestant Mission moved to Tual, the centre of the government administration. In the mid-1920s the division of the religions in Kai with a population of 37,611 showed 13,360 Muslim (ca. 34%), 10,749 Catholics (ca. 28%) and 5,734 Protestants (ca. 18%) and still 7,768 pagan.³⁰ Since then the distribution of the three religions has not experienced drastic changes. As in the Central and Northern Moluccas, the adherents of the major religions opted for living in closed communities. In Kai and Tanimbar this process went together with the formation of larger settlements than the one or two family houses that until then had constituted the basic human settlement. All villages now have either a Muslim, Catholic or Protestant character, while in the major towns, like Tual, special quarters have their specific denominational character.³¹

Langgur became a central place for the Catholic mission. It was since 1902 the basis for the mission of the MSC (Sacred Heart Missionaries, *Missionarii Sacri Cordis*) and associated sisters who established large compounds with various schools. In 1940 there were 29 priests in the Moluccas, 25 brothers (4 of whom were native Indonesians) and 48 sisters, of whom 17 were native Indonesians. Of these 9 priests, 16 brothers and 23 sisters worked in the small town of Langgur in a great mission compound with a hospital, primary and secondary schools. The most important institution was the teachers training school that produced Catholic teachers not only for the Moluccas but also for Papua.

The Catholics still fostered the dream of a “return to the heritage of Saint Francis.” In 1934 they celebrated with great pomp “400 Years of Christianity in Indonesia,” commemorating the Jesuit mission of the sixteenth century. However, in the island and town of Ambon itself they experienced great trouble in starting a Catholic parish. All native Christian Ambonese were now Protestants, while the small flock of Catholics in the capital of the residency consisted of some soldiers, government officials and Chinese traders who came from other regions. For this tiny community a parish was started in 1925, with only 352 faithful in 1938. Because of the dominant position of the town as capital of the regency 8 sisters had founded a Dutch language Catholic school in that town. In 1950 the town of Ambon became the centre of the Apostolic Vicariate and the seat of the bishop, who left Langgur because of the easier

³⁰ Mooij ed. 1925: 135; cf. Lasomer 1985:86. Since the 1920s there were no major changes in this division. In 1985 41% were Muslim, 33% Catholic and 25% Protestant. Laksono 1996:156–176, esp. 158.

³¹ For an anthropological account of this “rigid segregation between Catholic, Protestant and Muslim village” see Laksono 2002.

communications in Ambon. This was notwithstanding the fact that until now very few native Ambonese have become Catholic and the majority of the faithful in the diocese of Ambon still are found in the Kai and Tanimbar islands. Of the total population of the Moluccas about 5% is Catholic, and most live in the Southeastern islands.

For the South Moluccan mission the Japanese occupation was a very sad event, because of the cruelties of the Japanese navy which controlled the area. On 30 July 1942 Bishop Joseph Aerts together with 12 MSC priests and brothers were executed. As in many conflicts in this region also in Kai there was also some inter-religious rivalry involved. Mission sources blame an Arab from Tual as the main informant for the Japanese army and also a possible instigator for the cruel executions. Dutch colonial power certainly had given more facilities to Christian mission than to the spread of Islam. Therefore the close cooperation between the Muslim population and the Japanese can also be explained as a revenge for the neglect or even oppression of Islam in the colonial period.³²

To fill the lowest level of colonial administration, the *posthouder*, usually better educated natives or Eurasians were employed and in this region of Indonesia they most often came from Ambon. Also for the administrative functions of police, and clerks in the office of the *controleur*, it was often Christian Ambonese who were nominated to these positions. On the island of Tanimbar, where the Catholic mission had started about 1906, there were already some Ambonese Protestants active as teachers. They had already created a group of sympathisers for Protestantism, but were not allowed to administer baptism. About 1892 the Ambonese teacher Nicolaas Saliha from Ema came as the first Protestant teacher who settled on Tanimbar (Larat) and opened a school. He was followed in 1894 by Isaak Patty who worked on Selaru. The first teacher on Yamdena started in 1909 in Loro Ulung.³³

For 1913 the statistics for all islands of the Tanimbar and Babar archipelago counted 5,530 Protestants in 31 congregations, with 14 native ministers, educated at the STOVIL in Ambon, 12 'catechists' or *guru jemaat* and five more evangelists, sent by the central office of the *Indische Kerk* in Ambon. Since the start of missionary work in this region, not anybody had been accepted as a full member of the Protestant Church, entitled to receive Holy Communion. These figures show both the missionary spirit of the lay members of the Ambonese branch of the *Indische Kerk* and its reservation about a hasty acceptance of members. The same can be said about the south-western islands of Wetar and Sermata. Mission work has started here already in the period 1820–1840

³² Schreurs 1992:233–272.

³³ Steenbrink 2007:215.

(among them Luycke and Bär) and had in 1897 already resulted in 9,342 baptised, of whom only 345 were allowed to receive Holy Communion.³⁴

In the first decades of the twentieth century we see a whole range of conflicts between Catholics and Protestants on the Tanimbar Islands, where very few Muslims lived. Most of these conflicts were about the position of the teachers and often involved also the decision of villages or clans to opt for either Protestantism or Catholicism. The rivalry between the Catholic teachers from Kai (Langgur) and the Protestant teachers from Ambon resulted in one of the most debated Protestant baptising tours ever in this region. In 1918 Rev. G.C. van den Wijngaard, minister of the congregation of Banda, visited the southeastern islands and baptised on Tanimbar and some adjacent islands not less than 12,500 people. These people were prepared by Ambonese teachers in the region who had requested the coming of the Banda minister. His only demands were that people should ask for themselves for baptism and express their wish to become Christians; they should declare that they no longer put their confidence in the deities and spirits of their ancestors but in the one and only God who had created heaven and earth; they should solemnly promise to terminate all their pagan practices; they accepted the obligation to seek further Christian education as soon as possible in order to be admitted to the Holy Communion as well informed and pious Christians; they accepted the obligation to send their children to Protestant schools.³⁵ In normal circumstances at least the recitation of Our Father, the Apostles Creed, and the Ten Commandments was requested, but in this case mass baptism was practised because of the rare travelling of a minister to the isolated islands and the danger of conversion to Catholicism. There are some more examples of this style of baptism, but never in such great number is in 1918 on Tanimbar. In these islands the number of Muslims remained very low, while the division between Protestants and Catholics showed a two-third majority of Protestants and a one-third portion for Catholics.

1998–2002 the Moluccan tragedy of inter-religious conflicts

The first chapter of this book discussed the early race between Islam and Christianity, also related to East Indonesia. Whatever may have been its root cause, in the sixteenth and seventeenth century there were many conflicts between Christians and Muslims especially in the Moluccas as have been described in our first chapters. After the arrival of the Portuguese, the Muslims and Christians became divided in a mosaic of villages. There were and still are

³⁴ Van den End 1989–II:64.

³⁵ Enklaar 1947:71–75.

more Muslim villages on the northern coasts of the islands, while Christians more often occupy the southern regions. But very often also there is a short distance between the two and not really a situation of larger Muslim regions clearly isolated from Christian regions. Notwithstanding the short distances between the two communities on many islands a practice of segregation had started. Christian and Muslim villages used to exist separated and in mutual exclusion. This continued in the Japanese period. The Muslim villages were closed off from direct colonial influence. There were many schools in the Christian villages. They had started as mostly religious schools, but were more oriented towards a mixed religious-profane curriculum since 1864 and were in the end fully integrated into the national school system, where the Moluccas were among the most progressive and modern regions. However, until 1942, the *madrrasah*, the religious school of the Islamic villages, remained separated from this national educational system. Until the end of the Dutch colonial period there were very few elementary schools in Muslim villages.

During this period of isolation there were few conflicts between Christian and Muslim villages, at least not on a large scale. Both Muslim and Christian villages, especially in the Central Moluccas, felt perhaps that before all else they were united in the *Agama Ambon*. This was described by an anthropologist who did research in the late 1970s also as the “Nunusaku Religion” after the Banyan-mountain, from where all Ambonese originated according to their myth of origin. In this traditional religion also major elements of Islam and Christianity are incorporated, through an identification of this mountain with paradise, with Mount Ararat, where Noah’s ark landed, and also with the place where the Last Judgement will occur.

The content, meaning, and ultimate end of *Agama Nunusaku* is Ambonese society itself. It deals with the peculiarities of Ambonese society, gives meaning to Ambonese identity, and is concerned with the perpetuation of Ambonese society and its continued well-being and the harmony between Christians and Moslems.... The Ambonese Christians see their own brand of Christianity as unique and specifically their own, to the point of exclusion of Chinese Christians from worship in Ambonese churches. Similarly, the Moslems exclude ethnically different groups from religious services in their mosques. Before World War II, they also chased out of the main mosque in Ambon city, those religious reformers from other parts of Indonesia who had come to preach the purification of Islam. Ambonese ethnic religion shows some parallels to what Bellah terms ‘civil religion’ in America.³⁶

The unity of Muslims and Christians was further guaranteed and fostered by the *pela*-system of alliances between villages, often at great distances and of different religious affiliation. Although most alliances are between two

³⁶ Bartels 1977:319, referring to Bellah 1972:350–369.

villages, there are also cases of three or more villages. Begun as an economic alliance, *pela* is also the cultic centre of Ambonese ethnic religion.³⁷ It is not certain whether the *pela*-system originated before the colonial period (and thus even before the arrival of Islam and Christianity), or was constructed in the first half of the nineteenth century. It remained since the 'dim past' as the most important social bond which held society together. After the Indonesian independence (1945), the Ambonese Muslims, according to a very optimistic observer who did his fieldwork during the 1970s,

could have sought a strong identity primarily in Islam, distanced themselves from the stigmatised Christians and entered close ties with Islamic forces on a national level. But just as the Christians never severed their bonds with the Moslems when they themselves were swept to the top of the colonial hierarchy, the Moslems never cut their ties with the Christians when they found themselves in a superior position. The century-old links of *pela* were strong enough in both situations to prevent a break. Moslems and Christians have learned to trust and depend on each other and valued their proven relationship to such a high degree that they did not let other developments interfere with it... Islam and Christianity are now subordinated to the goals of ethnic religion, but if the latter crumbles, the buffer between the two will be removed, leading to a direct confrontation, since these systems would move into the centre of beliefs in both groups. Ambonese Christians and Moslems would then deal with one another not primarily as Ambonese, but as Moslems and Christians first and Ambonese second.³⁸

Through this *pela*-system, Muslims and Christians fostered the conviction that they were of the same origin, from the same *Upu* (ancestor). This can sometimes be seen in the names of villages like Siri-Sori Islam and Siri-Sori Kristen or in identical names for one clan that has Muslim and Christian members. The *pela* rituals and obligations were very successful in making the religious differences subordinate to the common genealogy. The few conflicts that arose during the last centuries most often were in quite remote areas, between Christians and Muslims as in the Kai or Sula archipelago, and they could be settled by local people themselves without interference by a regional or central government.

In the late 1960s, during the aftermath of the Soeharto-coup against the Communists, the issue of *kristenisasi* became prominent. This is the reproach by the Muslims of the Moluccas that the Christians tried to attain a majority in the Moluccas, or even to wipe out Islam through more intensive missionary campaigns. This was followed in the 1980s by the issue of 'proportionate personnel' at state institutions. As a prolongation of the colonial period when Christians rather than Muslims received Western education, jobs at government

³⁷ Bartels 1977:320.

³⁸ Bartels 1977:324–325.

offices and positions as teachers, from primary schools up to the Pattimura State University, were largely occupied by Christians. In the 1980s political correctness asked for the nomination of more and more Muslims to these traditional Christian bulwarks. Many government nominations were no longer based on quality and experience but on religious affiliation. From their side the Muslims felt that the Christians still held the highest positions and could not easily be removed at institutions like the Pattimura University.

On the local level this period from the 1960s to the 1990s saw many Muslim migrants from South and Central Sulawesi moving towards the Central Moluccas, especially to the town of Ambon. This caused a change in the already precarious religious balance of the region, where the Muslims had slightly outnumbered the Christians. The new migrants were looking for positions in the relatively prosperous economy of the Moluccas and threatened the job opportunities of local Muslims and Christians, both in the government and at private enterprises. The Christians felt hit twice, because local Muslims and newly arrived migrants were now taking 'their jobs.' This development threatened the earlier harmony between Muslims and Christians.

A further complicating factor in this process was the structure of the village administrations. During the 1960s the central government made new rulings for villages all over the country. In principle these regulations were modernising in a democratic spirit. Village heads should no longer be nominated along the feudal lines of ancestry, but should be elected by public vote after election campaigns by several candidates. The village also was to be called *desa* (different from the traditional name of *negeri* in the Moluccas) and the village head became *kepala desa* instead of the traditional title of *raja*. This new system eroded the traditional social structure with its respect for ancestors, and involved a number of conflicts and increased tensions related to elections. The traditional function of *raja* was only continued for rituals within the *pela*-system and some other customary ceremonies related to respect for the ancestors.

In this situation of growing tensions between the religious communities the issue of inter-religious dialogue became more and more important. It was a high priority in the policy of the central and provincial government whereby the central and provincial government (traditionally top-down) took many initiatives to improve relations between the religions. Not only churches and Muslim councils became active in encounters, the Protestant University of the Moluccas, UKIM, also became a member of the Research Institute for Inter-religious Relations (LPKUB, *Lembaga Pengkajian Antar Umat Beragama*). LPKUB was a joint enterprise of the Ministries of Religion and of Home Affairs, with a central office in Yogyakarta and branches in Medan and Ambon. The latter brought together lecturers of the Pattimura State University, the Protestant University of the Moluccas (UKIM), the Darussalam University (Muslim), the Trinitas Academy for Accountancy and Administration (Catholic) and the State

Institute for Islamic Studies besides some representatives of the Buddhist and Hindu communities. Its objective was, “to collect the result of field research, as well as comprehensive ideas about various aspects of the inter-religious harmony in an effort to foster friendly, dynamic, creative and productive relations between the religions.”³⁹ In line with this initiative the theology of religions and the knowledge of other religions became an important topic at Christian and Islamic institutes.

Notwithstanding serious efforts to promote inter-religious harmony the growing atmosphere of tension exploded in a bloody series of clashes, attacks and counter-attacks in the period 1998–2002. One of the major reasons for this outburst may be sought in the uncertain state of the whole country of Indonesia after the fall of President Soeharto on 22 May 1998, after being in office for 32 years. He was succeeded by the former Vice President, Baharuddin Yusuf Habibie, who announced free elections for mid-1999.

From mid-November 1998 many pamphlets were spread in Ambon, containing mutual slander of Christianity and Islam by both parties with the threat that the time for a final battle and cleansing would come soon. On 14 November 1998 serious fights broke out between Christians of Hative Besar and their Muslim neighbours of Wailete, just across the town of Ambon along the bay, dividing the island of Ambon more or less into Christian Southern and Muslim Northern halves.

On 22 November 1998 a Jakarta based gang that controlled parking places, shops and also some gambling houses in Ketapang, North Jakarta, led by the ‘Christians’ Milton Matuanakota and Ongky Pieters, lost a battle against a Muslim gang, from the Moluccan community in Jakarta, which was led by Ongen Sangaji: members of the *Pemuda Pancasila*, and of the *Mahasiswa Muslim Maluku* (Moluccan Muslim Students) who were hired by General Wiranto to fight anti-Habibie students in November 1998. Several hundred of the ‘Christian group’ returned to Ambon. Their opponents feared, that they would take revenge in the region (see also chapter six).

19 January 1999 was the start of the first period of cruel and bloody conflicts in Ambon. According to Muhammad Hussein⁴⁰ it was “an attack on Muslims, who were celebrating the end of Ramadan.” The riots started with a Christian⁴¹ *preman* or undisciplined youngster who did not pay a ticket for a car hired from a Muslim driver or owner (the Islamic version). Or was this just the story invented by Muslims who were already prepared to start the ethnic and religious cleansing

³⁹ Paragraph 4 of the Constitution of the LPKUB.

⁴⁰ Co-ordinator of the *Forum Islam Maluku Bersatu Jabotabek*, a Jakarta based organisation of Muslims, *Republika*, 11 Jan. 2000.

⁴¹ Or a Muslim? There are various versions of this story as is the case with many details of the Moluccan tragedy. For several reports see Hartono 1999:55–56; Sinansari 1999:173–176.

of Ambon (the Christian version)? Immediately after the fighting between these two persons some central districts of Ambon were full of rumours “that now the great war between Christians and Muslims had started.” Shops were pillaged, houses burnt. From the very beginning Christian gangs used red headbands, and Muslims white ones. The death toll of the first day was reported as eleven. Within a few weeks the riots spread to all the villages in the island of Ambon and to the neighbouring islands, bringing the number of persons killed up to several hundred. The Al-Fatah mosque of Ambon became the central meeting point for Muslim activists and the Maranatha Church for the Christians. Christians were nicknamed ‘Israel’ or ‘Obed’ (after the name Robert for Christians), Muslims ‘Palestinians’ or ‘Acang’ (after the Muslim name Hasan). At the start of some fighting, girls or young women performed ritual dances (some of the women were among the victims of the fighting). The fighting became a civil war with fixed rituals and procedures. Quite often groups of youngsters deliberately walked towards the enemy, built simple blockades using cars and motorbikes, and started shooting from behind their positions.

From the beginning there were many rumours that the vehement fighting was incited by army generals who had lost their positions after the 1998 session of the National Congress, and who did not comply with the political reform, which would exclude them from the national politics and economy. They wanted to demonstrate that the new head of the army (Admiral Widodo, from the navy!) could not regulate even his own area, the Moluccan archipelago. It has been suggested that at all instances when retired General Wiranto was summoned to appear at the court for investigation, new riots in Ambon broke out. This theory states that elements from the army were the real power behind the violence and that the killings and destruction by the gangsters were only a smokescreen.⁴²

The theory of outside, more specifically army involvement, can be corroborated by the rise of the violent group of *Laskar Jihad*. The group manifested itself for the first time during a prayer and information meeting, *tablig akbar*, held in the giant sports stadium of Senayan, Jakarta, on 6 April 2000. Some sources suggested retired General Prabowo, married to a daughter of ex-president Soeharto, as the man behind this group. Prabowo went to Jordan after the fall of Soeharto, because he was very close to the (then still) crown prince, Abdullah. Other reports suggest the name of the former Secretary General of the Tax Department, Fuad Bawazir, of Arab descent and with close connections in the Arab world, as the

⁴² “After initially using Ambonese gangsters as a smoke-screen, paramilitary forces close to Soeharto and troops loyal to Wiranto [dismissed as supreme commander of the army in early November 1999 and as Defence Minister on 15 February 2000] maintained the momentum of killings and destruction by continuously creating casualties on both sides that cried for revenge...” George Aditjondro, ‘Playing Political Football with Moluccan Lives’, an article that appeared at several places on the Internet.

strong financial man behind the *Laskar Jihad*. Even the name of Bin Laden and the international terrorism of Afghanistan and Sudan have been mentioned in this matter. *Laskar Jihad* leader Jafar Umar Thalib was in the late 1980s for some time in Pakistan as a student and joined the Muslim forces in Afghanistan during this period. Needless to say, there is no firm proof of any major source of the financing required to mount the great undertakings of this militia.⁴³

After the big demonstration in the Jakarta Senayan stadium on 6 April 2000, some 2000 *Laskar Jihad* members went into a training camp in Bogor, 80 km. south of Jakarta. In Jakarta, Yogyakarta and Surabaya, along major streets shops offered the opportunity to sign contracts for joining the *Laskar Jihad*. 17 April the training camp moved to Kaliurang, a mountain resort north of Yogyakarta in Central Java. During the next two weeks several thousands *Laskar Jihad* members took boats for the Moluccas.⁴⁴ The official position of the *Laskar Jihad* leaders was that their members went to “help Muslims in the islands with holy books, not swords and machetes.” They were often supported by members of the regular army, while sections of the police force were reported to support the Christians. The local and rather small-scale fighting of the first tragic year, 1999, became in this way a continuing civil war with horrible consequences for the whole population who saw their houses, schools and shops destroyed and had themselves to escape to the less populated mountains in the island of Ambon, and to the surrounding islands. Many refugees had to go to regions like Minahasa or West Timor. Probably some 200,000 of the migrants of South Sulawesi and the island of Buton returned to their place of origin, or that of their parents, as this migration had already been under way for some 30 years. Only after the 12 October 2002 bombing in the tourist resort of Kuta, Bali, where nearly 200 foreign tourists were killed, was the *Laskar Jihad* disbanded, some gang leaders (including some military) called to court and the road to a more peaceful society opened.

It was not only Ambon that was the battlefield in this tragic conflict. In April 1999 most of the houses of the Christian population of the town of Banda, on the island known for its nutmeg, were burnt down. Many people were killed and others had to flee. Some Christians had to embrace Islam under threat of death and the men among them had to undergo circumcision on the spot. Even more forced conversions to Islam were reported from the Kesui islands (southeast of Seram).

⁴³ *The Jakarta Post*, 17 April 2000 quotes *Laskar Jihad* leader Ja'far Umar Thalib as saying that he had to fly to the Middle East to meet with his counterpart to talk about the planned deployment of volunteers in the Moluccas. He mentioned Saudi Arabia, Yemen and Jordan. See also Aditjondro 1999 and 2000.

⁴⁴ *The Jakarta Post*, 17 April 2000. In this case a different name for the same group, the *Forum Ahlus Sunnah wal Jamaah* was used.

Many of the local conflicts had specific causes. On 31 March 1999 riots started in Tual (Kai Kecil). The long-standing quite peaceful relations between Muslims and Christians in these remote islands in the south-eastern region of the Moluccas changed drastically. It was the start of a long series of killings on the Kai islands, which caused half of the population of 100,000 to flee to safer places. Some suppose that there was a connection with the elections of June 1999, because of the close connections between religions and political parties.⁴⁵ In Kai the riots remained restricted to conflicts in the first half of 1999 and soon afterwards reconciliation could begin.

The violence in North Halmahera became probably the worst in the whole region, for the period under discussion. Some claim at least 2500 dead between 18 August 1999 and the end of that year. The centre of riots and fighting was on the eastern coast of North Halmahera. The most serious conflicts in the (mostly Protestant) Kao-Tobelo-Galela region were related to migrations after several volcanic eruptions on the island of Makian (between Tidore and Bacan, off the West Coast of Halmahera) between 1975 and 1980. Some 17,000 (nearly all Muslim) inhabitants of Makian, many of them traders, were resettled amongst the small communities on the eastern coast of North Halmahera, mostly made up of Protestant farmers and fishers. In November 1999, after rumours that Makian Muslims had attacked a Kao village, the Christians started to set mosques on fire, whereupon many Makian settlers fled to the island of Ternate and killed a number of Christians in revenge. On 26 December massive killings in settlements of Makian Muslims started, which caused many reactions in other parts of Indonesia. The rise of *Laskar Jihad*, already discussed above, was often defended with reference to the Halmahera killings. A bloody and nearly complete civil war between Christian and Muslim parties started in Northern Halmahera with very little presence of the army until a period when people complained that this whole area was in total chaos and anarchy.

On 12 May 1999, in a period of relative rest, a large group of religious leaders, public figures and youth groups signed a peace pact at an open field in Ambon city. The Secretary General of the Synod of the greatest Protestant Church, Sammy Titaley, the Roman Catholic Assistant Bishop, Joseph Tethool, and R. Hasanusi, chairman of the Council of Muslim Scholars were present, besides the Governor, Muh. Saleh Latuconsina, and the national army commander Wiranto.⁴⁶ This was only the first of a long series of efforts by religious leaders to calm the situation

⁴⁵ *Apakabar*, 4 April 1999. One of the few modern studies on Kai is by P.M. Laksono. He signals a religious division already since the 1930s when 61 villages were considered as Muslim, 45 Catholic and 41 Protestant. "The Dutch implemented a discriminatory policy against the Moslems. For example the Dutch ran only four public schools for all Islamic villages outside Tual, while subsidising seventeen Catholic and fourteen Protestant schools." (Laksono 1996:162).

⁴⁶ *Kompas*, 13 May 1999.

and to call for peace and reconciliation. But as shown by the facts above, they had little influence on their communities where mostly male youngsters were responsible for the prolongation of the fighting.

During its 34th meeting the Synod of the GPM made an inventory of the losses between 19 January 1999 and February 2001. In six presbyteries (*classes*) the GPM could no longer execute its authority because the district offices were burnt down and the Christian population was chased away and stayed in refugee camps. The districts that were affected are: Banda islands, Taluti (Seram), Ternate, North Buru, Bacan, Obi (North Moluccas) and East Seram. 163 local congregations were in total or in majority expelled. As many as 15,612 families, totalling 82,906 members of this church, were among the refugees. 150 churches were burnt and 12,861 houses.⁴⁷ On the Catholic side 66 churches were reported as burnt down, three were severely damaged. Also the place of pilgrimage of the Virgin Mary of Ahuru, Ambon, was totally destroyed.⁴⁸ From the Protestant Church of Halmahera some 15,000 faithful were among the refugees who fled, most of them to the Minahasa. 7,000 houses and 120 churches were reported as totally destroyed.⁴⁹ There are no detailed reports of the damage to mosques, Islamic schools and institutions, but on that side destruction was in comparable measure.

The civil war caused a drastic change in the service and pastoral care of the churches in this region. The traditional work was stopped when churches were destroyed and members had to flee. Besides care for the refugees, the first concern was the return of the citizens to their place of origin, because that was the place that was inhabited by their ancestors and the ownership of the ground was still guaranteed by public law. In the second half of 2002 the return could start in some regions: first of all to areas of Halmahera. It was common policy of the GPM that the refugees would not become members of the new local congregations but would remain within their former district, although they were now for some time far away from home.

Karel Steenbrink and Mesakh Tapilatu

⁴⁷ From the Report of the GPM Synod *Himpunan Data Kerusuhan 19 Januari 1999 sampai dengan Pebruari 2001*, Ambon, 2001.

⁴⁸ Information from the Diocese of Ambon, 2001.

⁴⁹ Interview with the head of the Synod of the Halmahera Protestant Church, Rev. Agustinus Ais, 1 November 2001.

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CHAPTER TEN

HOW CHRISTIANITY OBTAINED A CENTRAL POSITION IN MINAHASA CULTURE AND SOCIETY

In 2000 only four out of the (then) 32 provinces of Indonesia had a majority of Christians. These provinces were all located in the eastern regions of the vast archipelago. In number of total population they are somewhat comparable: the smallest being the Moluccas (1.1 million), middle ranking were North Sulawesi and Papua (2 and 2.2 million respectively) and the largest number was for East Nusa Tenggara (total population of 3.8 million). The highest percentage of Christians was in East Nusa Tenggara with 87.67%. It was followed by Papua with 75.51%. Third was North Sulawesi with 69.27%. Finally, a meagre majority was established for the Moluccas (not including the North Moluccas) with 50.19%. The province of North Sulawesi is the subject of this chapter.

Four provinces of Indonesia with a majority of Christians¹

Province	Population	Christians
East Nusa Tenggara	3,823,154	87.67%
Papua	2,213,831	75.51%
North Sulawesi	2,000,871	69.27%
Maluku	1,163,122	50.19%

For many people Minahasa (the largest part of North Sulawesi) and Christianity are inseparable, similar to the Muslim identity of Aceh and Minangkabau. There is probably no other region in Indonesia where so many people emphasise the close relationship between local or ethnic identity and Christianity. This strong identity was not yet present in the first period of encounter with Christianity (1570s–1820s) when only a few coastal villages, partly inhabited by traders and former slaves from outside regions, fostered the new religion. The Christian character of Minahasa was the result of the drastic changes in social, economic and religious life during the period of the first inland missionary activities by the German NZG workers J.G. Schwarz and J.F. Riedel (1831 until the early 1860s). This was the period when the government introduced the compulsory cultivation of coffee (and some other products like cacao), starting in 1822 and

¹ Suryadinata 2003:3 and 115–117.

continuing longer than in other regions of the archipelago, until 1899. This chapter will describe the various and very different episodes of Christianity in Minahasa and adjacent islands after the period 1570–1820 that has been described in chapters three and five.

Minahasa is a volcanic region. Distances are about 30–50 km from the east to the west coast and 120 km from the southwest to the northeast. Most of its territory is fertile and provides a healthy climate. The region is at three sides surrounded by the sea while in the south the rough and sparsely populated highlands of Bolaang Mongondow constitute a natural boundary. Besides West Sumatra, it was the only region in the outer islands where the *Cultuurstelsel* was implemented in the nineteenth century. This system of compulsory agriculture functioned through the mediation of the 27 chiefs of the Minahasa who ruled over what the Dutch called districts. They were liable for the quality and quantity of the delivered goods, but they also earned themselves much money and prestige from this economic system. In the absence of any traditional central power, the visit of Governor General G. van der Capellen in 1824 had increased the sense of belonging to the colonial framework. “Minahasan chiefs had by then become properly aware of how much their fate had come to be dependent on the Dutch colonialism.”² This was strengthened by the participation of 1,400 soldiers from Minahasa (out of a total population of some 80,000 in the late 1820s) in the last phase of the Java War (1825–1830). The great reliability of the Minahasan population to the Dutch is also shown by the creation of the Kampung Jawa in Tondano, where Javanese Muslims, taken captive during the Java war, were sent in exile. Besides Muslim settlements in the border regions with Bolaang Mongondow, this settlement was one of the few Muslim centres of the region.

The effective rule carried out by the colonial power since the early 1820s expressed itself also in the extinction of headhunting (the last raid took place somewhere between the 1860s and the 1890s, depending on the written or oral sources used).³ Another drastic change in social life was the disappearance of the huge traditional long-houses where people could cherish the memory of founding ancestors, living together with many related families. The population was often, under compulsion, re-established in small houses for one nuclear family, under arguments of hygiene and safety. This also destroyed the religious-emotional relationship to the ancestors and discouraged the continuation of traditional rituals. Already in 1905 two German anthropologists, Paul and Fritz Sarasin, criticised the modern society:

² Schouten 1998:76.

³ Schouten 1998:72.

If one has seen one village in Minahasa, one has seen them all, because they are generally larger or smaller, impressive or poor examples of the same model, which was introduced by the Dutch administration during the last century. The Minahasa village of an earlier period with its irregular structure and its huge and gloomy houses, supplying living-quarters for several families, has completely disappeared.⁴

1827–1881: The creation of a Christian Minahasan identity

In the first decades of the nineteenth century there were only four coastal villages that continued their Christian identity, served by schoolmasters. In 1817 Joseph Kam made an inspection tour from Ambon, and again in 1819. In 1821 he sent two missionaries who died soon after arrival. In 1827 missionary G.J. Hellendoorn was sent by Kam to Manado. His first duty was the care of the small European congregation. He was as a missionary sent to this region for lack of a proper Reformed minister. Hellendoorn also gave much attention to the small communities of native Christians along the coast. Much of his time was spent attending to the education of a small group of indigenous youngsters, who were to become founders of schools, such as those established by Kam and Roskott in Ambon and other Moluccan islands. These were schools where education was nearly totally orientated towards religious activities. There was much singing, music lessons (playing the flute), while reading was practically restricted to the Bible, sermons, hymns and prayers. Like Kam in Ambon, Hellendoorn, and also later missionaries like Riedel and Schwarz, took the pupils into their house, where they became accustomed to the daily routine of a pious half-European family (some of these missionaries were married to local women). After they had been long enough at the school and in the household of the missionary they were sent to establish schools for themselves. In 1832 Hellendoorn had already twenty rather well-organised schools under his supervision with some 700 pupils, nearly double the 400 in the poorly functioning schools five years before. When Hellendoorn died in 1839, the Minahasa mission counted 56 schools and 4,000 pupils. The success of the mission was counted in pupils rather than in baptisms!

Although Hellendoorn himself remained concentrated on Manado and environs, he insisted with Joseph Kam that future missionaries should extend their activities to inland Minahasa. For several reasons there were very few native Ambonese available for the Minahasa mission. But in 1831 Joseph Kam could send two German missionaries, Johann Friedrich Riedel who started work in the central town of Tondano, on the northern shore of the lake of

⁴ Quoted after Buchholt 1994:15.

the same name, and Johann Gottlob Schwarz who was placed in Langowan, a few miles southeast of this lake. Five more mission stations were opened in the 1830s (Amurang, Tomohon, Kema, Tanangwangko and Kumelembuai), and three more (Sonder, Ratahan, Talawaän) in the 1840s. The eleven mission stations (the capital of Manado included) were all centres for minor outer stations where the teachers of the schools also took care of the further introduction to Christianity.

Letters by missionaries of this period are full of complaints about the harsh life of the common people under the strict regime of the compulsory cultivation of coffee (up to 100 days per year) and corvée work for the roads (up to 30 days per year for all adults), with much profit for the chiefs but leaving the common people often in poverty and distress. Nevertheless, the *Pax Neerlandica* worked very positively for promoting religious conversions. It was estimated that about 1880 some 80,000 or 80% of the population was baptised and had embraced Christianity. Schouten interprets this change as “a strategy to overcome their cultural disorientation and social distress.... Much in the spirit of: if you can't beat them, join them. Embracing what Minahasans called *agama kompeni*, or the religion of Dutch government, was part of such a strategy.”⁵

In many respects the new religion differed much from traditional Minahasan religion. The latter put high value on power, pride and prestigious liberality. Wearing the colour red was the exclusive prerogative of successful headhunters. Only they and their wives could wear tattoos with depictions of human heads. They were given sumptuous funerals and large *waruga* or grave tombs. *Posso*, great festivals with many pigs and the traditional drink of *saguer*, were important for the reinforcement of the authority and prestige of social leaders. Religious functionaries and specialists, the *walian* and the *tonaà* who could make contact with the ancestors and had the knowledge of the sacred language and rituals, were found among male and female alike. The missionaries, however, rejected higher religious positions for women and thus in fact introduced an inferior position for women, although they claimed that they had reduced or even abolished the bride price and thus stated that they had promoted the position of women. The missionaries also preached an ethos of frugality, tried to ban alcoholic drinks, dancing, and protested against traditional ceremonies attached to the cycle of personal life and the yearly round of nature. They held no great baptism festivals and only introduced Christmas as a new festival, besides allowing ceremonies and feasts for occasions like harvest or moving into a newly built house. There were many conversions of the religious specialists

⁵ Schouten 1998:107.

who apparently followed the majority of the population instead of leading a strong opposition against the new faith. In many cases they were the first to take this decision. There was a remarkably high number of former male *walian* and *tona'a* among the local leadership of the new Christianity.⁶

Most conversions in this period were individual decisions, notwithstanding the increasing collective pressure to convert. The whole process lasted also for nearly two generations, or some 50 years. Only in a few cases was there a collective conversion or at least a sudden massive movement towards the new religion. Such a case was the revival in Tonsea and Likupang (north of Kema) where missionary F.G. Linemann could baptise 8,518 adults in the period 1856–1859.⁷

In the strategy of the NZG there was a strong separation between baptism and admission to the Holy Supper's. The missionaries were quite severe in the administration of baptism and asked for a thorough preparation. But even after baptism they required further training and good discipline in church attendance before their flock could be admitted to the Lord's Supper. Riedel baptised between 1831 and 1860, 9,341 people but only accepted 3,851 as full member of the church who were allowed to receive the Lord's Supper. His colleague N.P. Wilken baptised in the period 1843–1868 not less than 8,584 people but only admitted 1,452 to the Lord's Supper. Missionary S.D. van der Velde van Cappellen who worked in the station of Amurang took a more lenient position. In the mid-1850s he urged school pupils to receive baptism before leaving the three years of basic schooling, because he was afraid that they could turn to Islam. Somewhat later he had to conclude that this method was no guarantee at all: only 1/5 of these 'baptised pagans' came to church, and most of them only at Christmas and New Year.⁸ The jubilant statements about the magnificent increase of Christians in this period have also their dark side!

1881–1934 Minahasan Christianity under the administration of the Indische Kerk

The great success of the Minahasa mission also caused problems for the NZG. The missionary organisation came into financial troubles in the 1870s due to internal problems in the Netherlands and the increase of its missionary fields. In 1873 the NZG paid the salaries for 9 European missionaries, 14

⁶ Schouten 1998:108–111.

⁷ Coolsma 1901:579–580.

⁸ Enklaar 1947:77–79.

native assistant missionaries, 3 helpers and 123 teachers who in small villages also served as religious leaders of the Christians. Although salaries were quite modest, they were up to 36,000 guilders per year. There was no strategy to ask the new converts to begin contributions for the organisation of their belief. It was all planned and financed top-down. This situation created the need for drastic measures. For the next 50 years the solution of this problem was found in the surrender of the mission field to the established Protestant Church of the East Indies, a body financed and regulated by the colonial state. The process took some time. Between 1876 and 1881 one mission post after another was brought under supervision of the *Indische Kerk*. In daily practise this meant that regulations for salaries, the pension plans of church staff, provision of material and buildings, were carried out by the officials of the resident of Manado. These colonial personnel could be religion-minded but in many cases they were indifferent or even uncooperative. Later observers all considered this as a great mistake, because a golden opportunity to create an indigenous church at an early stage was lost. Hendrik Kraemer wrote in 1926:

I am firmly convinced that it is far more correct to call the Minahasa one of the most pitiable regions of the Archipelago, not a pet child but a tortured animal. . . . The curse (I cannot put it less forcefully in this connection) of the Dutch rage for religious neutrality swept over the Minahasa. A people with primitive notions and in the middle of a Christianising process, experienced cool indifference towards the new religion from the side of the civil servants of a government which in their eyes is identical with this Christian religion.⁹

Was it so bad? Was it really so negative for a blossoming Christianity with its many schools, that now received generous subsidies from a colonial government? The German historian of the Indonesian mission, Theodor Müller-Krüger, also wrote in a very negative way about this organisational move. For him one of the great failures of this move was the break with the language policy of the NZG. Until 1880 Malay was used in the schools and for the Bible no Minahasan translation was prepared (partly due to the fact that there were great differences between the various districts, with five distinct languages in this small area). The missionaries, however, learned the local languages and much of their work was carried out in these languages. They were moving towards the creation of a new Minahasan standard language, quite different from the Malay of the coastal regions. However, after the transfer of the mission to the *Indische Kerk*, this policy was abandoned in favour of a total application of Malay not only in schools but also in the church. Another negative effect of the transfer was the creation of a 'pyramid

⁹ Kraemer 1958:36–37.

of ministries' (*Ämterpyramide*) because work in the Minahasa was directed by a fully ordained European minister who served the Dutch-speaking congregation of Manado. Under this minister there were some 10–12 assistant ministers (nearly all of European origin) who in normal condition were not entitled to administer Baptism or Eucharist. Under these were the (native) assistant teachers (*hulpleeraar*) of religion (growing from a dozen in 1881 to 89 in 1934) and some 125 school teachers who were responsible for the local congregations in the villages. In their turn they were assisted by elders. This was really a top-down organisation controlled by white colonial officials, without much perspective for growth towards an independent and indigenous church structure. Only the fully ordained minister, the score of (European) assistant ministers and the growing group of native assistant teachers were entitled to receive government salaries.¹⁰

In his well-researched and meticulous study of Sam (Gerungan Saul Samuel Jacob) Ratu Langie (1890–1949), Van Klinken suggests that this Minahasa educator, journalist and first of all nationalist politician, was already part of a “post-Christian,” not post-animist or post-Muslim” society. He states that, “the intellectual upper layer of Minahasan society into which Ratu Langie was born, was by the early twentieth century almost completely un-churched.”¹¹ This is again a very strong statement, only reinforced with a quote from the report by Hendrik Kraemer that regular church attendance was only ten percent in the towns in the early 1920s.¹² On the other side, there was the statement in 1902 by Resident E.J. Jellesma, himself the son of a Protestant missionary, who wrote that, “Minahasa can be called a Protestant land.” But this latter judgment was also made in order to prevent Catholics from working in the same region and perhaps should not be taken too serious.¹³ Whatever may be true of this quick ‘secularisation,’ to be blamed on the freemason colonial officials and the very liberal Dutch ministers of the nineteenth century *Indische Kerk*, or on a poor inculturation of Christianity in Minahasan society, there was definitely not a golden age of full and obedient Christianity in this period, but still quite a vehement struggle for a new identity.

¹⁰ Müller-Krüger 1968:113.

¹¹ Van Klinken 2003:88.

¹² Kraemer 1958:11–42.

¹³ Steenbrink 2003–I:202.

Dutch names	Indonesian	
<i>Predikant</i>	Pendeta	Fully ordained minister Only Dutch men, with academic training in Europe
<i>Hulpprediker</i> After 1937: <i>Indisch Predikant</i>	<i>Pendeta penolong</i> Or just <i>Penolong</i> Also: <i>Pendeta pembantu</i> ¹⁴	Assistant minister. Most of them Dutch, in the early 20th century also several Indonesians who studied in Oegstgeest, Netherlands. No academic training, only theological college immediately after junior high school.
<i>Inlandsch leeraar</i>	<i>Pendeta pribumi</i>	Native teacher, Indonesian working under the supervision of the <i>Hulpprediker</i> .
<i>Goeroe</i>	<i>Guru jema'at</i> <i>Tua agama</i> or <i>Penatua</i>	Catechists, teachers in village schools that were concentrated on religious classes Elders; not specially trained people who took some local responsibilities in a congregation
<i>Diaken</i>	<i>Shamash</i> or <i>Deacon</i>	Service to the poor

The pyramid of the hierarchy of the *Indische Kerk* in its bi-lingual expressions. In 1934, when the GMIM was constituted, there were 2 fully ordained ministers, 6 Dutch and three Indonesian (Rev. Wenas, Moendoeng and F.W. Lumanow) *hulppredikers*, 89 *inlands leraar* and 374 *guru jemaat*.¹⁵

The school system of the NZG, mostly concentrated on religious teaching, remained outside the subsidies, also after the mission was taken over by the *Indische Kerk* in the 1870s. Simultaneous with the transfer of the church personnel from NZG to the *Indische Kerk* there was an increase in government schools, that were religiously neutral. This involved a provision that no religious classes were allowed in these schools, but their secular education was at a much higher level than was the case in the NZG schools. It was a serious setback for the missionaries who saw their major instrument for influence in society threatened. NZG decided therefore to continue the religious schools, although they could not compete with the government schools. Some 20–30 NZG teachers accepted a position within the government system that provided much higher salaries than the mission could give. They were put under the supervision of some 60 teachers who were trained at the government's teacher training school of Tondano. The mission continued for a long period with its

¹⁴ Van den End 1989:44–45.

¹⁵ De Jonge 1987:145. Van den End 1989–II:44–45.

own teachers' training programme, at home with the missionaries, which was also the traditional system where the *walian* also used adoption to pass on their knowledge and spirit power to the following generations.¹⁶ Besides this, a more formal mission school was erected in Tanawangko that, between 1854 and 1895, was led by qualified teacher and assistant minister Nicolaas Graafland. The government schools were first considered as places where people were prepared for a position as government officials or employees of a European firm (for *pangkat* or a position with social status) while mission schools (still 2/3 of all schools in the region) were seen as places to learn religion.¹⁷

The transfer of the mission to the *Indische Kerk* was not always executed in a smooth way. Several missionaries rejected the idea, because they felt not free to preach as they wanted within the framework of the *Indische Kerk*, considered as a bastion of liberal Christianity where even the doctrine of the Trinity and of the divinity of Jesus as son of God was not maintained. S. Ulfers (ca 1819–1885) who had worked in Amurang since 1847 and from 1849 in Kumelembuai, asked in 1874 for permission to stay under the NZG because of his age. This was granted to him. The same was asked by missionary J. Wiersma who strongly opposed the transfer from mission to *Indische Kerk* because he considered his congregation not yet ripe for this process. In 1878 the directors of the NZG ordered him to accept the transfer to the governmental position under threat of dismissal. Only in July 1881 did he accept this move and he was formally nominated for his station of Ratahan. Soon afterwards the resident of Manado took revenge for anti-government articles he had written in the journal *Indische Gids*, and Wiersma was moved to the far-away, isolated and tiny village of Waai in Ambon. He managed to declare himself sick, left for Europe on sick-leave and two years later he was dismissed from his government position 'with honour'. He was one of the most vocal protesters against the whole process. In his writings in newspapers and magazines he protested against the harsh measures of Resident A.H. Swaving (1876–1878), his successor, P.A. Matthes, and the lower staff of the residency of that time who put too heavy obligations on the population. In a comment on the murder of *Controleur* H. Haga, killed by someone who was unwilling to do corvée labour in September 1879, he wrote about this colonial official and his colleagues, "They were sent for coffee and roads." As a missionary Wiersma did not like to serve the same employer and thus to become identified with these people. He saw no other way out than dismissal from the mission and return to Europe.¹⁸

¹⁶ Buchholt 1994:19.

¹⁷ Schouten 1998:114; Kroeskamp 1973:255–296.

¹⁸ "Gezonden werden zij voor de koffie en de wegen..." in: [J. Wiersma], "Brieven uit de Minahassa," *Indische Gids* 1880-II:820–832, quote from p. 824. In this article he strongly

The deep impact of colonialism on Minahasan society was still reinforced by the condition that since 1881 even the new religion was formally a state affair. This probably increased the Minahasan tendency to accept many things European as part of their own culture. Especially European education became a favourite issue. In 1926 Hendrik Kraemer noticed two more or less contradictory aspects of Minahasan society. He considered “their natural desire to feast” to be a continuation of the pre-Christian society. But the new need was the education of their children, “The Minahasans live on their capital and not on its interest. The money they make from their plantations is spent on feasts or the education of their children. . . . As in Amboina, indigenous people as well as Europeans in the Minahasa stated that the country is glutted with Dutch education and that the cultural and economic development does not keep pace with it.”¹⁹

Catholics, Adventists, Pentecostals, KGPM: fragmentation of Minahasan Christianity in the first decades of the twentieth century

As already mentioned above, large numbers of Minahasan men entered since the later 1820s the colonial army. Most of those who were not yet converted to Christianity asked for baptism during their period of military service, often for the sake of the special financial gift on the occasion of baptism and the higher salary for Christian soldiers. There are reports that some even wanted a Catholic baptism after a Protestant in order to receive this baptismal allowance once again.²⁰ In the early 1850s there were already several scores of Minahasan Catholic soldiers, baptised in Semarang or Surabaya. Catholic priest Caspar de Hesselle was in the Minahasa between 6 January and 8 April 1853, but he met only some 120 Catholics from the Philippines. From the military garrison of Ambarawa 56 Minahasan baptisms were mentioned for the period 1859–1861; in 1861 from Semarang 48.²¹ One of these early baptisms was Daniel Mandagi who entered military service about 1845 and for some time stayed in Java. In early 1868 he sent a letter from Manado to the Semarang parish priest Jozef Lijnen asking for a residing priest in his region. After a permit from the colonial authorities was obtained, the Jesuit priest Johannes de Vries travelled to Minahasa. He concentrated, outside the capital of Manado, on the south-eastern district of Ratahan where he baptised

opposed the government supervision of any missionary work. About the killing of Haga, see *Indische Gids* 1880–I:592–601, probably also by J. Wiersma. The articles bear no name. See also Schouten 1998:74.

¹⁹ Kraemer 1958:27.

²⁰ Steenbrink 2003–I:14

²¹ Van Aernsbergen 1934:108.

more than 140 people during the absence of their missionary Rev. J. Wiersma. People may have taken him for an itinerant (Protestant or at least Christian) missionary. At least two chiefs who were in conflict with the Protestant minister took advantage of this presence to change their affiliation to Catholicism. The Catholics were inclined to recognise under certain conditions a marriage formalised without a minister. The Protestants were rather hesitant to baptise the children of such couples, but in some cases De Vries did. All this increased the Catholic flock little by little.

The two-month tour by De Vries in 1868 was the beginning of much debate and protests. Governor General P. Mijer, (a rather active promoter of Protestant mission) rebuked Vicar Apostolic Vrancken for “this most stupid and rash action by Mr De Vries, of all things a Jesuit!”²² The Lutheran Rev. J.A. Schuurman, minister of the *Indische Kerk* in Batavia (1868–1880), had a more nuanced opinion about the case. He blamed the Protestant missionaries in Minahasa for uncompromising and blatantly strict rules, which led to De Vries’s success in baptising.²³ For the next decades an internal struggle between the two Christian denominations continued. Bishop Vrancken was afraid of a new conflict with the colonial authorities (after the Grooff affair of 1844–1847) and only in 1873 did his successor A. Claessens send the calm and diplomatic Larantuka priest Gregorius Metz to Minahasa. After a continuation of these trips during the following decade, in 1886 a first priest, Bernardus Mutsaers, settled permanently in Manado. The number of Catholics was estimated at somewhat more than 2,500 at the time, a small number compared to more than 90,000 Protestants. In order to prevent easy change of denomination, in 1883 the so-called *briefjesbesluit* or Decision of Letters was issued by Governor General F.s’ Jacob. It stipulated that:

All native Christians in the residencies of Manado, Ambon and Ternate who want to leave their denomination and embrace another, must give notice of their wish to the minister of their first denomination in the presence of two witnesses. They have to declare that they freely want to change their denomination without any solicitation of another church.²⁴

This awkward decision, issued by the colonial state, was a strategy to make change of denomination more difficult. It was just one step in a long chain of conflicts between the denominations. The next Governor General, Van Rees, withdrew this regulation. New conflicts, however, rose again. The longest was about the arrival of Dutch Catholic nuns in 1898, who were only allowed to open a school in 1907 and even then only for indigenous Catholic girls.

²² Steenbrink 2003–I:193.

²³ Van der Velden 1908:179.

²⁴ Steenbrink 2003–I:195.

As with the Protestants, also in the Catholic endeavour education was a major instrument to attain influence and prestige in this majority Protestant region. This was also possible thanks to the sharp increase in foreign personnel with the Catholics. For the period 1900–1940 we can notice a very quick increase in Dutch priests, nuns and brothers, much faster than the increase in number of the faithful. In 1902 the nearly 7,000 Catholics were served by three Jesuit priests and about 8 nuns. In 1940 for a number of 25,304 Catholics there were 25 priests, 26 brothers and 80 sisters. By that time there were already 25 native Indonesians working as sisters in the Minahasa, but all the priests, religious brothers and 55 of the sisters were European (mostly Dutch with some German priests).²⁵ This is quite different from the relatively small number of expatriate Protestant mission personnel in the region, never exceeding ten people. The Protestant mission leader Baron van Boetzelaer, after regretting that the Catholics had started their mission in Minahasa, rightly stated “the results of this activity were not compatible to the effort exerted by the mission”.²⁶

The statistics for Catholic education show a strong emphasis on Dutch language education, the most prestigious (and most expensive) type of school. This resulted for the year 1939 in three Dutch language *Kindergarten*, three HIS and two HCS (Dutch language school for Chinese), two high schools (MULO), one teachers training college, two Dutch language vocational schools and a minor seminary. There were at that time 85 Catholic ‘Malay schools,’ where only three years’ education were given in Indonesian, with the exception of 9 of these schools that offered a five-years course (*Vervolgscholen*). The Dutch Catholic religious teachers concentrated on the Dutch language schools. Only six out of the 71 European sisters and brothers worked in Malay schools.²⁷ On the whole the study and practice of the Dutch language was very popular in the Minahasa, also nicknamed “the twelfth province of the Netherlands.” This was notwithstanding the strategy of the Protestant and Catholic missions that used Malay as their common language. It could partly be attributed to the special privilege of children of Minahasan soldiers who could be accepted in the most prestigious Dutch language school, the ELS, *Europese Lagere School*. But also the HIS was very popular in the region.²⁸ The Catholic institutes attracted also many Protestants. It is not exceptional that a Protestant figure like Wilhelm Johanis Rumambi (1916–1984), son and grand-son of a

²⁵ *Jaarboek 1940*:205–207.

²⁶ Baron van Boetzelaer 1947:453.

²⁷ *Jaarboek 1940*:207.

²⁸ Kees Groeneboer 1993:307, 366, 369, 387. Groeneboer mentions that the city of Manado had a 9.3% Dutch speaking population, only second to Ambon where 13% could speak and read Dutch.

Protestant minister and teacher was in the 1920s sent to a Catholic primary school, run by Dutch brothers in Manado, before he enrolled in a Protestant boarding school in Java, Surakarta in the period 1930–1934.²⁹ This exactly fitted the image described by Hendrik Kraemer of a people, spending so much money to secure the best education of their children. Although the impact of education decreased after independence, it remained an important aspect of Catholic life. In 2000 it was reported that the Catholic schools still largely outnumbered the percentage of Catholics in this region. In that year 15% of the teachers at Catholic primary schools were not Catholic, and even 30% of the teaching staff at high schools, although in all cases religious classes were taught by Catholic teachers. As to pupils the percentage was even less than that: not much more than half of the (about 30,000) pupils in 140 primary and 63 secondary schools were Catholic. Was this purely a heritage from the past, continued without much deliberation? At that time the official strategy of the diocese had become that faith education was more a family than a school affair. Therefore it wanted to develop a new mission for its schools.³⁰

The Catholics also spent much money and energy on health care. In Tomohon a Catholic hospital was founded by the JMJ sisters in 1916. It received government subsidies in 1917. This support was given under the Governor General Idenburg, an outspoken defender of balanced subsidies for all Christian denominations. The *Mariënheuvel* (Mary's Hill, *Gunung Maria*) hospital remained the only major medical institution organised by the Catholics in the Minahasa during the colonial period. After independence this hospital generated several hospitals and clinics. The influence of medical care on the spread of Catholicism was much less than that of the schools. In 1923 a cooperative union was established, the POB, *Perserikatan Orang Berkeboen*, an association of people working in plantations, mostly in coffee. The German MSC priest A.M. Domsdorff was the advisor to this union.³¹ In the 1970s, the time of the rise of development cooperations, this developed into credit unions. But still, most important socio-economic cooperation remained based on the small-scale lending between families and neighbourhoods, the *arisan*. Even a review of the role of Catholic doctrine in Minahasan society, as formulated in 2000 by Bishop Yosef Suwatan, must be understood as a rehabilitation of the importance of feasts (*posso*) repudiated and rejected so vehemently by Protestant preachers from the first missionaries until Hendrik Kraemer in 1926. This analysis glorifies the Minahasan fondness of big celebrations as the fulfilment of community, as the realisation of communal togetherness and harmony. "Although we should not forget that religion also preaches about the

²⁹ Rumambi 1994:21.

³⁰ Rosariyanto 2000:425–426.

³¹ M. Stigter in: Muskens 1974–IIIa:476.

life of the hereafter, we should take seriously this life that is in progress and moving towards fulfilment. Therefore we must enjoy what we have reached already thus far.”³²

In 2000 there were 102,536 Catholics in North Sulawesi or 3.28% of the total population, a modest percentage that had not risen substantially since 1900. Catholics remained the largest single Christian denomination besides the majority GMIM Protestants and some 50 other denominations in this region. Catholics were over-represented in the capital of Manado where they counted 18.3% (22,692) out of a population of some 110,000 in 2000. In the district of Tonsea they were 14.6% and in neighbouring Tontemboan 11.1%. This was already 2/3 of the Catholics in the broad region of North Sulawesi and Gorontalo, including Sangir-Talaud and the Banggai archipelago or Central Sulawesi.

The Catholic community had grown partly through what its adversaries had called sheep-stealing or proselytising. Many of its members had come from baptised Protestant families. The same can be said for all later denominations that gradually arrived in this region in the twentieth century. We can only give attention to a few of them.

A quite peculiar Protestant church was the Adventists who arrived in the Dutch colony in 1900, in Padang, and from there spread to the Batak area. In 1911 a young Minahasan man, Samuel Rantung, embraced Adventism in Batavia. In the 1910s he went for some time to an Adventist seminary in Singapore and in 1920, while sick, he took a period of leave in his home area of Ratahan, Minahasa. Here he made several other Minahasan converts. After some time he was joined in this mission by a young Sundanese M.E. Diredja, at that time working at the Advent mission press in Singapore: religious mission is a business of adventurous and travelling people! The two first evangelists were strengthened by the arrival of Singapore-born Joseph Phang, a dentist who had received his education in Los Angeles at UCLA. Phang settled in Manado where he worked as a dentist, but also tried to gain followers. He was quite successful and preached Adventism in the whole of Minahasa. In 1922 an American ordained minister, Albert Munson, arrived who settled in Manado. From Ratahan and Manado the Adventist church slowly spread through the whole of Minahasa. Also for this denomination the school was an important institution for gaining followers. Manado was in 1930 already established as an independent centre (a Union) for the Adventist Church. In the 1990s there were two Unions in Indonesia: one in Jakarta (also connected

³² Rosariyanto 2000:421.

to the Batak region) and one in Manado for East Indonesia. Both counted some 70,000 faithful among their flock.³³

Social scientists wondered how the Adventists, in most places an extremely small community, could find a relatively large response in Minahasa. They have a quite ascetic life-style, refrain from alcohol and coffee, do not indulge in luxuries like jewellery and cosmetics. On the whole this is quite in contrast to the usually extroverted life-style of the Minahasans. Erika Lünemann noticed that quite a few Adventists were among the well-to-do, even the *nouveaux riches*, while the Pentecostal movement is above all, a religion of the socially disadvantaged.³⁴

Denominational fragmentation saw a further step with the establishment on 21 April 1933 of the KGPM. Basically the origin of the KGPM can be traced back to the unlucky transition of the missionary society to the *Indische Kerk*. In order to train native ministers for the congregations a theological school was established in 1885 in Tomohon. The output of this theological school (under the supervision of the *Indische Kerk*) was not sufficient. Moreover, its graduates were not fully ordained ministers, but only served as assistant ministers who could not, under normal conditions, administer the basic sacraments of Baptism and Eucharist. Their formal name was *inlandsch leeraar* or 'native teacher'. Because their number was not sufficient the missionary society NZG continued to train schoolteachers to serve the congregations also. This resulted in the awkward situation that one part of the (assistant) ministers was paid by the *Indische Kerk*, and thus directly by the colonial state, whereas another group still received its salary from the missionary society for their function as teacher of a mission school and leader of the local congregation. In 1910 the NZG teachers established a union *Pangkal Setia*.³⁵ Within this union the antipathy against the *inlandsch leeraar* was enforced by nationalist sentiments. The *inlandsch leeraar* was characterised as a tool of the colonial government serving one of its major instruments, the *Indische Kerk* that gave first of all attention to the European members and considered the native Christians as only second class. This idea was strengthened by the discussion of the separation of the church (in fact for them the *Indische Kerk*) and the colonial state. During his visit to Minahasa in 1926 Hendrik Kraemer could still appease these emotions, but not for long. The only fully ordained minister was the Dutch E. de Vreede who was not popular among the indigenous population. Still, he was nominated to be the negotiator and initiator for a more independent

³³ Tambunan 1999:134–157 & 562–563.

³⁴ Buchholt 1994:42–47.

³⁵ There is some debate about the year of origin of *Pangkal Setia*. Many sources give the date of 1917. See Henley 1996:108.

Minahasan section within the *Indische Kerk*. This was a breaking point and the KGPM or *Kerapatan Gereja Protestan Minahasa* or Union of Protestant Churches in Minahasa, was established by proclamation of its existence by the group of teachers. They expanded rapidly and in 1941 counted 61 congregations, about 10% of the total number of Minahasan Christians.

KGPM continued to have close relations with secular nationalists who were active in the preparation for a regional council, the *Minahasaraad*. B.W. Lopian who had been a member of this democratic body, as well as vice-chairman of *Pangkal Setia*, became the first chairman of the KGPM. In 1938 Lopian was elected to become a member of the *Volksraad*, the embryonic national parliament. He spoke in that body as a fervent nationalist. This same national or rather regional pride was also apparent in the official KGPM hymn of 1934:

Atas goenoeng dan di lembah	In the mountains and the valleys
Tanahkoe Minahasa	Of my land, Minahasa,
Tidak koerang lontjing gentah	There are many church bells singing
M'warta Indjil berdjasa:	Of the Holy Gospel's goodness
Hai saudara, insafilah,	Awaken now, my brother,
KGPM kaumasoecklah!	Come and join KGPM
Kauinsaf, Kaumasoeck	Awaken now and join us
Kaumasoecklah KGPM	Come and join KGPM ³⁶

The KGPM was not the first independent Protestant church in the Indies. The Bataks and the Churches of East Java and (Central) Java (1931) had taken the lead. In Java the independence had been established more in harmony with the missionary leadership, but in Batakland already in 1927 an independent church had started before the foreign missionaries consented in the institution of the HKBP in 1930. In the Minahasa the KGPM was founded as a revolutionary institution, not against missionary organisations but in conflict with a state-dominated Protestant church. Its initiators were not the real elite of the region. It was a second ranking minister, *Inlandsch leraar* H. Sinaulan, and a retired judge, J. Jacobus who took the lead. It was clearly the expression of the wish to be Minahasan, Christian, and independent. In 2000 the KGPM had 50,017 members in 176 parishes, about 100 ministers, and 1,697 lay workers. It ran several schools and was involved in some community development works, especially in the area of home industry, credit union, agriculture and fishery.

³⁶ Quoted after Henley 1996:111.

*1934–1942 Constitution of the majority Minahasan
Protestant church, GMIM*

In the 1920s there was a growing desire among the lower rank and file of Minahasan Christian leaders to be given independence. This desire did not meet much response with the leadership of the *Indische Kerk*. In 1927 Hendrik Kraemer was asked to make a second visit to Minahasa and he proposed that a mixed commission of six European and six Minahasan Protestants would discuss matters in more concrete ways. Chair of this committee was Dr. E. de Vreede,³⁷ director of the training school and minister in Tomohon. In this committee the Europeans tried to make the Minahasa region a section within the *Indische Kerk*. Their formula would be that a partly autonomous branch of the major church would be recognised in Minahasa, while the Minahasan members tried to emphasise the ethnic identity of the church and asked for full independence. What came out of this debate was a somewhat meagre result. Due to the unexpected revolutionary secession of the KGPM, it was formulated that the name would be GMIM, *Gereja Masehi Injili Minahasa* or Minahasa Christian Evangelical Church, but leadership of the synod for the time being would be in the hands of Dutch ministers, while the Church Board in Batavia had the right to control the work of the synod and to annul some of its decisions. On 30 September 1934 the GMIM was formally erected.

Ideally the GMIM was no longer a top-down church: its lower ranking ministers (also the *guru jemaat*) were after ten years of practical service entitled to administer the sacraments. At the local level the congregation could hold elections for functionaries such as deacon or elder. They constituted the council of the *classis*, who again elected members for the synod. Initially, however, there were still some remnants of the top-down structure of the *Indische Kerk*: The president of the synod was still a Dutch minister, nominated by the church council of the *Indische Kerk* in Batavia and this council was still entitled to cancel some decisions of the Minahasa synod. This Batavia body also had the right to nominate the presidents of the GMIM districts (*classis*). Quite crucial was the regulation that the Batavia council could still control and administer the finances.

³⁷ Ernst Anton de Vreede worked during the 1920s for six years in Tondano. He used his European furlough to write a doctoral dissertation, defended on 5 January 1932 in Groningen, entitled *Het Nationalisme als Zedelijk Vraagstuk* (Nationalism as an ethical problem). It is a quite abstract philosophical writing. There are no direct references to Minahasa. The Dutch nationalism (against Spain, 1570–1650) and modern Chinese nationalism are much more important. It is full of Western superiority. Just to quote from the last page, 163, in relation with the 'transcendent solidarity in Christ': "Western society will, as the strongest party within the Eastern context, still have to carry the burden of the weak."

On 2 February 1942 the majority of the Minahasa synod took the decision that no longer a Dutch minister would be its chairman. The synod chose the experienced Minahasan minister A.Z.R. Wenas, since 1927 director of the theological college in Tomohon. By then the Japanese army had already entered the region, but the Dutch ministers were not yet interned. The decision was not really relevant, because soon afterwards the Japanese army put all Dutch citizens in prison, including the Protestant ministers. It was, however a symbolic act, showing the nationalist fervour within the church.

In 1933 the *Indische Kerk* had accepted a short formula as the basis of its faith. It was only a quotation from 1 Cor. 3:11, "Its foundation is Jesus Christ." This was formulated as a consequence of the twentieth century tendency towards a stricter orthodoxy within this church. In 1970, as part of a new church order for GMIM, more doctrinal elements were formulated,

6.2 The statement of belief of the Church. 1° In obedience to the witness of Scripture, Old and New Testament and through the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the GMIM confesses in all appearances and expressions of her life, that Jesus Christ is the Lord of the Church and Lord of the world. 2° this statement of belief is made in communion with the confession of the church in all centuries, summarised in the ecumenical confessions: the Apostolic Creed, the Creed of Nicea and the Confession of Athanasius, according to the interpretation of the Reformation and of the common statement of belief of the Indonesian Churches. 3° The GMIM fulfils this statement of belief in daily practice through preaching, liturgy, hymns, prayers, announcements from the pulpit, messages, pastoral communications, letters and formulas, and in the words and deeds of its members; 4° the service and the meetings of the church must be obedient to this ruling, in thought, speech and deeds. 5° The GMIM rejects everything that contradicts its confession.³⁸

It is quite striking that in these solemn expressions of a church that defined itself ethnically as a Minahasan church, nothing specific for this ethnicity and local culture can be found. Instead, during the post-1942 period an official rejection of paganism continued, where religious elements of traditional religion and culture could not be accepted. The confessional character was not newly defined, but as such simply a continuation of the basic formulations of classical Christianity, redefined in a strictly Reformed, i.e. Calvinistic sense. GMIM liturgy also resembled the traditional Dutch Reformed church order, with the Holy Supper celebrated while the congregation was seated at long tables. GMIM indeed continued a number of mainstream Dutch Reformed features, but in its daily piety it showed more and more sympathy for pietism and even for modern Evangelical thought. This may have been the reason why since the 1920s a significant minority of GMIM members felt attracted to the warmer and livelier Adventist and Pentecostal spirituality and joined these

³⁸ After Van den End 1986:69-70.

denominations. Otherwise it has to be stated that Pentecostals in Minahasa are rather close to GMIM in spirituality and liturgical practice and much less excited in their worship than in other regions.³⁹

*1942–1965 GMIM as the largest Minahasan Church in a turbulent period:
Japanese occupation, revolution and Permesta*

Japanese oppression of Christian churches in the Minahasa was not as severe as in other regions of the archipelago. Still, the new ruler interfered in religious life by ordering all the Christian churches to form one body, under the supervision of a Japanese Protestant minister, Hamazaki. The Japanese army even offered to pay the salaries for ministers, as they had been paid by the Dutch colonial government until that time. GMIM leadership, however, declined this offer, fearing too much dependency on their new masters. Synod president Wenas also rejected the request by the Japanese to hold services on 8 December 1942 in memory of the members of the Japanese army who had died during the war. Within PAKSOE (*Madjelis Persatoean Agama Kristen Selebes Oetara*, United Christian Council of North Sulawesi) GMIM, Catholics, Pentecostals, Adventists and the Salvation Army were united. It was a rare opportunity for leaders of the various denominations to meet each other, because before 1942 there were seldom meetings between rival Christian groups. Immediately after the Japanese capitulation of 15th August 1945 most denominations withdraw from PAKSOE. Although this body was never formally abolished, it was soon only a GMIM affair and remained sleeping until in the 1970s a new ecumenical body, the Provincial Council of Churches, was established.⁴⁰

In the revolutionary period 1945–1949 GMIM defended strongly its independence. There were passionate protests when the *Indische Kerk* from Batavia again wanted to nominate a Dutch minister as president of the GMIM synod. In 1948 GMIM participated at the Federal Synod of the *Indische Kerk* in Bogor, but it did not wish to be considered as just a regional section of this larger church. President of GMIM synod A. Wenas was very outspoken in this sense:

We must not foster a monolithic church. Not too much power should be given to the top. We clearly oppose the centralistic character of a church. That would be in contradiction to the fact of the local congregation as the kernel of the church. At this moment also in Minahasa, too much attention is given to individual persons. We even hear people saying, that GMIM is ‘the Wenas-church.’⁴¹

³⁹ Müller-Krüger 1968:129–130.

⁴⁰ Van den End 1989:90–91.

⁴¹ *Notulen van de Derde Algemene Synode van de Protestantse Kerk in Indonesië*, Buitenzorg, 1948:134–135. See also Müller-Krüger 1968:119. A member of the synod rejected the organic example of the mango fruit because it is centred on one stone alone; better is the comparison

During the period 1945–1949 GMIM could not make a choice between the possibility of a strong unified state or a loose federal state where East Indonesia could be rather independent, with a strong Christian section of the population. The church took no firm position in this matter, as it also avoided political decisions later. When in 1950 the majority of Indonesia opted for the strong unified state, GMIM again did not take an outspoken political position. The population was much divided; part of the people supporting Soekarno and his ideal of a strong centralised Indonesian state, but others favouring a continuation of some relationship with the Dutch in one way or another within a nearly autonomous State of East Indonesia. In 1950 the financial bonds between the Protestant Church (in this case also GMIM) and the government ended. The Indonesian government never took over the generous role of the Dutch colonial government, providing salaries for Protestant ministers and Catholic priests. In this period, too, ecumenical cooperation was initiated with churches in the region, especially through the Conference of Malino (in South Sulawesi), later resulting in the foundation of regional ecumenical councils, as well as the establishment of the Theological Seminary of Makassar. On the national level GMIM participated in the institution of the Indonesian Council of Churches in 1950, especially through the Minahasan minister Wilhelm Rumambi who became the first general secretary.

Later in the 1950s this church opposed the Muslim separatism of *Darul Islam* that was very strong in South and even in Central Sulawesi. In the difficult period of 1958–1961 when Minahasa was one of the centres of another separatist revolt, PERMESTA/PRRI, GMIM again took no political position because its membership was deeply divided between the promoters of the central state and those regional separatists who maintained that the government in Jakarta was exploiting the rich resources of some outer provinces. The PERMESTA/PRRI rebellion was a rare cooperation between the strongly Muslim province of Minangkabau (and some other parts of Sumatra) and the equally partisan Christian province of North Sulawesi, with many Christian and Muslim members of the army from both regions. A declaration issued by the GMIM synod in 1958⁴² firmly rejected the use of violence, both by the forces of the government and by the rebel forces, and advocated a peaceful solution of the conflict through talks, leading to the restoration of national unity. During the civil war, the church tried to organise help for the victims on both sides, by sending food and medicines to those who fled their homes and by giving material assistance to those whose villages and houses were destroyed. Rev. Wenas participated in the reconciliation talks seeking to re-

with grapes, which more resemble a loose federation. Best is the example of the orange fruit where many individual particles are hold together by an outward peel.

⁴² Van den End 1986:166–169.

establish peace (1959–1961). After the end of the war GMIM tried to seek further reconciliation between its members and to alleviate their suffering.

Despite these efforts the region only slowly recovered from the civil war. In the early 1960s many Minahasans lived in poverty. In this situation of social and economic crisis many church members proved susceptible to the propaganda of the PKI, the Communist Party of Indonesia. Hence, after the abortive communist coup of 1965 and the more successful counter-coup by the right wing military, the church initiated lay training programs to provide spiritual guidance not to say a reverse indoctrination of those affected by communism.

During this whole period the GMIM actively participated in regional and national (Protestant) ecumenical initiatives. A regional council of churches in Northern Sulawesi was founded in 1951, which was later enlarged with churches in Central Sulawesi. About 1990 the Council of Churches of Northern and Central Sulawesi merged with the southern churches to become the Common Synod of Churches in Sulawesi (*Sinode Am Gereja-gereja Sulawesi*), where 12 churches are brought together. This process, however, did not lead towards a permanent cooperation, let alone a union of churches.

The GMIM remained very active in the field of education. In 1965 the Christian University of Indonesia in Tomohon was established, uniting the former theological seminary and a teacher training school. The new theological faculty received students from all over North and Central Sulawesi.

1965–2000 GMIM amidst the booming cloves trade and the search for a purer Christianity

Rev. A. Wenas who had begun his church career as director of the theological college of Tomohon in 1927, and was elected president of the synod in 1942, was the undisputed leader of the GMIM until 1967. The new situation after the coup of 1965 urged the GMIM to give much attention to the spiritual guidance of its members. Its leadership was well aware of the influence of the church in all fields of life, since about 75% of the Minahasa population belonged to its membership. Through its primary and secondary schools, vocational schools and university, the church provided for the education of many children. Through its hospitals and clinics it gave medical care for many Minahasans. Church services and other meetings, organised by the church, usually were well attended.

But there was a feeling that many GMIM members still had a very superficial knowledge of the Bible and of Christian faith in general. In daily life many remnants of the old religion were still continued, hidden under the surface of a formal membership of a Christian church. Traditional healers were still consulted and small offerings were brought to the ancestors and spirits on

special occasions in life. Even when new churches were built, or old ones were renovated and enlarged, as was the case in the period of the booming clove business in the 1970s and 1980s, such offerings were given before church construction truly could start. Therefore the church, through a special department of the synod, organised an extensive lay programme in all villages. By making the traditional religion subject of theological reflection (especially in the theological faculty of Tomohon, but also at meetings of ministers), the church tried to make its members more aware of the meaning of Christian faith for daily life. In the 1980s efforts were even made to use elements from the pre-Christian tradition which the church considered positive. This was done especially for the promotion of social awareness and mutual help. Also some theological treatises from the 1990s can be mentioned which gave a more positive evaluation of the traditional religion. A quite prominent figure in this field is Johny Sumampow who in 1995 defended a MA thesis on the traditional Minahasan rituals based on belief in ancestors. He gave a quite sympathetic description of this tradition and defended the interpretation of the name Minahasa as meaning 'unity', also between the living beings and their ancestors.⁴³

The GMIM also extended its activities to social work outside the traditional field of education and health care. Training programmes were set up to improve farming methods or to start cooperatives. In various ways the church also started participating in national and international development cooperation programmes. After the 1965 change of national politics the economy in the Minahasa improved rapidly. Cloves became the new commodity to gain wealth quickly and rather easily. Hence woods were cut and clove trees were planted on a large scale, causing environmental problems through erosion. The economic gap between the rich and the poor widened, causing social tensions, especially in clove growing areas. The church tried to counter these developments by warning its members of the dangers of increased wealth (besides erosion the common words were consumerism and social injustice), but at the same time it applauded the government policy that aimed to improve the national economy through development (*pembangunan* was the new key word) of the country. Criticism of the military government that implemented its policy in an authoritarian and often rather manipulative, oppressive and corrupt way was only expressed by individual church members and small NGOs that were affiliated with the church. The leadership of the church generally supported the government and its ruling party (*Golkar*), even allowing church ministers to run for seats in the regional parliament, for this party. This was a general tendency among Indonesian Christians, caused by the fear

⁴³ Sumampow 1995:44.

of the return of Communism or of the spread of Islam. Here the New Order of General Soeharto was considered the guardian of religious freedom. Even in Minahasa, though firmly Christian or even outspokenly Protestant, people were afraid that their region would be taken over by Muslims.

This period showed an immense growth of Protestant denominations. The main reason for this fragmentation of the Christian community was not the direct increase of missionary activities by other churches among members of the majority church, the GMIM, although this certainly played a role too. But usually the foundation of a church was the result of conflicts within families or between villagers that tended to lead to schisms within the dominating church.

Because of the increasing prosperity in this period many new churches were built. Every village took pride in building a new and more magnificent church to replace the former building. The leadership of the synod did little to discourage this development that caused a noticeable decrease of funds available for the work of the synod's departments. Should we consider this as the love of the local population for its own church and some negligence with respect to broader superstructures? Perhaps this can be related also to Hendrik Kraemer's complaint about the "natural desire to feast" among the Minahasans and as such it should give a sign of continuity in Minahasan culture. In the 1980s anthropologist Mieke Schouten⁴⁴ observed how church festivals dominated village life for most of the year. People bought new clothes to go to church and some weeks later there were more active churchgoers, because they wanted to show off their new clothes.

In 1979–1980 GMIM experienced a series of three extraordinary activities: in 1979 it was the turn of the Province of North Sumatra to organise the national contest for Qur'an recitation, an event that was followed in the whole country with much interest because one of its most "Christian provinces" was the host for this festival that is seen as a special opportunity for a province to make itself known to the whole country. The festival was a great success as a demonstration of an ecumenical attitude and a sign of the nation's unity notwithstanding religious differences. Later that year GMIM held a synod that was followed in 1980 by the organisation of the Assembly of the Indonesian Council of Churches. There was a hot debate at this meeting between the proponents of those who wanted to proclaim the union or even unity of all (Protestant) Christian churches in Indonesia, while the more realistic and pragmatic wing wanted to postpone this proclamation. The latter party won the debate. It was quite exceptional that the Muslims of Minahasa also gave

⁴⁴ Mieke Schouten 1998:231–236; 264–267.

generous contributions for the great auditorium that was built in Tomohon for this national meeting of the Indonesian Churches.

The Presbyterian structure of GMIM and its sense of responsibility was expressed for the first time at the 1980 synod by the attendance of representatives of all local congregations at this grand meeting. Their travel and lodging expenses were no longer paid by the central office of the church, but by their local congregations.

The Minahasa word *mapalus* is used for a traditional system of cooperation among groups of farmers who share their costs, work and profit. But this system was no longer effective in the late 1970s and early 1980s for the booming business of coconut and clove plantations. Most of this work was done by individual farmers who hired workers for cash money. With the growing richness that mostly came from the clove trees, the individual people could live in a more luxurious way. This created some kind of excessive consumerism by some people. But one could also notice an increase in qualified members of the congregations who became active in the church and wanted to raise the quality of the life of their community. This was recognised by the governor of Minahasa in his address to the 1982 Synod. The greater participation within the church and its democratic structures were mentioned by this official as stimulating factors for the success of the 1982 national elections. He took the elections for positions within the church and the competition that was involved in that structure as a good example for the national system of elections. But the reverse also took place: political figures took their religious position as a starting point for a political career.

The negative aspects of Indonesian political life, like corruption, buying votes and abuse of power also crept into church structures. The 1983 synod therefore analysed a crisis in six fields: 1° an environmental and economic crisis, related to the clove boom, the deforestation and also the more and more aggressive ways of fishing where all kinds of explosives were used to catch as many fish as possible in a short period of time; 2° a moral crisis, in the field of looser sexual relations and the growing corruption in church and society; 3° a crisis of community or solidarity related to the growing individualism of people only longing for wealth; 4° a financial crisis because people only wanted to show their richness, had become fond of parties and celebrations, but had no interest in a sound and solid economic situation; 5° a leadership crisis related to growth of bureaucracy in state and church, strong formalism with disregard for the poor and true service to the congregations; 6° a faith crisis, because of the growing power play and corruption within the church and the loss of its prophetic function. In order to cure the weaknesses of the church, its appeal was called: "A Programme for a Healing Church."⁴⁵ During the jubi-

⁴⁵ See the Minutes of the GMIM 1983 Synod of 28–31 March 1983:48–49.

lee of 1984, when GMIM celebrated its 50th anniversary as an autonomous church, it was the hospitals and care for the sick rather than the schools that were the most important subject of debates. 'Holistic ministry' was the most important watchword at the occasion.

The issue of a prophetic versus a bureaucratic church remained an important one. A decade later it even dominated the report for the period 1990–1995 presented to the synod of 1995. GMIM leadership asked openly: "Is it still the power of the Holy Spirit which liberates us and others from all our boundaries, or is it the power and authority of the organisation and the position of the personnel within the church, the institution and its material basis that is found more important than the Holy Spirit?" The leadership of the GMIM Synod openly acknowledged that it had not been a true witness of Christ in the struggle against poverty. It had interpreted poverty too much as a pure spiritual entity and not seen its visible and concrete realisations.

In the 1990s there was a debate within the church about the issue of the corpses of those who were killed during the tragic years of civil war, the *Permesta* of 1957–1961. Many of those killed during the brutal conflicts had been buried in the forest. In order to find these bodies magicians and witches (*dukun*) were consulted who used practices that should be considered as magic. Quite a few people questioned these practices: "Is it allowed for church officials or ministers to work with this kind of people to find the burial place of dead bodies? Can we believe that people can speak to the spirit of the deceased?"

Another related issue was the official garment for church ministers. Until the late 1980s they used the black robes of Reformed ministers from the Netherlands. In order to promote the introduction of Minahasan cultural elements in GMIM, there were proposals that ministers should wear the dress of traditional leaders, including the small sword (*keris*) that is a sign of spiritual power. This kind of traditional dress and the use of that sword are also related to faith in the spirits of the ancestors. This was all part of a theology of inculturation that became quite popular in the early 1990s. It was an effort to do away with habits that were considered to be too western and not suited to this Indonesian culture. The debate, however, was soon concentrated on this specific issue of the dress of the minister. Many common people in the congregation already considered the black cassock to be part of the sacred dress of a proper Reformed minister within the GMIM church. Unfortunately, the first candidate to use the local dress as a sign of inculturation, and who used the *keris*, was a young minister who was inaugurated in his function while wearing this dress, but who died very soon after he had taken office. This fact harmed the reputation of the whole theology of inculturation and since then it has become more and more difficult to give concrete proposals for this kind of practice.

Although Minahasa remained a strong majority Christian region, the long series of attacks on churches that started as inter-religious conflicts in Java

in 1996, also made the Minahasa Christians concerned. Quite a few faithful asked for a more militant position, related to the relative power of their church in their own region. If GMIM could not stand up to defend the Christians of Indonesia, who else would dare to do it? The church hesitated, as it did with previous political conflicts, because there was no unanimity among its members. There were various strategic and political considerations that prevented the church from taking a strong position in this affair. For these reasons, the show of force that was requested by quite a few members was not given, although its supporters considered it important in order to give clear signs to those people who wanted to infiltrate in Minahasa and to disturb the peace in that region. The Synod of February 1997 asked attention for the social unrest that had caused the destruction of so many places of worship and centres of service in many regions of the country. The government was urgently requested to arrest the actors without any discrimination of religion and race. The synod expressed its gratitude that GMIM members had taken their responsibility and had not followed the agitations of some parties (i.e. that they had not tried to destroy mosques in the Minahasa in revenge for the churches that were burnt in Java and other regions of the country, thus following the actions of the agitators who only wanted to incite a nation-wide civil strife amongst the religions). They asked the members to act in a positive way and not to follow the invitations to hatred and destruction.

The economic and monetary crisis that struck the country after August 1997 was relatively manageable for people in Minahasa because while the value of the Indonesian currency fell in a dramatic way the farmers who sold their cloves, corn and vegetables for foreign currency could earn much more money than before. The people of Minahasa in this period behaved very generously and sent from their affluence to other areas. In this period the story of Joseph in Egypt who took good stock in periods of prosperity, became a popular text for sermons. Many common small farmers could not really understand the talk by politicians about a monetary crisis, because traders from the Philippines directly approached them in order to buy cloves and corn. Some even expressed their hope that the *krismon* (*krisis moneter* the expression for the monetary crisis) would last a very long time, because they earned much more cash than ever before! But the events of unrest, killings and fires that took place in Jakarta in May 1998, related to the fall of General Soeharto, were again a warning that the world was not yet really peaceful.

The movement of *reformasi* that was started immediately after the fall of General Soeharto on 22 May 1998 created an atmosphere of freedom of speech and liberty among the common people. They started to criticise the bureaucracy. This was also extended to the church leadership that was considered as committing the same crimes as the corrupt regime, like corruption and undemocratic decision-making. As an institution GMIM had for long

been a bottom-up democratic structure with a free election of its leadership by members of local congregations. But the general euphoria in the country was also extended to thinking about church leadership. In the circles of the common people there arose an atmosphere as if it was now time to deal with autocratic aspects also within the churches, notwithstanding its formal democratic church order. Therefore there was a quite strong movement that no longer obeyed the formal rules of the church order and established free congregations, independent from the main church body. This was again, as had already happened frequently in the history of GMIM, a reason to cause schism, in fact often on the basis of rather small complaints that could have been settled quite easily.

The political process of *reformasi* was also quite complicated. There were already elections in 1999. Many politicians were very generous in their promises, but not always cautious in mixing administrative measures with their political campaign. Many funds for agricultural credit unions were used to attract votes in the political campaign and were spent in large amounts. Many common people and government officials claimed that they were farmers in order to receive loans. There were rumours that these loans as agricultural credits should not be paid back. Also names of deceased persons were put on the lists in order to receive more loans. Several church ministers were involved in these cases that were a public secret. The easy way to get money had attracted them and had destroyed their moral sense. They applied for agricultural credit themselves, but the money was used for luxury articles like hand-phones, cars and parties. They were openly rebuked by some government officials for these acts.

A typical reaction occurred in late November 2000 when the GMIM Synod gathered in the Emmanuel Congregation of Aertembaga. During heavy rains a landslide destroyed much of that place and even cemeteries were struck. Graves were moved and bodies displaced and some even could not be recovered. This catastrophe was considered to be a punishment from God for the bad deeds of some church leaders.

In January 1999 a complicated social and religious conflict started in the Moluccas (see chapter nine). In November 1999 this wave of terror also arrived in Ternate and Tidore. Houses of Christians were burned down and many people were expelled from the North Moluccas. Many therefore fled to Minahasa. One month later the conflict escalated in Northern Halmahera and even in all districts of the North Moluccas. Tens of thousands of refugees came to Manado. They were later followed by another group of Christians from Poso, Central Sulawesi. GMIM Leadership coordinated help in food and clothes and they found a generous response among the congregations. Many church buildings were used as shelters for these refugees. The local government reacted somewhat later also with permission to use their facilities.

The reason behind these conflicts was not restricted to the Moluccas only but was a national problem, and it was also felt in the Minahasa that the relationship between the religions had worsened, as a reaction to the fact that there were radical groups of local militias, like the *Laskar Rakyat* (litt. 'the People's Militia') who were in fact former members of Permesta and their sympathisers. Other groups were *Brigade Manguni*, *Militia Waraney* and even several more with outspoken Christian names like *Militia Christi* and *Front Solidaritas Bangsa Israel*, the Solidarity Front with the People of Israel. These radical groups tried to occupy positions in Minahasa and to be active in some kind of pre-emptive strikes under the slogan "better kill before being beaten." They stated that there was a serious threat of infiltration in the region by outsider Muslim gangs and that therefore people should be mobilised. They attacked some areas where many Muslims were trading. GMIM took this threat very serious and these issues were at the heart of the debates in the synod. The church took the initiative for calling meetings of reconciliation and the establishment of inter-religious councils. Television programmes were quite important and effective in order to calm the situation. These initiatives were quite effective and in this period Minahasa remained relatively stable and calm, and could remain a safe haven for many refugees from various places in East Indonesia.

Over the course of time the relations between GMIM and local government usually were very warm and open. This created a specific Minahasan atmosphere in the life of the church and government. Some even said that the association was too close. This was caused by the fact that many elders and deacons of local congregations were also government officials. Even several church ministers were at the same time government officials. This occurred at all levels, from the small villages up to the government of districts and the province. GMIM leadership inaugurated a special church service for members of its church or from churches in different regions of Indonesia who received an official position in the bureaucracy of North Sulawesi, whether they were governor, district officer, mayor, or were placed in lower positions. In this service they were seen as sent by the church into the secular government with the responsibility as members of the church to serve all people in an honest and noble way. This relationship was seen by some as too close, because it was mostly the church that was subservient to the political leaders, both in the New Order period of General Soeharto and in the years that followed. Again and again church leaders called for somewhat more distance between the bureaucracy and the church. The latter should be faithful to its prophetic function as well as serving society.

This close relation, however, did not include an absolute harmony between government and church. When in 2000 the central government of President Abdurrahman Wahid wanted to withdraw decision no 25 of the National

Congress of 1966, about the ban on Communist and Marxist teachings, GMIM took the position that these doctrines were still in conflict with religion and not in line with the basis of Christianity and should remain forbidden. Therefore the 72nd Synod of 24–29 April 2000 took the double decision of a protest against the proposal but also of a programme for the full rehabilitation of former Communists.

In 2000 ATM not only had become the common term for a money machine (*automated teller machine*) but also for Ambon-Ternate-Manado, the chain of violence and refugees, the ethnic and inter-religious violence in the region that caused the arrival of many refugees in Minahasa. There were in 2002 some 35,000 refugees, nearly all of them Christians from the Moluccas and some from Central Sulawesi. As we saw above, these tensions also caused the rise of Christian militias, small groups of GMIM members who wanted to answer the Muslim violence in the neighbouring regions. Some of them tried to get the help of angry refugees who were full of hatred towards the Muslim attackers in their region, in order to start some actions in the Minahasa itself. In an effort to create more inter-religious cooperation, there was a common plan accepted by leaders of all major religious organisations that the year 2002 should be called the Year of the Lord's Grace for Minahasa. This was followed with 2003 as a "Year of Love without Violence" and 2004 as a "Year of Love and Hope." This religious qualification was also supported by the provincial parliament and the provincial bureaucracy. In this manner the GMIM retained the features of the dominant religion in Minahasa: not only the market leader because of its majority position, but also as the more or less 'natural' religion for Minahasan people. There is probably no other Christian group in present-day Indonesia that could realise such a strong identification between regional and even ethnic pride and a Protestant identity.

Sangir and Talaud archipelagos in the nineteenth and twentieth century

Why was the Minahasa a Christian region, while nearly all other parts of Sulawesi, at least its coastal regions, sooner or later accepted Islam? Why are the majority of the Northern Sangir and Talaud islands, forming a bridge between Indonesia and the Philippines, mostly Christian, while the southern islands of the Philippines are in majority Muslim? Were they, between 1520 and 1680 politically dominated by the Spanish, later by the VOC, spared from the great movement of Islamisation that was carried out in the region, before and together with the first major expansion of Christianity? Whatever may have been the case, during the later seventeenth and eighteenth centuries not much attention was given to these territories. In the first half of the nineteenth century Joseph Kam several times made a short visit to the region,

but only in 1857 did four Gossner missionaries arrive in Sangir, followed by five more for Talaud in 1859 as the re-commencement of earlier efforts for evangelisation.

The Sangir-Talaud archipelago comprises 47 inhabited islands, with some 260,000 inhabitants in the late 1990s. Sangir Besar is slightly bigger than Ambon (798 km² versus 761 km² for Ambon) but had only 24,000 inhabitants in the late 1990s, just 10% of the population of the capital of the Moluccas. Siau is the second largest island of the Sangir archipelago. All these islands are quite mountainous with the volcano Karangetang of Siau as the highest. The Talaud Islands, at 100 km distance from the Sangir islands, are not volcanic and therefore much less fertile than the Sangir islands and may well be seen as under-populated. The island of Karakelong is, with 846 km², its largest island.

About the fate of Christianity in this region during the first half of the nineteenth century very little is known. What is reported about the Christian life here is extremely contradictory. From one side the few visitors mention that the state of Christianity was a disaster, no religious books were available and there was very little knowledge of Christianity. Other reports, however, mention a strong affection for Christianity. Due to economic problems the strong Dutch Governor General Daendels (1807–1810) had stopped the payments to teachers in the first decade of the nineteenth century. The British wanted to reinstate these payments but they were not long enough in the Indies to effect their plans. Joseph Kam who visited the Sangir island in the second half of 1817 reported that the raja of Tagulandang received him in a friendly manner. Kam heard that the whole village, including its church, was destroyed during the last volcanic eruption, but saw also that it had already been rebuilt. The ruler was happy that Kam was willing to teach there during a full week. Kam made a notice that “people here have a very poor knowledge of religion, but express a firm belief in Christ as the Redeemer of sins.”⁴⁶ The raja of Siau was a pious and obedient member of the church, who could read the Malay Bible and asked Kam for the interpretation of some sections of scripture. On many islands the teachers had to work in their fields because the salaries were halted, but the raja of Siau paid them himself. He had ordered teachers to give instruction in the Christian faith to many of his slaves and they could now be baptised by Reverend Kam, after due examination. On the main island of Sangir most teachers had no books and even no copies of the New Testament. In some hamlets where there were no teachers some youngsters led the Sunday service. Kam distributed copies of the New Testament but

⁴⁶ Enklaar 1963:83.

could not do much more. A visit by missionary Hellendoorn from Minahasa in 1832, again produced mixed information about “gross ignorance, superstition and immoral life” alongside many churches and simple schools where Christianity was taught. Of the native school masters, about half were now paid by the government.⁴⁷

The next somewhat more detailed report is from the year 1854. It was written after the inspection by the Batavia minister, Rev. S.A. Buddingh. He told a moving story of parents who urged him to baptise their children. After baptism of their children, some mothers who probably never had received baptism bowed before him and prayed: “Me too!” Buddingh should have given these adults catechism lessons for a long period before he could baptise such ignorant people, but he was not able to reject their request and in nine days baptised 1658 people. In 1855 the Minahasa missionary S.D. van de Velde van der Capellen reported that there were 24 church buildings in Sangir and Talaud, most of these also used as schools by Ambonese teachers. He estimated the number of Christians at about 20,000. From these he had himself baptised 5033 people although their knowledge was still very poor and polygamy nearly as common as among the Muslim population in other regions.⁴⁸

After the report by Buddingh was made known in the Netherlands, the Dutch propagator of foreign missions Ottho Heldring took initiatives to send more European personnel. Facing a lack of Dutch candidates he was able, with the help of J. Gossner, to attract four willing men from Berlin. They were simple manual workers, one was a common soldier another a trader and the third a coachbuilder. They were simple, industrious and pious men who were sent to continue their jobs in foreign countries and to earn their own money in what is now called a tent-making ministry. They had to stay for nearly two years in Java before they were given a ‘certificate’ as missionaries, a yearly allowance by the colonial government and the permit to start work in the Sangir islands. In late 1859 five more of these ‘tent-making missionaries’ arrived for the Talaud Islands, two of German, three of Dutch citizenship: one was a shoemaker, two had more than 20 years’ experience as common soldiers in the Indies.

The ‘tent-making’ missionaries in the Sangir islands were very strict in ecclesiastical discipline: they fought against cock-fighting, heavy drinking (especially at traditional parties, which they called ‘devil’s ceremonies’), gambling and polygamy. They were hesitant in administration of baptism and extremely strict in admission to the Holy Supper. They considered it an enormous step forward when they could allow, in 1872, one thousand out of 17,000 to receive the Lord’s Supper. They were also quite successful in the

⁴⁷ Coolsma 1901:628.

⁴⁸ Müller-Krüger 1968:141; Coolsma 1901:630.

improvement of religious education. Former coach-maker Friedrich Kelling translated the Heidelberg catechism and the New Testament in the Sangirese dialect of Siau.⁴⁹

Work on the even more remote Talaud Islands was much more difficult and less successful. One of the missionaries rather soon entered the much better paid government service. Two married local women and were severely criticised by the other missionaries for this. But they continued their work until the late 1880s. There never was a hierarchical pyramid like that in the Minahasa: the European workers who gave a new impulse to Christianity in the Sangir and Talaud archipelago in the period 1855–1890 remained strongly related to the somewhat odd and syncretic, but definitely inculturated Christianity that had grown there since the last decades of the seventeenth century. A later scholar like the Dutch historian Hommo Reenders⁵⁰ may have had his reasons for considering this mission, especially in Talaud, as “a badly prepared and ultimately ill-considered mission,” but the mentality of these European missionaries was probably much closer to that of their Indonesian flock than the well-educated development workers who arrived in the 1960s and 1970s in the same region. The most successful of these ‘tent-making’ missionaries certainly was E.T. Steller, who worked in Sangir between 1857 and 1897. He started plantations in the mountainous regions of Manganitu in Sangir-Besar. Some orphanages and hospitals were established. In Kaliwatu a teacher training college and school for ministers was established. A more or less theocratic society was built, under strong leadership of this European missionary and his colleagues, who had up to some 90 pupils in their house. They worked in the plantations and received, during a period of five to ten years, a thorough puritan Christian education. The ‘graduates’ of these plantation schools became the teachers and preachers for the new Sangir Christianity. They were severe in their control of public morality. E.T. Steller was for the main island of Sangir-Besar the leading figure. He was succeeded by his son K.G.F. Steller, who had obtained a law degree in Utrecht, the Netherlands, but returned to Manganitu in 1897. Two other sons of missionaries also continued the work of their fathers and founded in this way theocratic missionary dynasties.⁵¹

In 1885 the Sangir and Talaud Committee was established in the Netherlands as the successor to the rather uncertain financial support provided by Heldring (1804–1876) and his successors. The financial backbone of the mission since the 1850s had been the salaries provided by the colonial government. The missionaries therefore suggested a solution like that in the Minahasa, a coalition or even an association with the ‘national’, state-supported and state-directed

⁴⁹ Reenders 1991:284–292.

⁵⁰ Reenders 1991:295.

⁵¹ Reenders 1991:382–383 for the Pape and Schröder families.

Indische Kerk. The new Dutch committee strongly supported a different solution. The government declared its willingness to pay yearly 75% of the amount estimated necessary for a full take-over of the mission (including provision for its church buildings, schools, school material, missionaries as 'assistant ministers' and native teachers) without an effective and direct administration over their activities and personnel. It was willing to accept an independent mission and to pay for it.

In the first decades of the twentieth century the Sangir and Talaud congregations could develop quietly. Education was put at a higher, but also more secularised, level. In the few major villages even Dutch-language schools were set up as the summit of the educational development. The number of Christians increased from 20,000 in 1855 to 121,000 in 1936. In the early decades of the twentieth century the missionaries abandoned gradually the paternalism that had been dominant until then. By 1921 they had already ordained 16 indigenous ministers. In the beginning these ministers still functioned as a link in a hierarchical chain, but then the missionaries started discussing the building of a Presbyterian structure. The process took much time, and it was not yet finished when the Japanese occupied many of the islands in the period 1942–5. Only in 1947 was the first Synod of the GMIST, *Gereja Masehi Injil Sangir Talaud* convened. The first president of the Synod was Yahya Salawati (ca 1890–1964). Problems that the new church had to face were the relationships between the two island groups and with the Sangirese emigrants in Western Indonesia and in the Philippines. Like its sister church the Minahasan GMIM, the GMIST made an experiment in granting more autonomy to the local congregations (1961). By 1970 this experiment had matured even more radically than in the GMIM, but in 1978 the presbytery, as a district body supervising the local congregations, had to be restored. Today 90% of the inhabitants of the Sangir-Talaud Islands belong to the GMIST.

As in the Minahasa, also in Sangir-Talaud there were indigenous ministers who found this process towards independence too long. In 1926 therefore two small groups seceded from the mission led by foreign personnel and erected independent churches. The Talaud congregations did not join the GMIST in 1947, but when in 1955 Yahya Salawati was succeeded by a minister from Talaud as president of the synod of the church, they also joined that church. Since 1965 some GMIST ministers started work in the south of the Philippines among migrants from this region and also to make new converts.

The church suffered much from the political tensions accompanying the rise and fall of the Indonesian Communist Party. Around 1984 a younger generation took over and the rising self-assurance of the Indonesian nation made it felt in the church. In the 1990s, the church had to cope with a new secession movement on the northern islands, the Talaud archipelago. The Synod held in December 1996 agreed to the founding of an independent church in that

region. The church has a large number of elementary and vocational schools and some clinics. It publishes a magazine, *Marimba*. The GMIST considers 15 May 1947 as its birth date.

There are small Catholic and Pentecostal minorities in the archipelago. Major challenges for the GMIST, however, are the difficult connections between the islands and the great differences in this remote area.

*The 'Diaspora': some notes about other islands, especially the
Banggai Archipelago*

In the region of Bolaang Mongondow, southwest of Minahasa, some coastal villages had accepted Christianity during the eighteenth century. Since then they were seldom visited by the VOC. Also in the nineteenth century it was a peripheral, underdeveloped and under-populated territory for colonial imperialism. In the first decades after 1850 the most powerful raja accepted Islam and with him most of his people. This was part of a stream of Islamisation that had started from Gorontalo. There are old traditions that the ruler of the harbour town of Balaang could ask for tribute from the whole of Minahasa as well, but this overlordship had ended about 1800. From Minahasa some missionaries visited the region after the 1830s. They met some Minahasan migrants, but the colonial government did not allow a permanent mission station in this region. One of the Muslim chiefs, Cornelis Manoppo, asked in 1904, for the Minahasa missionaries to send teachers in order to found schools in his region. Only after this request could the NZG send various teachers, who even opened a Dutch-language HIS in Kotamobagu. They also took care of the small flock of migrant Christians from Minahasa and Singair who had settled there. There was no direct and well-structured mission to the majority of Muslims there. Not only the teachers, but also the assistant ministers who lead the congregation, were from Minahasa. Most prominent among them was J. Pandegirot who was a teacher since 1906 and a native minister after 1930. In the long run also some native people from Bolaang Mongondow embraced Christianity and in 1970 they were about 20% of the major Protestant church in this region, totalling 30,000 baptised or about 15–20% of the population. In the late 1930s already efforts were made to start an independent church. This could only be accomplished in 1950 when the *Gereja Masehi Injili Bolaang Mongondow* was instituted. Like the GMIM it also suffered much from the civil war during the Permesta period. For many matters (like the education of ministers) it is more or less considered a 'diaspora church,' dependent upon the much larger GMIM. In the 1990s it was also formally connected through a common synod with the other major Protestant churches of Sulawesi.

In much more outspoken Muslim Gorontalo—another region even more to the west of Minahasa—there were similar developments. Several times missionaries were sent from Manado who could only serve a small flock. In 1965 an independent sister church, the *Gereja Protestan Indonesia Gorontalo*, was established, with some 6,000 members. In 1965 a *Gereja Protestan Indonesia Buol Toli-Toli* was established for the next more western region, with some 5000 members.

Christianity was much more successful in the Banggai archipelago, off the east coast of Central Sulawesi, but long considered as part of the Manado regency. In this region there were the last pockets where people had not yet decided in favour of Islam or Christianity. In these poor regions the Christians were the first. From Manado and even more from Ambon some teachers were sent by the *Indische Kerk* who established schools. They worked in a quite dominating way, neglected the local languages and used only Malay, and rejected anything of the local customs. They were quite successful in creating new congregations: in 1937 there were already 25,000 Protestants in this region. At that time they were put under the responsibility of the Minahasa GMIM church. After 1945 the congregations in this archipelago were put under the synod of the Sangir and Talaud archipelago. But the connections proved to be very difficult in this region and therefore in 1966 an independent *Gereja Kristen Luwuk-Banggai* was established. Also, after 1900, the Catholics started some missionary work in these islands, beginning with a number of Philippine migrants who worked as pearl fishers. In 1925 a Protestant teacher in a small island not far from Sambiut had accepted Catholicism, probably after some internal Protestant conflicts. Thereupon a few hundred people from that island also applied for Catholic baptism and were already prepared to come to a ceremony in Sambiut. But the ceremony was cancelled after the intervention of their village head, who suggested that they should not follow this teacher, but rather ask for baptism from the Protestant minister of Luwuk. There was another rivalry between Catholics and Protestants here. But the Catholics remained far behind the Protestants and counted less than 1,000 baptised in the late 1930s. The rivalry with Islam again rose during the turbulent period of 1999–2003 when the whole region was full of stories of Muslim-Christian conflicts. In some of the Banggai islands Christians had the choice between death and acceptance of Islam, including immediate circumcision. Hundreds opted for the latter possibility and thus caused traumatic reactions all over the country.

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CHAPTER ELEVEN

CHRISTIANITY IN CENTRAL AND SOUTHERN SULAWESI

Until the beginning of the twentieth century, the great island of Sulawesi (Celebes), with an area of 186,000 km², was touched by Western influences only at its southern and northern extremities: the city of Makassar and the surrounding area, and the Minahasa on the northern tip of the island. Makassar, which after the fall of Ternate (1606) had become the leading power in the central archipelago, had been conquered by the Dutch in 1667. In the second decade of the twentieth century, when the whole island became occupied by the Dutch, the inhabitants of Sulawesi numbered about 2.5 million. Of these, the Buginese and Makassarese in the South had received Islam between 1605 and 1634; during the next centuries Islam had slowly spread to other areas. Minahasa, where Christianity had been first introduced in 1563, had been thoroughly christianised during the second half of the nineteenth century; but in other parts of northern Sulawesi Christianity had lost to Islam the footholds it had obtained during a period of Dutch expansion between 1670 and 1730. Around 1900, generally speaking, only the tribes inhabiting the mountainous interior of Central Sulawesi still kept to the ancestral religion. The coastal Muslims referred to them as *Toraja*, possibly meaning “upland people,” but they consisted of a great number of peoples large and small, speaking languages which belong to the Malayo-Polynesian subfamily of the Austronesian language family, but in many cases varying widely with each other. Later, under the influence of government and mission, these tribes coalesced into greater units. The Dutch government and mission officials applied the name “Toraja” to all non-Muslim peoples in Central Sulawesi, distinguishing between South, East, and West Toraja. In the post-colonial era, the people inhabiting the southern half of the central highlands kept to the name “Toraja,” with a subdivision of “Sadan Toraja,” living in the upper reaches of the Sadan River; and the “Mamasa Toraja” in the valleys of the Mamasa River and its tributaries. Conversely, the inhabitants of the Poso River basin and the isolated valleys to the west adopted for themselves the name of “orang Pamona,” taken from their mythical place of origin north of Lake Poso. The tribes in the hill country to the south of Donggala on the west coast of Central Sulawesi are still called by their traditional names: Kulawi, Ledo, and others.

*Christianity in the Poso area and adjacent regions:
the missionary Albert C. Kruyt*

After the Dutch Missionary Society (NZG) had surrendered its successful mission in the Minahasa to the Protestant Church (ca. 1875), its sphere of activity was restricted to East Java, where the work among the Muslim population advanced with difficulty. Therefore the NZG took up the suggestion made by an official of the Protestant Church that it should start a mission in other parts of Sulawesi. In 1892, A.C. Kruyt (born 1869 in East Java as the son of a NZG missionary) established himself on the southern coast of the Gulf of Tomini, near the mouth of the Poso River. At the time, the inland region had not been occupied by the colonial government. The inhabitants were subject to the Islamic kingdom of Luwu in the south, and to two smaller states in Central Sulawesi, Sigi and Tojo, but their relation to these kingdoms was mainly of a mythical and ritual character. A few years later, the Dutch Bible Society sent the language expert Dr. N. Adriani (1865–1926) to assist Kruyt by translating the Bible. They were to leave their mark on Dutch missionary work in Indonesia during the first decades of the twentieth century.

In many aspects, Kruyt's approach was still that of the nineteenth century. He tried to found schools, studied the local language, distributed small gifts to those present at the Sunday meetings, and provided medical assistance to the sick and wounded. However, in some respects he took a different attitude. This was not a fruit of theoretical reflection or theological considerations, but of practical experience in the contact with the local people. For example, at first Kruyt, like his predecessors in other mission fields, tried to "prove" that the spirits and powers feared and worshipped by the Toraja simply were not real, did not exist. But the people did not accept his "scientific" arguments. Kruyt for his part respected their attitude and stopped attacking their religion directly. Instead, he argued that the God whose message he came to proclaim was more powerful than the local deities and spirits. This was a level of arguing people could understand. In later years it happened that a village laid out two sets of gardens: one accompanied by the customary ritual, the other without any ritual, with the express purpose of seeing which one would do better. When there appeared to be no difference at all, the village declared itself ready to embrace the Christian faith.

However, for Kruyt renouncing direct attacks on traditional religion was not enough. Like his nineteenth-century predecessors, he wanted the message of the Gospel to penetrate into the hearts of the people and bring them to a personal conversion. But better than they, he understood that to touch the innermost part of his hearers he had to know the patterns prevailing in their minds. So he began studying local religion and culture (and afterwards traditional religion and culture in several other regions of the Dutch East Indies with an

intensity without precedent within the Dutch missions, which made him one of the leading ethnographers of his time, quoted also by foreign scholars, and earned him a doctorate *honoris causa* of Utrecht University (1913). Maybe what made him break new ground in this aspect was the fact that, as his like-minded colleague in West Papua, F.J.F. van Hasselt, he was a missionary's son, for whom indigenous people and their ways were something he had seen from his earliest youth. His magnum opus was *De Bare'e sprekende Toradja's van Midden Celebes* (The Bare'e-speaking Toraja of Central Sulawesi), three volumes, which he published together with Adriani. In his later works Kruyt adopted an evolutionary framework, according to which the "animism" of his Toraja was one of the lower stages in the religious development of mankind, Christianity (in its Western, Protestant form) representing its highest level.

Kruyt's intimate knowledge of Toraja religion and culture and his fluent command of their language ensured that the Toraja, generally speaking, were paying serious attention to his preaching. But there were other factors that caused him to be held in esteem by the people in whose midst he had come to live. His robust physique and his ability to walk great distances in the forests and mountains of Central Sulawesi not only stood him in good stead on the journeys he undertook to know the land and spread the Gospel, but also earned him the respect of the locals. His good health and that of his family were considered a token of spiritual power and moral pureness. He was admired for his personal courage (once he chased away a swarm of warriors that had come to do away with him just by exploding in fury when they trespassed on his premises). Even though during the first years the mission received no backing whatsoever from the colonial government, Kruyt managed to achieve a position as one of the prominent residents of the country. In 1894 he even acted as a mediator in a conflict between some tribes. The prestige thus acquired made it possible for Kruyt to criticise traditional values and customs without people breaking off contact.

Nevertheless, only after seventeen years did the first baptism take place. In fact, as early as 1898 one of the most influential chiefs, Papa i Wunte, declared his readiness to become a Christian. However, out of a sense of responsibility for the unity and well-being of his people he felt he could not take this step alone. Unlike the average missionary of the nineteenth century, Kruyt respected this attitude and did not press him to come forward individually. Other people, too, felt attracted by the new faith, but they were too much attached to the traditional community. Moreover, the people in the Poso area were afraid of their Muslim overlord in Palopo, who had formally forbidden them to change their religion. This bond with Luwu was more than just political: Luwu was the guarantee of the old way of life; negating this injunction would invoke supernatural sanctions.

Breakthrough of colonialism and Christianity: 1905 and following decades

Then, however, the colonial government made its power felt. Following the final reduction of Aceh in 1903, the Dutch established their rule in the territories which until then had remained independent, such as Central Sulawesi, Papua, and others. In 1905 Luwu was occupied and its ruler compelled to cede his sovereign rights on all territories north of the Takolekaju mountain range. With that, the fear of worldly and supernatural sanctions disappeared. Moreover, the colonial government at once interfered with the traditional way of life. It is true that the traditional structures of society were largely maintained, but head-hunting and killing of people suspected of sorcery were forbidden, slavery was abolished, the people were forced to come down from their hilltop dwellings and settle alongside the roads built by the government (through forced labour provided by the inhabitants themselves). There was more to this than would seem at first sight, because headhunting was not just a way of warfare, but an important guarantee for the general well-being of a community, and leaving the traditional dwelling places meant also leaving the *lobo* or village sanctuary. Disobedience was punished rightaway. As the people did not always know or understand the ways of the white rulers, they turned to the missionaries for guidance, and because the changes affected their religious life, they were prepared also to ask for guidance in matters of religion. Even so, the mission (between 1903 and 1910 the NZG sent three more missionaries to Central Sulawesi) was not in a hurry to administer baptism. Only on Christmas 1909 was Papa i Wunte baptised, together with 167 others. This baptism was not the beginning of a mass movement, but during the next decades there was a steady stream of conversions to Christianity. In 1942 baptised Christians numbered ca. 43,000. By then, the greater part of the inhabitants of the interior had become Christian. The villages on the north coast, mostly inhabited by people from other parts of Sulawesi, were Muslim; in the districts south of the Takolekaju Mountains, the lower class people embraced Christianity while the upper class remained Muslim. Efforts by Roman Catholic missionaries to penetrate this Protestant mission field were unsuccessful.

In his *Het zendingsveld Posso* (The missionfield Poso), J. Kruyt, son of A.C. Kruyt, stresses that conversion was more than a formal transition from one community to another. In two respects the 'inner life' of the converts had changed: they had received Pue Ala (the Lord God, the name Kruyt had introduced for the God of the Bible, *Ala* being the Bare'e form of the Malay *Allah*) as their God, to whom they had direct access, without having to take into account the powers which they had feared and respected before; and they had developed a new sense of good and evil, which was no longer oriented only towards the well-being of the community as previously understood.

Nevertheless, the missionaries were aware that the faith as conceived and confessed by the converts was different from the Protestant faith as conceived by themselves.

This awareness was not new; what was new was that Kruyt, again in contrast to the nineteenth-century missionaries, did not condemn the deviancies and try to suppress them, but made them an integral part of his missionary theory. In his *Van Heiden tot Christen* (From Pagan to Christian, 1925) he argued that the faith of people coming from animism to Christianity had to go through a 'magical' and 'legalistic' stage before it could reach the maturity supposedly attained by the 'spiritual' Christianity of the West. Thus conversion was not seen as a clean break with the past, but as a process of sifting and transforming. This was true of the individual, but also of society as a whole. Accordingly, people were allowed as much as possible to keep to their traditional culture. Even when a custom seemed incompatible with the Christian faith, the mission did not just forbid it, but tried to adapt it. For example, after the colonial government banned the traditional ceremonies for the dead because they were considered a danger to public health, people had adopted the custom of cleaning the graves of relatives who had recently died, with the same goal as the old ceremonies, i.e. in order to prevent those relatives doing damage to the harvest. Kruyt's colleague P. Schuyt (1908–1924 on the field) wanted to suppress this custom, by having the congregations celebrate the Holy Supper at the same time. But the majority of the missionaries, led by Kruyt, found another solution: they transferred the cleaning of the graves from harvest time to Easter, connecting it with the resurrection.

Another example of adapting old structures is the way the mission reacted to slavery. Some of the tribes inhabiting the Poso area kept slaves. Slavery was banned by the colonial government, but of course this ban could not erase the dividing line between the slaves and their former masters. Even today, a century after the emancipatory measures of the colonial administration, people in Central and South Sulawesi know full well whose ancestors used to be slaves. When the teacher training school turned out the first teachers from among the indigenous population, it was found that a village community would not accept a former 'slave' in a position of authority. Then the rule was adopted that people of slave descent would no longer be accepted in the teacher training school. Twenty years later, a group of Christians descended from 'slaves' protested: within the church, there ought not to be any distinction between freeman and slave. Then the conference of missionaries decided to abolish the rule mentioned above (1937). However, this decision was not made public.

From these examples it can be concluded that the Poso mission had a conservative outlook in religious, cultural and social matters. In fact, its avowed aim was to assist the christianised population in creating a truly indigenous

Christian culture and society. This attitude determined the mission's policy in the field of language as well. Here the influence of Adriani made itself felt. According to him, only in their native language could the people fully express themselves, and only through their native language could their inner self be known and understood. For that reason, the use of Malay in the mission was anathema to the Poso mission. In other missionfields (like the Minahasa, or Papua), the lack of linguistic homogeneity had induced the mission, against its will, to introduce Malay as the language of church and school. Kruyt and Adriani refused to follow that example, even if in Central Sulawesi at least four or five different languages were used. School education was given in the local language, and Dr. Adriani undertook the translation of the Bible into Bare'e, the language spoken by a majority of the inhabitants.

However, this attitude had its drawback. In the Dutch East Indies, except in Java, all secondary education was given in Malay (or Dutch). The aversion of the mission to Malay caused it to be disinterested in the founding of secondary schools. The only mission schools above the three-year village school level were three *vervolgsholen*, that is schools where three year supplementary education was given up to the level of a complete elementary school. Unlike most Dutch missions in eastern Indonesia, the Poso mission had one Dutch-language elementary school, but the initiative had been taken by Minahasan Christians living in Poso town, while only a small part of the pupils was from Central Sulawesi. Not even the government, let alone the mission, saw fit to set up secondary schools in Central Sulawesi. This meant that there was hardly an opportunity for Christian children from the region to move on to secondary and higher education outside their native region, that they had no independent access to modernity, and consequently that after World War II they were not represented in the elite of independent Indonesia, as were their southern neighbours the Sa'dan Toraja, where the GZB mission from 1924 onward had a Dutch-language elementary school and the administrative and educational centre of Makassar was within easy reach. It must be added that this policy of the Poso mission, and of all Dutch missions working in eastern Indonesia except the GZB, was not based on the consideration that outside Java Malay was the bearer of Islam. From the seventeenth century onward a Christian variety of Malay had developed; a Christian terminology was available, and the complete Bible had been translated into that language twice. The mission was not much interested in the spread of 'Christian' Dutch either. Malay, like Dutch, was just 'foreign,' its use considered a danger to the conservation and further development of local culture.

We have seen that the missionaries emphasised the personal growth of the converts. In contrast, the organisation of the church as a whole received scant attention. The local congregations were served by preachers who also taught at the village school. During the first stages these were mostly Minahasans

or Sangirese, but the teacher training school set up in 1913 at Pendolo and until 1929 led by A.C. Kruyt himself, then by his son J. Kruyt (1929–1953), turned out a growing number of indigenous teacher-preachers. During the first years, the village headmen would spontaneously act as leaders of the congregations alongside the teacher-preachers. Kruyt hoped that in this way a truly indigenous system of church government would develop. However, the increasing involvement of the chiefs in the colonial apparatus made it impossible to continue this practice. In 1921 all congregations had an elder, whom they had chosen from their midst, but as yet there were no local or parish councils. Inspired by the Tambaram Conference, however, in 1939 the mission appointed a committee which was to prepare a provisional church order. It should be noted that of the three members of this committee two were influenced by Barth's theological thinking. The committee proposed a Presbyterian church government, consisting of local, regional and church-wide councils. Local church councils were instituted after the Netherlands had been involved in the European war (1940), but on the outbreak of the Pacific War there was still no supralocal organisation and not even one Indonesian teacher-preacher was authorised to administer the sacraments.

The Japanese interregnum

Before the arrival of the Japanese, the missionaries hurriedly set up fourteen regional presbyteries, each of which was led by a *guru* appointed by the mission, who was given the authority of administering baptism and the Holy Supper. As the Japanese took the schools away from the mission and forbade the teacher-preachers to perform any task in the church, the congregations were led by the elders. As in other parts of Sulawesi (see also chapters six and nine), the Christians received much help from S. Miyahira, a Japanese Christian who from 1929 until 1939 had lived in the Dutch East Indies, and who had returned in 1942 to become the secretary of the Japanese governor of East Indonesia in Makassar and (until December 1943) head of the Department of Religious Affairs of the Japanese administration. In that capacity he did much to protect the Indonesian Christians from vexations and intrigues at the hands of other groups (or of Minahasan Christians ill-disposed towards the mission) and from suspicions on the part of the Japanese authorities. He ordained several ministers and provided money to build churches. In 1943 he installed the *Selebes Kristokyodan Rengokai* (Christian Union of Sulawesi), a federation which included all Protestant churches on the central and southern parts of the island. After he was ousted from office, his role as a protector was taken over by S. Narumi, who before the war had made a living in the region as a trader, and by the Japanese minister, Goro Hujisaki. Narumi, who

declared, "From a worldly point of view, the Dutch are our enemies, but the things brought by the missionaries are good, and their regulations should be followed even now." However, he introduced the flag ceremony into church services: before the beginning of the service, everybody bowed to a Japanese flag strung out on the wall at the north side of the building, people sang the Japanese national hymn, and prayed for the soldiers killed or wounded in the war; before leaving the building, everybody bowed again to the flag. Many Christians were afraid of being punished by the Japanese if somehow they made a mistake; others considered this ceremony idolatry; all these people stayed away from church. Other factors interfering with church life were the atmosphere of fear prevailing at the time, and the forced labour on the massive road projects carried out by the Japanese. A number of church leaders were arrested, and some died in prison. Nevertheless the congregations made it through the war relatively unscathed. There were no relapses into old patterns and no conversions to Islam. According to the testimony of the Christians themselves, the availability of the New Testament and other parts of the Bible in the vernacular was a great comfort in those dark times.

The independent Christian Church of Central Sulawesi: an eventful history

The history of the Gereja Kristen Sulawesi Tengah after its institution in October 1947 is characterised by the political turmoil and religious strife that shook the region from 1951 to 1965, around 1970, and again from 1998 until the present day. During the power vacuum that followed the capitulation of Japan (August 1945 until well into 1946), the Muslim elite in the southern districts took its revenge on the Christian communities which under the protection of the colonial dispensation of justice had challenged its absolute power and therefore were considered minions of the Dutch. After the unitary Republic of Indonesia had absorbed the Dutch-created autonomous State of East Indonesia (April 1950), an opposition movement increasingly inspired by Islam started a guerilla war under the name Darul Islam (House of Islam) and wrought havoc among the Christian communities in the whole southern half of the island. A great number of Christian leaders were killed; thousands of refugees from the south entered the Poso area. Only in 1965 was this movement finally suppressed. Meanwhile, in 1958 the Minahasa took an active part in a rebellion against the central government in Jakarta (Permesta). Within a few months this rebellion was stamped out, but the remnants took refuge in the forests and mountains of Central Sulawesi. As most of them were Christians, they did not persecute the church, but their presence brought suffering to the local population. The destruction of the communist party in 1965–1966 left Central Sulawesi relatively undisturbed, but in 1970–1971 the reconstruction

of the political landscape by Soeharto's New Order brought new unrest, as the population, who adhered *en masse* to the Protestant political party Parkindo, was forced to vote for the government-sponsored Golkar.

After 1971, a relative calm descended upon the region. But during this period fundamental changes took place, which sowed the seed of new disturbances. Central Sulawesi was designated as a transmigration area; thousands of migrants from other islands, especially Java, settled in the coastal area, upsetting the demographic and religious balance. The indigenous population, mainly Christians, was not able to insert itself into modern economic life and was increasingly marginalised. In the 1990s, the growing political influence of Islam on a national level made itself felt in the region as well. Modernisation and centralisation caused traditional leadership and traditional community spirit to diminish. When in the wake of Soeharto's fall central government was weakened, violence erupted; first at Christmas 1998. The worst incidents took place in 2000–2001. Numbers of Muslim and Christian villages were incinerated, hundreds, if not thousands, died, including women and children; in the end the Christians were pushed back to Tentena. As in the Moluccas, Muslims from Java came to the aid of their co-religionists and caused the conflict to assume even more the character of a religious war. Also as in the Moluccas, there was no wholesale killing of Christian populations, they were 'merely' terrorised into leaving their territory, which then was occupied by others. Church life was largely disrupted; many of the 350 congregations ceased to exist.

Developments within the GKST church

On 18 October 1947 the Christian Church of Central Sulawesi was instituted. At the time the membership was 80,000 (including about 30,000 in Luwuk Banggai); its territory included the central part of the island and parts of its northern, eastern and southeastern arms. The mission had provided it with a simple church order, which stressed the authority of the central board. The church at once entered into relations with sister churches: it became a member of the WCC (1948) and was a founding member of the Indonesian Council of Churches (1950). The relationship with its parent church, the Netherlands Reformed Church (NHK, which in 1951 took over the mission work from the missionary societies) was a little uneasy. This was in part caused by the nationalist feelings of the Minahasan element in the church, and in part by the wish of the church to improve its credentials in nationalist and Muslim circles. In 1951/1952 the remaining missionaries were requested to leave; in 1952 the relationship with the NHK was restored, and a multidisciplinary team was sent to assist in the development of the region. After 1970 a relationship

was established with organisations from other countries and confessions, like the Overseas Missionary Fellowship, the Missionary Aviation Fellowship, and the Mennonite Central Committee.

At the GKST synods two themes regularly are debated: administrative questions, including financial problems, and the mission of the church. Financial problems arose mainly as a consequence of the centralized structure of the church. The congregations, which mainly consisted of subsistence farmers, appeared unwilling or unable to provide the funds needed for the relatively modest central apparatus. As for the mission of the church, successive synods stressed that the church should follow in the footsteps of the mission and pay attention to the whole of human life. During the 1970s, when the Soeharto government entered upon a massive development program (*pembangunan*), the church, like its sister churches in other parts of the country, declared its readiness to cooperate and insert its activities into the government programme. However, it also called for attention to the negative consequences of economic development, the more so because often it was the members of the church who felt these consequences. Meanwhile, the church did the best it could to maintain a good relationship with the government; one of the first acts of a newly elected synod board would be to meet with the provincial and regional officials to present its program for the next term. The concentration on economic development caused the church to redefine the attitude towards traditional culture it had inherited from the mission: now traditional practices were seen as a waste of economic resources (1972). The church undertook missionary work among unevangelized tribes in the interior, but in the given circumstances to proclaim the Gospel among Muslims was unthinkable.

Palu, Donggala, Luwuk Banggai

The missionfield of the NZG did not include the whole of Central Sulawesi. In 1894 the Dutch branch of the Salvation Army had sent two officers to Central Java, where they were active in social and medical work. Looking for economic opportunities for the Javanese in their care, they decided upon founding a colony in the *Palu Valley*, to the west of Poso (1913). In its turn, this colony became the basis of a mission among the inhabitants of the region, where Islam was stronger already than in Poso. From 1917 until 1949, this work was led by lieutenant-colonel Leonard Woodward and his wife. Their method was not substantially different from that applied in other parts of Sulawesi: they founded schools, gave medical help, and educated teacher-preachers. However, as the Salvation Army does not administer the sacraments, the converts were not baptised and the Holy Supper was not celebrated. This did not prevent the Salvation Army from having their indigenous helpers educated in the teacher

training school at Pendolo. By 1937 there were around 3,000 indigenous Christians; now the Salvation Army is strongly represented in the area.

Large numbers of farmers from the densely populated Minahasa migrated to the *Donggala area*, to the north of Palu. They were cared for by teacher-preachers sent from Minahasa. In the 1930s they established contact with the indigenous population. This resulted in the autonomous Minahasan Church taking responsibility for missionary work in the area (1936). In 1965 the congregations in the Donggala-Palu area formed the Evangelical Protestant Church of Donggala, which in 2000 had about 23,000 members.

The church in *Luwuk Banggai*, to the East of Poso, is a fruit of the mission started in 1911 by the Rev. R.W.F. Kyftenbelt of the Protestant Church in Makassar. Formally, his task as a minister of the established church was only to provide spiritual care for Christian Europeans and Indonesians, government officials and others. But during his visits to congregation members outside the town of Makassar (his parish included the whole southern half of Sulawesi), he observed that the pacification of the area had made it possible for Muslim officials and traders to settle in the interior and spread their religion there, the more so because traditional religion was weakened by the measures taken by the colonial government. He travelled to the territories considered threatened by Islam and not yet occupied by the mission (which was short of staff and funds) and appointed large numbers of teacher-preachers from other parts of the archipelago with orders to prepare the Christianisation of the population. Once a minimum of Christian knowledge had been imparted to the people, Kyftenbelt or an assistant minister came back and administered baptism. For a few years this endeavour was supported by the supposedly neutral colonial government, which remembered very well how Islam had been a motivating force in the resistance of the Acehnese to their subjugation by the Dutch.

The method applied by Kyftenbelt and his helpers in this missionary effort was diametrically opposed to that of the Poso mission. People were baptised by their thousands; no attention was paid to the community (for example, schoolboys would be baptised without their parents becoming Christians or even giving permission); traditional culture was disregarded, and actively suppressed by the teacher-preachers, especially the Ambonese among them; Malay was the language of church and school; in many congregations there was hardly any follow-up in the sense of intensive spiritual care; in accordance with the general practice of the *Indische Kerk*, church members had to do a second and much more serious examination before being allowed to participate in the Lord's Supper. Even in the few congregations in which it was celebrated only a small part of the baptised members took part. Thus church practice in Luwuk Banggai was much nearer to the customs prevailing in the Minahasan Church than to the method applied by the Poso mission. Accordingly, when the Minahasan Church had been given autonomy (1934, GMIM), the Protestant

Church Board surrendered Luwuk Banggai to that church. However, as the GMIM did not feel equal to the task, it suggested the NZG mission should take over. In 1947 Luwuk Banggai was incorporated into the independent Church of Central Sulawesi. Ethnic and geographic factors caused tensions to develop between the regional congregations and the leadership of the church. In 1966 it was agreed that the church in Luwuk Banggai should become independent. In 1997 the membership of the *Christian Church of Luwuk Banggai* (GKLB) was 70,000. In its turn, the GKLB experienced the force of ethnicity as a divisive element in the church when part of the congregations in the Banggai archipelago split off on the same grounds as had led to the birth of their parent church.

The Christian start among the Sa'dan Toraja

The group commonly identified as 'Sa'dan Toraja' lives in the southern part of the mountain block that constitutes the central part of Sulawesi. They are distinguished from the inhabitants of Central Sulawesi by their language, which belongs to another branch of the Austronesian group, and by certain characteristics of their culture, for example house building and the elaborate ceremonies for the dead. In colonial times (since 1906) their territory belonged to the government of Celebes (which comprised only the southern half of the island); after independence to the province of South Sulawesi, where they account for about 10% of the population. Toraja society is strongly feudal, especially in the southern part of their territory, where the *puangs* considered themselves on a par with the Buginese kings. During the second half of the seventeenth century, the Sa'dan Toraja withstood efforts by the Buginese to conquer and islamize their territory. However, they maintained trading relations with the Buginese, the most important export products being coffee and slaves.

In 1906 Torajaland was subjugated by the colonial government, not without fierce resistance on the part of some chiefs. As has been expounded in the section on Central Sulawesi, the Rev. Kyftenbelt of the Protestant Church of the Indies in Makassar took measures to prevent the Islamisation of the area, which was now open to foreign influences. Indigenous teacher-preachers were sent to Torajaland, and in May 1913 a number of pupils of the government school in the town of Makale were baptised by an assistant minister of the Protestant Church. This was not to the liking of the NZG mission to the north. Like Kyftenbelt, Kruyt and Adriani wanted to establish a Christian stronghold which would encompass the whole of central Sulawesi, but they wished the mission to be in a single hand, so that the indigenous church would be built on homogeneous foundations. However, the Netherlands Missionary Society did not have the funds and the personnel needed to occupy the territories to

the south of the Poso mission field. Therefore they enlisted the help of the *Gereformeerde Zendingsbond* (GZB), which had been founded in 1901 by orthodox Protestants who had not followed Abraham Kuyper into his new *Gereformeerde Kerken*, but had remained in the Netherlands Reformed Church. For several years already this mission had been looking for a missionfield, and it readily accepted the invitation of the NZG. For the Poso mission, the fact that the GZB missionaries were educated in the same institute as its own people was a guarantee of homogeneity in the method used. In 1913 the first GZB missionary, A.A. van de Loosdrecht, arrived on the mission field. He spent four months with Dr. Adriani to receive an introduction into the Toraja languages, but also to get acquainted with the ways of the Poso mission. In May 1914 he established himself in Rantepao and started working among the Sa'dan Toraja. Within two years he was followed by the missionary teacher, J. Belksma, who was to start a training institute for Toraja teacher-preachers, and by the language expert, Dr. H. van der Veen.

At first, all went well with the new mission. Following the usual pattern, Van de Loosdrecht founded schools, gave medical assistance, and learned the language, in which he became particularly fluent. In 1915 the government allotted the southern part of Torajaland, which until then had been a missionfeld of the Protestant Church, to the GZB. However, in the meantime tensions in Torajaland rose. Especially in the Rantepao area, the pacification had been preceded by years of violence and arbitrary rule by several chiefs and warlords. Now those who felt aggrieved came forward and laid charges with the colonial administration. Sometimes the missionary, because of his knowledge of the vernacular, would act as an intermediary between those lodging complaints and the government officials. In his preaching too, Van de Loosdrecht, a labourer's son and a staunch Calvinist, occasionally gave the impression that God was on the side of the poor. This viewpoint was quite to the contrary of the opinion prevailing among the Torajas, who frankly appreciated wealth as a sign that somebody was favoured by the gods. The banishment of the most powerful man in Torajaland, the raja of Rantepao, and of several other chiefs, following charges of extortion, further increased tensions. Moreover, the attitude of the government, which closely cooperated with the mission, among other things by punishing the absenteeism of school children, gave the population the impression that Christianity would be forced upon them. Actually, the mission was rather reticent in administering baptism: during the three years of Van de Loosdrecht's activity he baptised only 15 Toraja. In mid-1917 some feudal lords prepared a rising. All Europeans in the area were to be killed. When attempts to murder the local administrator failed, the rebels killed the missionary. This was an extraordinary event. From 1859 (Banjarmasin War) until the outbreak of World War II only four times a Protestant or Catholic missionary was killed in the Dutch East Indies, even though until the early

1900s many of them worked in areas not yet administrated by the colonial government, such as Papua.

The murder of Van de Loosdrecht only temporarily slowed down the mission effort. During the next 25 years the mission founded a network of schools, including a Dutch-language elementary school (1924) led by a Dutch mission teacher, a hospital, and several hundred congregations. In 1938 baptised Protestant Christians in the GZB mission field numbered 13,000, out of a total of approximately 250,000 non-Muslim inhabitants. As in several other mission fields, like North Sumatra, the early years of the Toraja mission are characterised by the active participation in missionary work of charismatic converts, mostly people who had an intimate knowledge of the traditional religion, like the *tominaa* (priest) Pong Lengko (baptised 1920, died 1930), who in former times had accompanied the men of his district in war. The missionaries noted fragments of their preaching, in which things were put somewhat differently from their own way. For example, just like new converts on other mission fields, Pong Lengko could not understand why the colonial government took a (more or less) neutral attitude in religious matters. For him, the traditional gods were real powers, which in ancient times had usurped the place belonging to the one true God, and now should be driven out.

Seen against the background of the mission in the Dutch East Indies as a whole, the GZB makes an interesting case-study, because in matters of traditional religion and culture it followed the line of Kruyt and Adriani (the 'Oegstgeest' policy, inspired by the ethical current in Dutch theology), while in matters of church organization it adopted the Calvinist model applied by the mission of the *Gereformeerde Kerken* (GZB) on its missionfield in Central Java. The ethical faction within the missionary corps was led by H. van der Veen, son of a minister of the Dutch Reformed Church. In 1923 a committee on which he sat together with the two other missionaries and a number of teacher-preachers and Toraja elders, produced a Christian *adat* regulation containing a number of stipulations on the disposal of the dead, the harvesting of the rice, the inauguration of a new house, traditional feasts, and marriage. We quote some of these stipulations on the disposal of the dead,

It is up to the family to bury the dead at once or postpone burial (according to traditional custom). None of the two practices is sinful. Only if the government official orders the body to be buried immediately, you must obey him. But do not forget that many people cannot stand the smell of the decomposing body; many get ill by it. At the burial people may slaughter buffaloes as well as pigs; singing lamentations is not forbidden. However, if you slaughter animals, you are not allowed to bring an offering to the soul of the deceased person; you must not think that the dead take along these animals to the place of the souls or to heaven. (...) There is no objection against erecting a *bala'kayan* (framework from which the buffalo meat is distributed), or a *simbuang* memorial stone. Much more important is that you keep the meat clean and do not drag it through dung or

mud. People (*i.e. Christians*) are not allowed to make a *tau-tau* (statue or picture of the dead person), nor make sacrifices to it. It is not allowed to raise lamentations in front of these statues, because that is just foolish. The Christians do not have to keep to the prohibition of eating rice during the period of mourning. (...) When you are in a house of mourning, where the people do not eat rice, you should not eat rice either, in order not to give offence.¹

This adat-regulation has not become a guiding document of the nascent church; in fact the original text has not even been preserved. However, it mirrors the attitude of the GZB mission (and of its sister organisations within the *Hervormde Kerk*) towards traditional culture and religion. This attitude has three characteristics: (1) Regarding to traditional culture, a distinction is made between elements considered purely religious (such as bringing offerings to the dead or to the statue of a dead person) and those considered more or less 'neutral', such as slaughtering animals at a burial. (2) Within the 'neutral' domain, the 'freedom of a Christian' is an important theme. (3) Typically Western notions, like hygiene and government regulations (based themselves on hygiene) are introduced. These considerations determined missionary practice. The feasts of the dead are not prohibited, but Christianised; elements of traditional music are (with little success) introduced into church singing. On the GZB mission field we observe the same caution towards traditional structures as in Poso. From 1924 onwards, many Christians from the middle and lower classes refused to give the traditional gift of meat to the village elite, arguing that this gift had a religious meaning (the *buku lesu* affair). The missionaries, especially Dr. Van der Veen, tried to persuade them to honour tradition, but Belksma secretly supported the Christians. Even under pressure from the government, which throughout the Indies supported traditional feudal structures, the Christians did not give in; after independence they settled the matter through their political party, Parkindo.

Van der Veen also wanted Christian slaves to render the customary services to their former overlords, except those, which were clearly connected with traditional religion. On the GZB mission field, people of slave descent were not formally denied access to the teacher-training course and the evangelists' course, but in practice, for the same reason as in Poso, the mission preferred teachers from the upper classes. Nevertheless, somehow a number of people of slave descent succeeded in getting through the selection and joining one of the groups which most participated in upward social mobility. Maybe here, too, Belksma was instrumental. He was the son of a farm labourer, a member of the *Gereformeerde Kerken*, and in his youth had absorbed the social teachings of Abraham Kuyper.

¹ The text (in Dutch) in: Th. van den End 1985:205–209. A translation into modern Indonesian in: Th. van den End 1994:188–193. The original text has not been preserved.

The mission also had to determine its attitude towards the Indonesian national movement. Instinctively it tried to avoid the issue; in the GZB archive, as in those of other missions, there is hardly a document to be found on the emergence of this movement in Torajaland. Indonesian mission workers later confessed that, of course, they adored Soekarno and knew the anthem *Indonesia Raya* (Greater Indonesia) by heart, but did not dare to mention it to the missionaries. Young Toraja returning from Java with a secondary or higher education sometimes were received in the service of the mission, but invariably after some time they opted out because they chafed at the paternalism of some missionaries and at the political conservatism of, for example Belksma, who in the monthly *Soelo* (Torch) published by the mission even dubbed Hatta 'a communist.' Conversely, the mission, especially Dr. Van der Veen, supported the regional nationalism of the Toraja, who traditionally had been subject to neighbouring Luwu and whose lands were incorporated by the colonial administration into the territory of that name, which enjoyed a form of self-governing under the traditional ruler, who was a Muslim. The support of the mission for the Toraja secession movement earned it the wrath of the colonial government. Here, too, the Toraja themselves settled the affair after the war, securing for the Makale-Rantepao area an administrative status on a par with that of Luwu.

In all questions mentioned above, GZB policy was not unlike that of its sister mission in Poso. In the matter of church organisation, however, it took a different course. In the first place, as quickly as possible the mission started laying the foundations of a Presbyterian Church organisation. When a group of village dwellers had been baptised, almost at once a local church council was formed which together with the local teacher-preacher or evangelist had to care for the congregation, under the supervision of the missionary. Ten years later, regional presbyteries were formed, and in 1937 Belksma presented a draft church order. Characteristically, Van der Veen stated that this draft was too Western, and that the organisation of the church would have to grow spontaneously from within the congregations. However, the concept was accepted by the missionary conference and passed on to the Mission Board in the Netherlands for further discussion and ratification.

Church order as envisaged by the missionaries was marked by two characteristics. Firstly, it provided for a church growing out of the congregations. Each congregation, which fulfilled certain conditions, could call a teacher-preacher or evangelist to become its minister. The conference would give this minister the authority to administer the sacraments, and with that the congregation would be independent from the mission. Out of these independent congregations an independent church would grow. Secondly, the concept as amended by the conference referred to the Calvinist confessions of faith, and more precisely to the first article of the *Confessio Belgica* "as more broadly

specified in the Heidelberg Catechism.” In both issues, the conference followed the policy of the *Gereformeerd* mission in Central Java, where the church (instituted in 1931) had grown in the same way and had the Catechism as its confession. But in each the final result was different. As for the growth of an independent church: in 1940 the first congregation reached this stage, but before others could follow the Pacific War intervened, and in 1947 the mission declared the church independent in a way similar to that used in Poso and most other mission fields. As for the confession, conservative elements in the mission inserted the complete *Confessio Belgica* and the Canons of Dort (of which until 1983 no Indonesian translation was available) in the article regarding the confession of the Toraja Church.

The Japanese interregnum in Torajaland

In the Torajaland, the Japanese occupation brought problems and solutions similar to those in the Poso area. The GZB hurriedly ordained five evangelists as ministers and gave them the authority and the money necessary to guide the church through the war. As in Poso, this did not mean that from now on the church was independent; the new structure was a continuation of the missionary organization under Indonesian leadership. During the power vacuum pending the installation of a Japanese administration, the Christians were told that Islam was the only religion permitted by the Japanese, and that these would kill all pigs. But afterwards the Japanese suppressed Islamic agitation. Here, too, the Christians were assisted and protected by Christian Japanese, who ordained several more ministers. However, in Torajaland, too, the population was required to contribute to the war effort. In May 1945, the Japanese authorities organised a course for church workers, with lectures by Indonesian and Japanese agricultural experts and church-leaders. The verbatim account of this course makes fascinating reading. The Japanese Christians present took part in the propagation of the Greater Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere ideology. But the Japanese Presbyterian minister and theologian, Juji Seya had the courage to state that “The present war is a world-wide war, and is of great significance, because it shows that England, America, Russia, Holland, Japan (!), even all mankind, must return to God, by the cross of Golgotha, the cross of Jesus the Messiah.”²

After the missionaries came back from Japanese internment, the Toraja ministers, ordained in 1942, duly handed back the leadership of the church to them. In February 1947 the mission convened a Synod in which the autonomous Toraja Church was proclaimed. Belksma’s draft of 1937 became

² Van den End 1985:521. Indonesian in: Van den End 1994:526.

its church order. However, as has been pointed out before, this was a top-down proclamation. As in most other Indonesian churches (for example Central Sulawesi, East Java, West Java, the Toba Batak Church), the church board was the heir of the mission, and its first chairman was a missionary. In fact, between 1947 and 1950 the mission in Toraja had more foreign workers in Torajaland than ever before, and it continued to operate alongside the church as an independent body. In 1950 the outbreak of disorders following the dissolution of the State of East Indonesia caused most mission staff to retire to the provincial capital Makassar and afterwards to Holland. But only when the rift between Indonesia and the Netherlands over western New Guinea (Papua) made it impossible to maintain a missionary presence in Torajaland did the church become truly independent. Just as in the rest of Indonesia, after 1965 the position of new 'fraternal workers' from the West within the church was very different from that of their predecessors.

The internal development of the Toraja Church during the first decades after 1945 was strongly influenced by political events in the region. As in the southern districts of the Poso mission, the power vacuum after August 1945 brought suffering for the congregations in areas that were predominantly Muslim, like the coastal plains around Palopo, where Muslim nationalists killed seventeen church leaders. From 1950 until 1965 the Darul Islam rebellion disrupted life in Toraja-land and surrounding regions. Only in the central towns did the government have any authority. In the areas dominated by the guerrillas, again a number of Christians were killed. The adherents to traditional religion (by far the majority of the population) were forced to 'accept a religion,' choosing between Islam and Christianity. Tens of thousands chose Islam, but many more had the courage to choose Christianity. In this way, in a few years the membership of the church trebled. Under the circumstances, it was impossible to give baptismal instruction to the new converts. The resulting leeway in Christian knowledge posed a problem to the church for years to come. The unstable situation after the fall of Soeharto (1998) did not have the same disastrous results as in Central Sulawesi, because Christian and Muslim religious leaders succeeded in warding off religious strife in Torajaland proper. But as in the 1940s and 1950s Christian villages in the coastal plain to the east were attacked and burnt down.

The history of the Toraja Church after 1965 is characterised by three developments. In the first place, the church adapted itself to its Indonesian ecclesiastical environment, dropping some of the Dutch conservative Calvinist features received from the GZB mission. The church opened the ministry for women (1984), which by Indonesian standards was rather late. Like other Indonesian churches before and after it, in 1981 the Toraja Church adopted a new confession in which the orthodox faith was formulated in a more contextual way; six years later the classic Calvinist forms were deleted from the church order.

Secondly, the church had to determine its attitude towards the cultural heritage of the Toraja people. In general it followed the line of the mission. Traditional culture was not viewed as something to suppress or to be ashamed of. On the contrary, in church ceremonies traditional clothes were worn, traditional dances received a place, although attempts to introduce dancing and music into worship met with some resistance. The church followed the mission also in its attitude towards social stratification. As late as the 1980s office holders from what were considered the lower strata of society were relatively few and rarely were chosen as members of the regional and central boards. This situation was most pronounced in isolated regions. Christian members of the traditional elite even tried to reverse some of the prohibitions of the mission against what they considered to be pagan elements in ceremonies otherwise tolerated. In the 1980s and 1990s there was much discussion on the question whether or not the *tau-tau* (statues of the dead) could be tolerated after all, because the homage given them should not be classified as worship, but was just an expression of the reverence due from a child to his parents. The 1984 synod reached a compromise: the church strongly discouraged the use of these effigies, but if a family insisted upon having a *tau-tau*, provided it was not paraded around or prominently displayed during the funeral ritual, the Church would allow individual ministers to determine whether or not they wanted to officiate at the services. It is significant of the situation of the *Gereja Toraja* between old and new challenges that the next synod (1988) discussed *in vitro* fertilization and urbanisation.

The third feature of the history of the Toraja Church was the sustained growth it experienced throughout this period. When it became independent, church members numbered 25,000. This number trebled during the persecution in the 1950s, and doubled again in the sixties. In 2000 the church gave its membership as 375,000, which made it a medium-sized church within Indonesian Protestantism. This growth was mainly achieved at the cost of traditional religion, which long had remained strong among the Torajas, and even had succeeded, just like similar communities in Kalimantan and elsewhere, in winning recognition by the government as a part of (officially recognised) Hinduism.

However, the Toraja Church is not the only expression of Christianity among the approximately six hundred thousand Toraja people.³ In the late 1930s, the Roman Catholic Church penetrated into what at that time was the mission field of the GZB; after the war it established a number of congregations and at the end of the century it numbered about 65,000 for the whole of Central

³ In the sense of: people living in Torajaland proper (the modern regency Tana Toraja) and the area immediately to the east, and their descendants in Luwu and in other parts of Indonesia. Torajas in the broader sense of 'speakers of the Toraja language' are said to number 1,500,000.

Sulawesi. Even earlier the Christian and Missionary Alliance (CAMA), which since 1930 had its headquarters in Makassar, established congregations in Tana Toraja. Until the late 1930s, the colonial government forbade missionary work in an area already occupied by another mission, but it could not prevent Indonesians from coming in. Benyamin Bokko' was first a student at the CAMA seminary at Makassar, and from 1941 onward founded a church named *Kerapatan Injil Bangsa Indonesia* (KIBAID) in his native Torajaland. In 1986 KIBAID membership numbered 35,000; it even had a theological seminary of its own in the town of Makale. Another Anglo-American denomination entering Torajaland was the Assemblies of God, of Pentecostal stock. In 1966 several congregations in the coastal plain left the Toraja Church and founded the *Gereja Protestan Injili Luwu* (Evangelical Protestant Church of Luwu), which in 2000 gave its membership as 17,000. As for the Catholic Church, KIBAID, and the Assemblies of God, not only adherents of the traditional religion, but also many members of the Toraja Church entered one of these churches, for various reasons. The Roman Catholic Church is very tolerant towards traditional culture (for example, it makes no objection whatsoever about making *tau-tau*), while KIBAID and the Pentecostals require their members to avoid all objects and ceremonies even remotely related to the ancestral religion. However, there is one common denominator: in them traditional social structures are much less important than in the Gereja Toraja. Thus people of lower descent feel themselves more at home. The secession of part of the congregations in the coastal plain had another source: Christians in that region felt neglected by the leadership of the church in Rantepao. Nevertheless, the *Gereja Toraja* remained by far the largest church in the region and among the Toraja people, with strong congregations in Makassar and other towns in the region and in the great cities of Java.

The Gereja Toraja Mamasa (Mamasa Toraja Church GTM)

The early history of Protestant Christianity in Southwest Sulawesi does not differ much from that in Torajaland and in the eastern part of the island. Islam was strong in the coastal regions from the seventeenth century onwards. When the colonial government occupied the interior, the Rev. Kyftenbelt sent teacher-preachers to prevent Islam from spreading there (1912–1913); afterwards the mission took over. Actually, in 1914 the government promised to surrender the whole of Southwest Sulawesi to the GZB provided it could muster the personnel and funds to occupy the area effectively. It could not, and thus the Protestant Church of the Indies (*Indische Kerk*) was left in charge. It sent an assistant minister, who with government support baptised thousands of people. But in 1928 the *Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerk* (Christian Reformed Church,

CGK), a small conservative Calvinist church in the Netherlands, fruit of the Secession of 1834, took over responsibility for this mission field. It sent two missionaries, A. Bikker and M. Geleijnse, who in their first reports put the number of Christians at over 20,000. In the statistics of 1932, however, the number reported was 1,338. The others had simply returned to the ancestral religion, which in fact they had never left.

It turned out that the mission had to make a new start. Baptisms administered by the *Indische Kerk* were recognised as valid, but adult Christians who wanted to be accepted as church members were under the obligation of following religious instruction and confessing their faith in a church ceremony. In this way, confirmation in a sense took the place of baptism. The teacher-preachers taken over from the *Indische Kerk* were upgraded and closely supervised; the mission opened a teacher training course and even a Dutch-language elementary school for the indigenous population. In this way the number of church members rose again to 5,500 in 1937. In matters of church organization, the CGK mission followed the same course as the neighbouring mission in Torajaland: in 1931 there were already ten local church councils that were organized into a classis; in 1938 there were three presbyteries. In March 1942 the missionaries ordained two Ambonese, the teacher-preacher J.E. Latuihamallo (father of the well-known Indonesian theologian P.D. Latuihamallo) and the evangelist P. Pattikayhatu, so that administration of the sacraments would go on during the Japanese occupation. The way elders and deacons were appointed was rather remarkable. When a new group of Christians had come into existence, the missionary asked the local teacher-preacher to designate members who would make good elders or deacons. These members were introduced to the congregation and then had to pass a probationary period. They worked together with the teacher-preacher and were supposed to work among non-Christians. Those who had proved worthy were ordained. In this way the elders in particular were involved in the expansion of the congregation.

The CGK mission and the GZB were kindred organisations. There was close cooperation in several fields, such as Bible translation, the preparation of a Psalm-book, education of teacher-preachers (which was concentrated in Barana, near Rantepao), and the development of the church organisation. Actually the idea was that the two mission fields would coalesce into one church. In fact, at the third synod of the Toraja Church (1950) Mamasa was represented as a *classis* and the document in which the Toraja Church applied to the government for recognition as a corporate body was co-signed by the representative of the CGK mission in Mamasa. As late as 1965 the GZB and CGK missions urged the Mamasa Church to unite with the *Gereja Toraja*. However, the Synod of October 1965 rejected this proposal. This decision was mainly inspired by regionalist feelings: "politically we manage ourselves as a

separate district, so why should not we manage ourselves in the church, too, strengthened by geography and by the long isolation caused by the Muslim guerrilla actions between 1950 and 1965?" Thus in the end the *Gereja Toraja Mamasa* (GTM) emerged as an independent church, which in retrospect considers 1947 as its year of birth.

In Mamasa, the Japanese occupation brought the same experiences as in neighbouring regions. However, because of its isolated situation, the insecurity and suffering caused by the Muslim separatist (DII) guerrilla actions lasted much longer. Many Christians died, among them the first Toraja minister, the Rev. Sem Bombong who not long before had been chosen by the people as a district head (1950). The mission tried to maintain a presence in the Mamasa region, but in 1953 its last representative had to leave. Nevertheless, during this period the church grew; in 1954 it had approximately 20,000 members, in 1965 over 40,000. The history of the church after 1965 more or less follows the pattern of the neighbouring churches, in particular the Toraja Church. There were discussions about the permissibility for Christians of traditional customs and ceremonies. The GTM received woman ministers at about the same time as the neighbouring church (1982). The church also shared with its sister church the experience of secession. In 1977 the congregations in the Galumpang district, to the northwest of Mamasa, founded the *Gereja Protestan di Sulawesi Selatan*, the Protestant Church in South Sulawesi, GPSS, which in 2001 gave its membership as 16,000.

From 1967 onwards the GTM church again received Dutch fraternal workers, who were active in the education of church leaders, general education, medical care, and agriculture. The problems met in these areas were those encountered also in many other Indonesian churches. The Bible school (founded 1969) succumbed due to its very success: it produced so many graduates that the church could not absorb them and the school was closed after only eight years. For a quarter of a century the church sent its future pastors to Rantepao, Makassar, or Java, but in 2004 it opened a Theological College of its own. In 1973 a Christian Women's Federation was founded, which, as in other Indonesian churches became one of the most active organisations within the church. At the time of writing (2006) the membership of the *Gereja Toraja Mamasa* is given as 120,000.

The Gereja Kristen Sulawesi Selatan
(Christian Church of South Sulawesi, GKSS)

As has been related in chapter three, there was a Catholic presence in southern Sulawesi between 1544 and 1661. It was ended by the pressure of the Dutch, who in 1667 conquered Makassar. From 1670 onwards, Protestant ministers

were stationed in that town. These were charged with the spiritual care of the European and Eurasian residents of Makassar and some other coastal towns, but until the twentieth century undertook no mission work among the Makassarese or among the Buginese to the north. The only Indonesian Protestants in the area were government officials from Christianised regions such as the Moluccas and the Minahasa. There was a church council, in which the Christian Indonesians were represented. The church building was located within the Dutch fortress *Rotterdam*. Church members outside Makassar, who in 1850 numbered 300, were visited only once or twice a year. Some ministers suggested that an assistant minister be placed among them, but the Church Board in Batavia rejected this suggestion because it (*i.e.* the government) was afraid this would cause trouble among the local population.

Missionary work among the Makassar and Bugis people started in 1848. In that year the Dutch Bible Society sent Dr. B.F. Matthes to Makassar with the instruction to study the local languages and produce a translation of the Bible. When he observed the neglected state of the Eurasian Christians outside Makassar, he urged the NZG to send a missionary to look after them and eventually turn these neglected communities into bases for missionary work. The NZG complied with his request, and from 1852 until 1864 three missionaries worked in the region. They founded schools that were visited by a few dozen of indigenous children, but the government did not allow them to start direct evangelisation among the local population. Therefore the mission withdrew from South Sulawesi, handing back the Indonesian Christians to the *Indische Kerk*. From 1868 onwards assistant ministers served them, an office that had been created in the 1860s. Matthes remained until 1870. He composed the first grammar and dictionary both of Buginese and of Makassarese, and published editions of literary works in both languages. In 1881 his translation of the New Testament was printed, and in 1900 the complete Bible was available in both languages. But there were hardly any indigenous Christians to use these Bible editions; a second attempt to establish a foothold in southern Sulawesi, undertaken by the mission in 1895–1905, also failed.

Thus the *Indische Kerk* again was the only representative of (Protestant) Christianity in the area, and once more there was no Christian presence among the indigenous population. In the early 1930s, however, this situation changed. The Protestant minister in Makassar, P.A. Binsbergen, succeeded in establishing lasting contacts with inhabitants of Salayar, an island off the south coast of Sulawesi. After a few years, congregations of the *Gereformeerde Kerken* on the island of Java started missionary work in the city of Makassar and the surrounding region, where a number of European GKN families lived. After World War II this work was continued by their successors, the *Gereja Protestan di Indonesia bagian Barat* (Protestant Church in the western part of Indonesia, GPIB), aided by the mission of both the Netherlands Reformed

Church (NHK) and *Gereformeerde Kerken* (GKN) in the Netherlands and the *Gereja Kristen Indonesia* (Indonesian Christian Church, GKI) in Central Java, which had originated from the GKN mission in that region. The missionary work undertaken by these churches resulted in the founding of the *Gereja Kristen di Sulawesi Selatan* (Christian Church of South Sulawesi, GKSS), which almost exclusively consisted of Buginese and Makassarese (1966). This mission had four centres, far apart from each other: the island of Salayar in the south, the Buginese region of Soppeng in the north, both mission fields of the Protestant Church, and the city of Makassar with the neighbouring region of Gowa, the ancient capital of the Makassarese, which before 1966 were served by the GKN/GKI mission.

On Salayar there existed a mystical, semi-Islamic movement, with the name *Igama Binanga Benteng* (the Binanga Benteng Religion, Binanga Benteng being the place of residence of Haji Abdul Gani, the founder of the movement), which after World War II was named Mukhdi Akbar. This movement seemed to offer a starting-point for the mission, which founded a number of village schools. These schools were popular, but direct evangelisation work turned out to be difficult. In 1938 there were only 58 baptised Christians on the island. However, among them were several future leaders of the Christian Church in South Sulawesi. After the war the work was resumed under the leadership of a Salayar convert, Nonce Daeng Massikki. A Christian community centre was built, a teacher training school was opened that existed for only ten years, but produced a number of teachers who were instrumental in the expansion of the church, and church councils were instituted. But only after the *coup d'état* in 1965, when the mistrust towards deviant Muslim movements put the Mukhdi Akbar movement in a tight spot, did the church start to grow. However, in many cases the former Mukhdi Akbar members continued to hold their traditional meetings and to honour their former spiritual leaders. In 1982 Protestant Christians on Salayar numbered 1,482, including Indonesians from other islands living in the administrative centre, out of a total island population of 92,000.

In 1933 mission work in Makassar and surroundings was taken up by a GKN minister H. van den Brink (1933–1939, 1948–1962) assisted by a growing number of Indonesian evangelists, teachers, nurses, and book peddlers. He opened several missionary stations, founded village schools and the hospital Labuang Baji (1938); his wife started work among women and girls. These efforts yielded scant results, in particular because at the time several Christian denominations had chosen Makassar as their centre of activity. In 1938 the number of Christians in the care of Van den Brink and his mission numbered 32.

After the war Van den Brink returned to Makassar and he found that the Christian groups outside the town had disappeared. Conversely, the hospi-

tal had become the centre of a flourishing congregation numbering several hundreds, which was led by a Javanese minister. As this congregation mainly consisted of Toraja from the north, which had come to the town in order to escape persecution in their home area, it was transferred to the Toraja Church. The few indigenous members were gathered in a new congregation named Makkio Baji (*makkio* = to call, *baji* = good). But this congregation in its turn became dominated by Northerners. Another group of Buginese Christians later entered the GPIL. In the meantime the congregations belonging to Indonesian churches based outside the region (Toraja Church, GPIB, Batak Church etc.) expanded. In 1982 in Makassar there were 46,000 Protestant Christians out of a total population of 718,000. Of these, only several hundred belonged to the GKSS.

Van den Brink also worked in the region of Malino, 60 km to the east of Makassar. Here the mission faced strong opposition on the part of local Muslims. After five years, only nine people were baptised. All of them had come into contact with Christianity previously, through the agency of other Christian bodies, such as the CAMA, the Salvation Army, or the Pentecostal movement. During World War II the work stagnated, and after 1950 the strong presence of the Darul Islam rebellion in this mountainous region made church life impossible. Only in the town of Malino could a congregation continue to exist. As in Makassar, the minority position of Makassarese Christians within this congregation generated tensions. After 1960 there was renewed growth. In 1966 there were three congregations in the area, which together came to form a classis of the GKSS. But in these congregations, too, migrants from other parts of the country were in the majority. According to government statistics, in 1982 in the Malino district there were 2,048 Protestant Christians out of a total population of 366,000. The majority of these Protestants belonged to the GKSS.

In 1936 an indigenous assistant minister of the *Indische Kerk* baptised some Buginese in the coastal town of Barru, 90 km to the north of Makassar. From Barru, Christianity spread to the neighbouring district of Soppeng, with the administrative centre of Watansoppeng. Between 1940 and 1942 some 800 inhabitants of this district embraced Christianity. The Christian groups survived the war, and in 1950 their number had grown to 1,000. The presence of a Pentecostal movement caused a schism, but after ten years this could be overcome. During this crucial period the work in Soppeng was led by a convert from Salayar, Syamsuddin Daeng Soreang (Denso), who had received an education at the GZB seminary in Torajaland and in Malang, East Java. He was assisted by a few influential church members and by several Buginese evangelists. After the war six local church councils were instituted.

In Soppeng, too, the Darul Islam rebellion brought organised church life outside the towns to a standstill. Local elders and evangelists looked

after the remaining Christians. But even now people were baptised and (in Watansoppeng) church services were held, with the help of army chaplains and ministers of the Toraja Church. Between 1959 and 1965, the church in Soppeng was served by ministers, sent by the GPIB who concentrated on the training of church leaders. However, the presence of 'foreign' ministers caused irritation. In 1965 the Theological Academy at Makassar produced the two first Buginese theologians, who subsequently were ordained as ministers of the church in Soppeng. In the meantime this church had 1,183 baptised members, out of a population of 200,000.

Out of these four mission fields grew the *Gereja Kristen di Sulawesi Selatan* (Christian Church of South Sulawesi, GKSS). The Dutch mission wanted the church to become a classis of the Protestant Church in western Indonesia (GPIB). However, the indigenous leaders wished to found an independent church. In April 1965 a *musyawarah* (discussion meeting) was held at Watansoppeng by the representants of thirteen Buginese and Makassarese congregations, about 2,000 members. The first synod was held in June 1966. However, as early as 1947 the Conference of Churches and Missions in Malino (15–25 March 1947) had decided that a separate church for Buginese and Makassarese should be formed. In 1949 a provisional church organisation was set up, which from 1954 onwards lived under a provisional church order. The cadres for the incipient church were first educated in a course that produced twelve evangelists, and later in several Theological Academies in Makassar and in Java. The church order of 1965 was fashioned after the GPIB model. Ministers were ordained, appointed, and transferred by the Church Board, chosen by the Synod, which met every five years. The only credal text mentioned was the Apostles' Creed.

After 1966 members of the Protestant Church living in the diaspora north of Makassar joined the GKSS. Nevertheless it is still a small church; at the time of writing (2006) the membership is given as 6,450 in 37 congregations, with 45 ministers, among whom 28 are from other regions (Torajaland, Moluccas etc.). In many respects it is similar to the other churches in the region that originated from the work of Dutch missionary societies. It is conservative in theological matters, introverted and tending to avoid critical reflection. Politically it is law-abiding, conservative and patriotic. As in all Indonesian churches, for pragmatic reasons the national ideology (*Pancasila*), was considered a great blessing, because it guaranteed freedom of religion, even if in practice this freedom was hard to realise. For a long time, the GKSS concentrated on its internal problems and quarrels, which in large part were caused by the socio-economic and political differences between autochthonous church members and migrants from other regions that had joined the church, and upon safeguarding the position gained. Apart from a few personal contacts, there were hardly any efforts to enter into a dialogue with Islam, with the

Mukhdi Akbar movement or any one of the numerous religious currents in southern Sulawesi. Following the example of the Dutch missionaries, Islam was considered an enemy of the faith, while people thought about the relation to traditional religion and customs (*adat*) in terms of struggle, distance, and enmity. The Christian faith was considered to require a clean break with the religious environment, including Islam. Everything not fitting within this negative pattern was considered syncretism (H. van den Brink). Syamsuddin Denso was an exception to this rule; his statement that the Gospel should be announced “by Buginese to Buginese” conveyed his conviction that Christianity should not be a threat to Buginese cultural values and traditions and that non-Christian elements within the church should be overcome with patience and from within, or even, if possible, adapted and given a new content. In this way, of all missionary workers Denso was closest to what in later years was called contextual theology. The lack of theological creativity and assertiveness made the GKSS membership vulnerable to American faith missions, which entered in the 1980s and sometimes caused great confusion.

The GKSS faces a variety of problems. Among them the hierarchical mentality and approach of many office-bearers and board members, as well as the socio-cultural difference between town and countryside, are among the most important. Hierarchy is the age-old binding agent of the Buginese and Makassarese society, in which the GKSS is rooted. But for a long time this mentality made it impossible for deliberative bodies based upon western ideas, such as church councils and presbyteries, to function properly. The contrast between town and countryside paralleled that between modern dynamic, Java-dominated Indonesia, and the static, introverted societies of eastern Indonesia. This socio-cultural contrast more or less coincided with that between church members originating from other parts of Indonesia, who often did not stay long in one place and opposed the complete integration of “their” congregations into the GKSS on the one hand, and the Buginese and Makassarese members, for whom the GKSS was their sole spiritual home on the other. These differences brought about the frequent breakdowns in communication between the leadership of the church in Makassar and the congregations in the countryside. The schisms and secessions caused the GKSS to lose a large part of its autochthonous membership during the first two decades of its existence. In 1984 there were only 400 autochthonous families left, making up about half of the total membership. Besides, it should be noted that in many of these families either husband or wife came from outside. This decline was made up only by the arrival of a number of new members from other regions, and by the events on Salayar, where in 1966 hundreds of followers of the *Mukhdi Akbar* movement joined the GKSS. It should be noted, however, that most of these are nominal members only. This development shows that, after a promising start in Soppeng (1940–1950), the GKSS increasingly lost

ground in the Buginese-Makassarese society. It was less and less a *suku* (tribal) church, and was less and less present in the countryside. The membership, of which in 2006 an estimated 60% were Torajanese, was increasingly concentrated in the towns: Watansoppeng, Pangkep, Maros, Makassar, Malino, and Benteng (Salayar). Contrary to the original intention, the GKSS has become a very heterogeneous church.

The Catholic Archdiocese of Makassar

With the exception of the Toraja region (in the broader sense), the Christians are a dispersed diaspora minority community in overwhelmingly Muslim Central, South and Southeast Sulawesi. Moreover, they are divided among larger and smaller churches as is clear from structure and content of this chapter. A special feature for the Catholic church is the fact that it is the only Christian community that is found all over Indonesia but also has its peculiar local history in all regions. In the larger towns all the Christian communities began with the European and Eurasian Christians, either *Indische Kerk* or Catholic Church. Because Makassar was the major harbour for East Indonesia, in 1892 a resident priest started his work for the Catholics residing in the town. Besides, this person took Makassar as the basis for pastoral travelling. Only in 1929 was a second permanent station in this region opened: Raha in the island of Muna (see below under Southeast Sulawesi).

The city of Makassar is until now considered the capital of East Indonesia. In the colonial period the population was already heterogeneous. All kinds of ethnic groups could be found there: the local people of Makassar and Bugis, but also from Java, Flores, Manado, Toraja, the Moluccas, Europeans, Eurasians, Chinese. The Catholic parish was served by the Jesuits and from 1920 on by the MSC priests, but since 1937 it was the CICM or Scheut missionaries who worked here. As in other parts of Indonesia, the diocesan priests came much later. Until 1965 the Scheut Fathers served all mission stations and city parishes in the Archdiocese of Makassar. The proportion between diocesan priests and Scheut Fathers was then one to forty-six. At the beginning of 1989 only two mission stations and four parishes were still in the hands of CICM. There were at that time forty-one diocesan priests and fifteen Scheut Fathers.⁴

In the late 1930s it was Toraja migrants to the town of Makassar who came into contact with the Catholic priests, converted and in this way prepared the arrival of Catholicism in the Toraja lands, that were until that period considered as a purely Protestant mission field. In the 1960s and 1970s the Catholic clergy in the region took several initiatives for economic development. In 1962

⁴ Daniël Verhelst & Nestor Pycke 1991:368.

CICM priest J. Hauben started an agricultural college in Jonga, a suburb of Makassar. Several agricultural centres were also started in the Toraja heartlands in this period when international development aid was mainly given through the channel of church organisations. Quite typical for this period is the person of CICM priest Ray Stock, who studied agriculture after he finished his study of theology. With fellow priest Kees Brouwer he established a course for 'agrarian catechists' in Messawa, West Toraja.⁵ This type of pastoral worker was planned as a combination of development worker and instructor for the Catholic faith. Scores of candidates followed the courses and could be nominated for both functions in this region.

In 2001 out of the 166,143 Catholics of the Archdiocese, 34,500 faithful lived in the city of Makassar. They were an urban community of migrants from so many different places. The largest single ethnic group of Catholics was found in the Toraja regions, but also here the Catholics had been latecomers and a minority, as already sketched above. Besides, there were many locations for migrant farmers from Java, Bali and Flores, among who were also modest numbers of Christians.

Christians in Southeast Sulawesi

The indigenous population of Southeast Sulawesi consisted mainly of Tomonene who lived in the Southwestern peninsula (Poleang and Rumbia), Tolaki living in the central parts (Kolaka, Kendari) and some Toraja to the north. The indigenous tribes were the descendants of pre-historic migrants who originated from other parts of Asia and from Oceania. They possessed a hierarchical social structure, which generally consisted of an elite, a middle class and slaves, and lived predominantly in the interior. About 1830, when they entered written history, they appeared to adhere to some form of ancestral religion. They sustained themselves by means of shifting cultivation, hunting and some barter trade. With only a few exceptions they were unfamiliar with coastal fishing and seafaring. Sporadically they came to the shores, mainly to sell their forest produce and to obtain human heads, which they needed for their festivities and rituals.

Except for some sporadic settlements of Bugis, Butonese and Bajo traders and shipbuilders in river estuaries, the coasts of Southeast Sulawesi were empty and uninhabited. These Bugis and Butonese traders were Muslim, at least nominally, which was also the case with the vast majority of the population of Buton and Muna islands located off the south and southeast coasts of mainland Southeast Sulawesi. Through these coastal settlements Islam was

⁵ Van Schie 2003:111-147.

slowly gaining some following among the indigenous population, especially among the ruling elite.

*The Catholic mission in Southeast Sulawesi, the first attempt in 1885–1887:
the Bay of Kendari*

Dutch colonial involvement with the mainland intensified towards the end of the nineteenth century. Several expeditionary forces penetrated the hinterland without meeting any opposition. The government was of the opinion that the much-desired political stability in the region and the development of its population was (as everywhere else in its colonies) best served by establishing Protestant Christianity. To further its goals it approached the Board of the *Protestantse Kerk in Nederlands-Indië* (PKNI) in Batavia. This church however declined the invitation, whereupon the government turned to the Roman Catholic Apostolic Vicar at Batavia requesting him to send a priest to the area. Eager to re-establish its presence in as many places as possible in eastern Indonesia after having been absent for about three centuries, this church responded in a much more positive way (1882).⁶

As a result in October 1885 a Jesuit missionary opened a *statie* (RC mission post) on the shore of the Bay of Kendari on the east coast of the peninsula. His name was Franciscus Voogel and he was accompanied by Abdoel Kadir, a Roman Catholic civil servant from Makassar. Although Voogel and Kadir received a rather hostile reception from the local population, they built a school, which was attended by four, later twelve children. The first teacher was a Muslim from Makassar, whereas the children were without exception recruited from the nearby Bugis and Bajo communities. No Tolaki children attended the school.

Voogel had several children live in his house, some of whom were baptised in September 1886. The first two adults who were baptised half a year later belonged to the Bajo community. He tried to make contact with the Tolaki population by acting as an intermediary between them and Bugis, Bajo and Chinese merchants in Kolaka and Kendari. Although initially these efforts met with some success, after a time there grew some resistance to his presence, especially from the Bugis merchants who feared his competition and influence on the indigenous population. As a result Voogel had to abandon his missionary efforts and leave the area (Sept. 1887).⁷

⁶ Kees de Jong 2002.

⁷ Muskens 1972-II:156–158; Van der Velden 1908:204–207; *Koloniaal verslag* 1888:18.

*The Catholic mission in Southeast Sulawesi, the second attempt:
Muna after 1929*

In 1929 the mission made a second attempt to gain a foothold in Southeast Sulawesi. A missionary of the MSC, Pastoor J. Spelz, set up a base in Raha, a coastal village on the island of Muna, located several miles south of the mainland of Southeast Sulawesi, and from that year on the activities of the Catholic mission in this region were restricted to this island. In 1932 a second missionary joined him. The relationship of the mission at Raha with the local Protestant church, which was established in 1919, was uneasy from the start. A few years later (1937) the Congregation of the Sacred Heart was replaced by the Congregation of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, CICM: the Scheut Missions (a Belgian Order).⁸

In 1930 the government hospital at Raha was entrusted to the Sisters of the Society of Jesus, Maria, Josef (JMJ), who not only provided medical care but also opened a boarding house (*asrama*) for girls and women and trained them in domestic duties and child-care. Most members of the small Catholic flock were Chinese shopkeepers, or Filipinos who had come as divers for pearls. Right from the start the mission opened several primary schools at Raha, which attracted some pupils. Among the wider indigenous Muna population however the results of the work of the mission were extremely poor. A handful of proselytes were made among the Moronene community on Muna, but all efforts to set up mission-posts on Buton or the mainland met with failure. The Moronene group of Lamanu, Muna, originated from mainland Southeast Sulawesi and remained distinct from the general population of Muna. Their chief, Simon Badaru, had migrated with his clan to Muna after a conflict in mainland Southeast Sulawesi. On 15 February 1932 this chief with members of his clan was baptised. They were the first group of more or less 'local' Catholics on Muna. Another small group that accepted Catholicism in the mid-1930s were a non-Muslim indigenous clan in the region of South Muna, Wale-Ale and Lolibu.

The first contact here started with pupils of the mission school, but a breakthrough came after a miraculous event in October 1940. In the beginning of that month one of the local leaders, La Dee, was severely wounded by a water buffalo. His son stayed at that time in the parish house in Raha. When this boy heard the news he came to Wale-Ale together with a doctor and the priest. They brought La Dee to the Raha hospital where sister Joseph nursed him and asked him whether he wanted to be baptised. Under the condition

⁸ For this section see Kees de Jong 2002:92–106.

that he would be buried in Wale-Ale, this man was baptised as Lambertus La Dee on 15 October 1940. A few days later he died and was buried with a Catholic ritual in Wale-Ale. For the pagan population it was a curious but impressive ceremony. During this burial ceremony a water buffalo turned up from the bushes. While all the people ran away, the water buffalo came to a standstill in front of the grave and bowed his head. After that he disappeared. The conversion of La Dee and the events at the burial motivated some of the inhabitants of Wale-Ale to become Catholic. Between 1 July 1941 and the beginning of the Japanese occupation in April 1942, 120 people were baptised in Wale-Ale.

During World War II all activities of the Catholic mission on Muna came to a standstill as far as the Europeans were concerned. A local chief, G. La Mboki, led regular Sunday services for the small Catholic community. There was even some growth in this period. La Mboki (c. 1922–1996) was, notwithstanding his youth, a powerful and charismatic leader. In 1953 he moved to the village of Lolibu, where he started a Catholic community that already counted 1,695 members in 1965.

In the early 1960s the young Belgian Scheut missionary M. Mingneau started an agricultural project in Lakapera, located between Lolibu and Wale-Ale. The marshland of this region was drained and all families received 2 hectares. The families started the production of cashew nuts, which was extremely successful and gave them some prosperity. In 1984 another group of Catholics started a local migration project in La Tompa in North Buton. The various small but very devout and strongly committed Catholic communities of Muna have provided a relatively large number of candidates for the religious ministry (like their Protestant counterpart in Salayar) to the Christians of Makassar and the related region. In Muna the Catholics counted in 2001 some 4,000 from a total population of 200,000; still a very small minority, as in most parts of this region.

During the decades of development aid, the Scheut order sent in 1958 the priest and medical doctor C. Lemmens to Muna. After Southeast Sulawesi had become a province of its own in 1964, Lemmens was asked to become the director of the new government hospital in the capital, Kendari, notwithstanding the overwhelming Muslim majority in this region. Lemmens also brought JMJ Sisters to the town that opened a maternity clinic that finally became a true Catholic hospital, more or less in rivalry with the government hospital where he was director.

The linguistic scholar René van den Berg worked out a more or less classical triptych in the last decades of the twentieth century. In 1989 he published a grammar of the Muna language, in 1996 a Muna-English Dictionary was ready and since then the translation of the Bible in Muna is under way.

The Protestant Church of the Indies in pre-war Southeast Sulawesi

The Protestant Church (*Indische Kerk*) entered mainland Southeast Sulawesi via the island of Buton. As a result of the expanding colonial rule the number of predominantly Protestant civil servants and military personnel grew rapidly, especially after 1906 when the pacification of Southeast Sulawesi was intensified.

Until the outbreak of World War II in Southeast Sulawesi there existed four congregations of the Protestant Church, in Kendari and Kolaka on the mainland, in Bau-Bau on Buton (1940: 150 members), and in Raha in the neighbouring island of Muna. As these congregations were generally small, they never had their own ordained minister. Except for Muna (1940: 270 members) which was too difficult to reach, these congregations were visited once or twice a year by an assistant minister or minister from Makassar, under whose ecclesiastical jurisdiction they fell. But usually a member of the local church council, who also took charge of the other congregational duties, led Sunday services. Occasionally missionaries of the Dutch Missionary Society (NZV), who started to work among the indigenous population in 1916, ministered to the Protestant congregations at Kendari and Kolaka.

On the eve of the Japanese invasion in 1942 the number of members of the Protestant Church of the Indies in Southeast Sulawesi, both on the mainland and on the islands, totalled about 700. The vast majority of these were civil servants or employees of several companies who originated from other parts of the archipelago, mostly the Moluccas, Timor, and North Sulawesi and adjacent islands.

It wasn't until the 1930s that these Protestant congregations had their own trained pastors. The Protestant congregations that grew fastest were those in Kolaka and Pomala'a on the west coast of the mainland. This was the result of the establishment of a mining company among whose work force were a number of Protestants. A considerable influx of new members also occurred at Kendari following the building of an airfield in the late thirties. Apart from the ill-fated initiative of the mission-minded Protestant minister in Makassar, R.W.F. Kyftenbelt, who at the request of a local government official early in the second decade of the twentieth century established two schools for Tolaki children, the Protestant Church was not involved in any missionary work among the indigenous population and no Tolaki or Tomoronene joined the Protestant Church. The task of approaching them was left to the mission.

*The Protestant mission in Southeast Sulawesi:
the Nederlandsche Zendingsvereeniging*

By the second half of the nineteenth century Islam had gained a foothold among the Tolaki and Tomoronene by way of the contacts of the latter with Bugis and Butonese merchants. As a result Islam quickly became the religion of the elite. Their conversion was greatly facilitated by the fact that it put no restrictions on their role in traditional religion. In contrast, Protestant Christianity, as far as it has been introduced by the *Nederlandsche Zendingsvereeniging* (Dutch Missionary Society, NZV), found its adherents mainly among the lower half of society, the *ata*. As it introduced western education and medical care and put severe restrictions on participation in local society as far as it was governed by traditional religion and adat, its influence on indigenous society was far more unsettling than that of Islam.

The first missionary to arrive was Hendrik van der Klift (1916). At first he settled in Kolaka, but after some time he moved to Mowewe (1919), a tiny village east of Kolaka, where he lived in humble circumstances until World War II. He was followed by five other missionaries, all Dutch men in their twenties, who were accompanied by their families. Just like Van der Klift, they took up their abode in small and remote villages in the hinterland, far away from the centres of commerce and colonial government. In these villages Islam had not yet penetrated.

At first their missionary work was concentrated in their own households where they held short daily services. Their domestic staff and one or two curious neighbours, and occasionally a village head attended these. In some places these *kumpulan rumah tangga* gradually gained momentum and over the years developed into local churches.

On horseback and on foot the missionaries visited villages in their allotted areas. They held religious meetings, gave advice on agricultural matters and opened several schools and small health care centres. They visited each other, kept an eye on the growing number of indigenous schoolteachers and lay preachers, baptised converts, concluded marriages, celebrated Holy Supper, oversaw the building of churches and schools. If necessary they called on the colonial government to intervene when conflicts arose. In their teachings they combined Reformed theology with the practical application of biblical commandments and wisdom. Some tried to bridge the gap between Christianity and traditional religion not by any sort of latitudinarianism but by means of substitution: they maintained that the rules regarding the true and lasting worship of their most important "ancestor" (Jesus Christ) were only to be found in the Bible, not with the pagan village heads or adat chiefs. The purpose was to find a way of gaining the confidence of the local population while at the same time holding on to their original purpose: spreading Reformed Christianity.

The first Tolaki ever to be baptised was Petroes Wongga (1917), who belonged to Van der Kliff's household staff. Although the work of the mission was often made complicated by the semi-nomadic lifestyle of the population, others followed and in 1924 there were 110 baptised Tolaki and Tomoronene, living in several parts of Southeast Sulawesi. On the eve of World War II, the number of Christians in the NZV mission had risen to a little over 3,000. At that time, on mainland Southeast Sulawesi there existed a missionary infrastructure which consisted of a gradually expanding number of mission posts, schools (1938: 16 schools with 1,049 pupils), health care centres and fledgling congregations—of which Mowewe was not only the largest, but also the most prestigious because it was the oldest—which were visited on a regular basis by the missionaries. In 1927 a teacher-training course was opened in Mowewe.

On 24 January 1942 the Japanese landed near Kendari. On the first day the very able missionary M.J. Gouweloos and a number of indigenous officials, Christians, were killed. The missionaries had not transferred the possessions of the mission to the indigenous congregations; everything, including church buildings, was confiscated by the Japanese as enemy property, and much was destroyed. The missionaries had not ordained Indonesians either, so that during the war the sacraments could not be administered. During the next years, evangelists, who even managed to hold some meetings and divide the work between them, led the Christian community. In January 1944 they went to Makassar to seek support from Miyahira. As a result, the *Minseibu* Office of Religious Affairs recognised the Christian community of Southeast Sulawesi as a church, gave it a rudimentary organisation, and promised financial help. However, when the delegates had returned, the Japanese military did not heed the agreement reached in Makassar. They simply prohibited the Christians from holding church services. As the church leaders ignored this prohibition, they were threatened with the death penalty. Two weeks later the war was over.

The end of the war did not bring peace. In November 1945 a rebellion, in which a number of local Christians participated, broke out against the returning Dutch government. Only during the next year could a number of missionaries establish themselves. In 1946–1947 a number of evangelists and teacher-preachers were ordained. But then the members of the team travelling around to prepare the first synod were murdered by Muslim rebels (1950), who continued to destabilise the region and harass the Christian population for years. The foreign missionaries had to leave the region (1951–1953). Only in 1957 had the situation stabilised sufficiently for the church to constitute itself as the *Gereja Protestan Sulawesi Tenggara* (Protestant Church of Southeast Sulawesi, Gepsultra). However, until 1965 the rebels of Kahar Muzakkar remained active in the region. In 1958 they burnt down the church office in the Christian village of Lambuia, together with the whole village; other settlements were also attacked and burned. The impoverishment and isolation

of the church was such that until 1970 all internal discussions and divisions were to do with the use of and control over the little aid that reached the church from outside. In 1970 the seventh synod of the Gepsultra decided on a reorganisation. From that time on the church settled on a new course, which brought slow but sustained growth. In 2001 its membership was 25,000. Part of the growth came from Christian migrants, as the Indonesian government had designated Southeast Sulawesi as a transmigration area.

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CHAPTER TWELVE

KALIMANTAN OR INDONESIAN BORNEO

Borneo is, after New Guinea, the largest island of the Indo-Malayan archipelago and together with the somewhat larger Greenland these are the largest islands of the world. Kalimantan, the Indonesian section of the island of Borneo, covers two thirds of this giant territory. It is five times the size of Java, but in 2003 Java counted 130 million inhabitants while Kalimantan only had 11 million. Therefore it was for a long time considered to be under-populated. That was the reason why the Soeharto government, between 1967 and 1998, intensified earlier programmes of transmigration, resettling poor farmers from Java, Bali and Madura on small pieces of land. In combination with the large-scale deforestation, for the export of tropical wood and for the new rubber and oil-palm plantations, this programme has caused a tremendous change in the landscape of the island that is much less fertile than its smaller southern neighbour, Java.

The native population of Kalimantan is divided into Malay people and people of many tribes, commonly summarised under the name of Dayak. This is also a religious division. Muslim influence arrived in the major harbours from the fifteenth century and extended upstream along the large rivers. Accepting Islam was identical with the turn towards Malay language and culture and this is also the common expression for accepting Islam (*masuk Malayu* or 'entering Malayness'). The most important sultanates were from the Northeast to the South and then to the Northwest:

1. Kutai, the more traditional old town, with a weak Sultan residing in Tenggarong, some 30 km upriver from Samarinda. This sultan was, about 1900, the richest man of Kalimantan, due to his revenues from coal and oil, found in southern Balikpapan. After the Catholics had founded a mission post in Laham in 1907 he protested for some time, but he ceded the whole Upper Mahakam territory to the Dutch for NGL 12,990 extra income per year 'for the Sultan and the Rulers of his Realm.' Samarinda, the sea harbour on the river Mahakam and the more southern town of Balikpapan were basically European-Chinese settlements in this region. The museum in Tenggarong still bears the name of King Mulawarman, the Hindu ruler who is mentioned in a Kutei inscription, the oldest written document of Indonesia and probably dating about 400 CE.

2. The Sultanate of Banjarmasin was from about 1500 until its abolition in 1860 the most important religious and cultural centre in Kalimantan. It fostered a combination of Javanese and Malay traditions, including the shadow plays of the wayang. The so-called Banjarmasin War, basically an internal quarrel for succession within the sultan's dynasty, had started in 1859 with the murder of

two Protestant German missionaries. Mission activity was soon resumed in the upriver area, but the coastal region of Banjarmasin was labelled as 'fanatic Muslim' and until the 1930s no mission work in the Malay region was allowed.

3. The Pontianak sultanate was ruled by a family of Arab descent, with the charisma of the *sayyid*, descendants of the prophet. The al-Gadri dynasty that had ruled the region of the mighty Kapuas River since 1770 was quite pragmatic in its relations with the Dutch who more and more dominated the political life of the region. Pontianak is the city with the highest average Chinese ethnic population of Indonesia: about 30% in 2000.

4. The Sultanate of Sambas was outspokenly Islamic, but with mystical connections. Like the Pontianak rulers they claimed to be offspring of the prophet Muhammad and used the title of *sharif* to indicate this. They were in the nineteenth century active promoters of the Qadiriyyah brotherhood, but at the same time they were willing to cooperate with the colonial power. During the Japanese occupation the drastic measures of the foreign power in West Kalimantan were not restricted to the common people. All members of the Sultanate's family were beheaded in 1944, except one grandson.

There were some centres of Islamic learning in the 'Malay-Islamic zone' of Kalimantan, especially in the Banjarmasin region. Some 12 km north of Banjarmasin the village of Dalam Pagar, the former residence of Shaikh Arsyad al-Banjari, the famous early nineteenth-century saint, had been turned into the most frequently visited shrine of Kalimantan. Dalam Pagar was also the most impressive centre of Islamic learning of Kalimantan.¹ Sambas produced in the nineteenth century a famous teacher of the Naqshbandi brotherhood, who moved to Mecca where he taught in the last decades of that century. He is known as Shaikh Ahmad Khatib Sambas. The town had renowned religious administrators, who also taught Islamic law and mysticism. In the 1930s Shaykh Muhammad Basyuni 'Imrān of Sambas wrote a question to the Arab-Egyptian journal *al Manār*, "Why are the Muslims backward, and why are other nations so advanced?" This became the start of the well-known book by the Lebanese poet, journalist and polemicist Shakib Arslan, published in Arabic in 1351 H or 1932 CE that was published later in English translation as *Our Decline and its Causes*. Both the question and the answer may give some idea of the style of Malay Islam at the eve of independence.

Protestant and Catholic missionaries very seldom addressed the Malay Muslims of the coastal regions in relation to their religion. It was commonly taken for granted that it was impossible to hope for conversions and there are very rare cases of disputes or debates on religion. There was a continuing complaint among missionaries about the favoured position of Malay people. Also in West Kalimantan, where there were many non-Malay people especially in the middle and upper Kapuas region, there were no Dayak government

¹ Steenbrink 1984:91–100.

officials, no nurses, and no teachers outside the mission stations until 1947. Extending far upriver there were lower Malay rulers, dependent upon the Sultans of Pontianak and Sambas, who ruled from the trading stations along the river. They could, without protest, demand forced and unpaid labour from the Dayak, use their land for rubber plantations and urge them to embrace Islam. In the missionary circles the Dayak were considered as people without defence who could easily be exploited by the Malay.²

Comparative statistics of Muslims and Christians in Kalimantan³

	East Kal.	South Kal.	Central Kal.	West Kal.	Total
Muslims 1971	500,726 68.44%	1,635,146 96.24%	383,793 54.68%	862,723 42.7%	3,382,388 (out of 5,152,571) 65.65%
Muslims 2000	2,077,428 85.02%	2,888,001 97.05%	1,335,290 74.14%	2,151,056 57.62%	8,451,775 (out of 10,953,004) 77.16%
Christians 1971	124,825 17.06%	22,335 0.26%	114,523 16.32%	361,928 17.92%	623,611 12.10%
Christians 2000	338,015 13.83%	43,649 1.47%	311,924 17.32%	1,269,553 34.01%	1,963,141 17.92%

These statistics show the enormous differences between regions. While South Kalimantan is one of the most homogeneous Muslim provinces in Indonesia (more or less equalling provinces like West Sumatra or Southeast Sulawesi), Central and West Kalimantan show many more Christians. The overall picture, however, would become more visible if we would look at Kalimantan as a circle with the outer segments (the more densely populated coastal regions) as the Muslim dominated part, while the inner circles, the less densely populated inner regions, upriver and more mountainous, show a much stronger Christian presence. However, even in these regions the Muslims dominated the commercial settlements and small towns since the early twentieth century, and therefore there are no dominant Christian districts or regions in Kalimantan, as were created in the twentieth century in Flores, Timor, Sulawesi and Sumatra.

There were many Chinese migrants to Kalimantan, especially to the Western districts. The Chinese came from the mid-eighteenth century for work in the gold mining area north of Pontianak. They formed *kongsis* to share their work

² Examples in Van Hulten 1983-I:125-135.

³ After Suryadinata et alii 2003:108-138.

and profits. Through combination of larger *kongsis* they could live for a long period completely independent from the sultans' authority. Also under Dutch colonial rule (after 1819) they could live under Chinese officers, who were little more than tax collectors. After the gold sites were exhausted in the first half of the nineteenth century, there were numerous small wars between the *kongsis* until they were disbanded. In the twentieth century a new wave of Chinese migration started, concentrating on rubber plantations and trade. In 2000 West Kalimantan was, after Bangka-Belitung (11.54% ethnic Chinese), the province with the highest percentage of ethnic Chinese: 9.46%. This is also shown in the religious statistics for West Kalimantan: 6.41% Buddhists in 2000 (239,408), while the figures for the rest of Kalimantan were all below 1% in that year (0.13% in Central Kalimantan).⁴ In the 1971 government statistics there were only 3,811 Buddhists counted in West Kalimantan, but these were balanced by the high figure for Confucians in that year: 132,974 or 6.58%. In the 2000 census Confucianism could no longer be registered as religion. Therefore we should consider the high figure for Confucianism in 1971 and for Buddhism in 2000 as the indication for those ethnic Chinese who had not opted for Christianity or (in much smaller numbers) for Islam.

In the 2000 census the figures for Hinduism were generally very low in Kalimantan: West Kalimantan 0.21%, East Kalimantan 0.27% and South Kalimantan 0.46, but they reached 7.87% in Central Kalimantan (against a meagre 0.87% in 1971).⁵ This relatively high figure for Hinduism in Central Kalimantan can be explained only in very small part as a sign of the migration of Balinese farmers to this province. Rather, it must be seen as the continuation or even revival of traditional Dayak religion. After the island of Bali (with 87.44% Hindus) Central Kalimantan is by far the region with the highest percentage of Hindus, according to the official register of affiliations, followed by Central Sulawesi (3.84%), and Southeast Sulawesi (2.21%), and West Nusa Tenggara (the Balinese of Lombok: 2.66%). This is another unique feature of religious development in Kalimantan. Traditional religion could survive longer, was stronger and more persistent than anywhere else in the archipelago. Why? Was it a stronger sense of traditional religious identity that prevented the quite common schedule of a race between Islam and Christianity, and traditional communities opting for one of the two only? Was there a growing Dayak resistance against Islam and Malay identity, while Christianity could not give a satisfying answer to the new needs of the Dayak population? Was it a matter of some powerful and charismatic individual persons who created a viable alternative? The introduction to this section of the history of

⁴ Suryadinata 2003:126.

⁵ Suryadinata 2003:122.

Christianity is not the place to go deeply into these questions. We only want to stress that the creation of Kaharingan as a religious identity of its own (albeit under Indonesian law as a sect or special tradition within the global religion of Hinduism) is a quite exceptional development in Indonesian religious life during the last five decades. It began in late 1956 when Ngaju Dayaks started a rebellion against the Muslim and Banjarese domination of the Province of South Kalimantan within the new Indonesian Republic. M. Mahar and Tjilik Riwut led this rebellion that took the name of *Gerakan Mandau Talawang Pancasila* or “Movement of the Cutlass and Shield Pro Pancasila.” The latter was baptised a Protestant in the 1920s, turned Catholic in relation to his marriage in Central Java in the 1940s. In the 1950s he became the ‘Prophet of Kaharingan.’ The rebellion succeeded in the establishment of a separate province of Central Kalimantan that had been formally declared already in May 1957. Riwut, a major in the Indonesian army who had had a quite important role in the fight against the Dutch for Central Kalimantan in 1946⁶ became the first governor of the new province and he immediately re-allocated the money that had been donated by the central Ministry of Religion for the building of a mosque in the new capital, Palangkaraya. Instead of building a grand mosque, he took the initiative of constructing a modest mosque, a Protestant church and a shrine for the traditional religion.

Dayak people had no specific word for religion, let alone for Dayak religion as distinct from other religions, but in the mid-1940s already a new term for Dayak religiosity had come into use as an alternative for derogatory words like paganism or heathendom. This was *Kaharingan* meaning life in the double connotation of the source of (the water of) life and the Supreme Deity who with his wife had created the world. In various forms this name Kaharingan became known among different tribes from South Kalimantan up to North Borneo (Sabah). In 1980 Kaharingan became officially recognised as a branch of Hinduism and it had a modest but quite solid development especially in Central Kalimantan.

In 1955 one Koik produced a booklet with texts and rituals that he proudly gave the title *Bibel Kaharingan*. A Dayak political party distributed the booklet.⁷ In the early 1970s a *Majelis Alim Ulama Kaharingan Indonesia* (MAUKI, Council of Religious Teachers of Indonesian Kaharingan) was established, renamed *Majelis Besar Agama Hindu Kaharingan* or MBAHK, Supreme Council of Hindu Kaharingan Religion, after the official recognition of 1980. In the ceremony that was held at the major shrine, the Balai Kaharingan of Palangkaraya, on 30 March 1980, to highlight this recognition,

⁶ Van Dijk 1981:220.

⁷ Miles 1976:127.

the Director General for Hindu Affairs of the Ministry of Religion, Ida Bagus Oka Puniatmadja referred to the discovery of ancient Hindu relics in Kutei and concluded that it was entirely possible that the adherents of Kaharingan were in fact the oldest followers of Hinduism in the archipelago.⁸ In the 1970s MAUKI published a number of texts on the creation myth, prayer books, a guideline for performing marriage and one for burials, besides some other topics. Many of these texts were collected in 1973 in the *Buku Ajar Agama Kaharingan* (Book of Instruction in the Kaharingan Religion) that was a major step towards institutionalisation of the Kaharingan religion. In 1995 it was revised by MBAHK as *Talata Basarah*, after the weekly public ceremony of Basarah that was instituted in 1981 on Thursday evening, undoubtedly after the example of weekly common prayers by Muslims on Friday and by Christians on Sunday.⁹ One of the major activities of the MBAHK is the design and organisation of the great rituals for the final burial of people. Because of the great costs and the many people involved, sometimes up to 2,000 dead receive their final ritual or *tiwah* in one extended ceremony. People from several Dayak tribes of South and Central Kalimantan can be served in these ceremonies that show in this way a unified 'Dayak religion.' As in similar great funeral ceremonies in the Toraja and Batak regions, there is also active participation at a *tiwah*-ceremony by Christian and some Muslim members of the community. This already shows that "most of those who call themselves Christians have dual religious adherence."¹⁰ As is shown by Douglas Miles, Islamic principles are more strict and exclusive than Christian ones and therefore "Islam and Kaharingan are fundamentally irreconcilable as social ideologies."¹¹ This has led to a great number of people practising double or even multiple loyalties. The tension and its solution are probably best formulated in a quotation from an elder Dayak, "Religion or *agama* honours God; our traditional beliefs or *kepercayaan* honour our ancestors."¹²

It was against this background that the Capuchin Friar Donatus Dunselman (born 1901 and in the Kalimantan mission since 1933) reflected upon the encounter between Dayak people and Western Christianity. Dunselman was in a Japanese prison between mid-1942 and late August 1945. Dunselman was a keen observer of the language and culture of the Mualang Dayak of Sejiram and the Middle Kapuas region. On the religious practice of these people he stated that Dayak religion was not a static and 'pure' practice, but a living and often quite syncretistic view of life:

⁸ Schiller 1997:119.

⁹ Schiller 1997:122–123.

¹⁰ Miles 1976:98.

¹¹ Miles 1976:99.

¹² In Davidson 2003:6.

Some Dayak Christian families still put their daily food on copper plates that before were used for pagan sacrifices. They use the configuration that was used by pagan priests. We are requested to say a *benedictio mensae*, a table blessing over this food as a substitute for the pagan prayer. In the beginning of my work in Kalimantan, I often obeyed these requests, especially with people who had started catechism classes. Sometimes I took the red, Chinese joss sticks out of the plates: the Dayak is fond of syncretism.¹³

Besides the great funeral ceremonies, Kaharingan continues a set of taboos, rules, small rituals at home, known under the common name of *hadat* or tradition, customs. For some of these the ritual specialists, the *basir*, are needed, because they are familiar with the ritual language and the ceremonies.

This is the cultural, ethnic and religious environment that has set the conditions for the arrival of Christianity since the nineteenth century: starting not from the coastal regions, as was the case with Islam, but from the upriver towns of the inland territories of this vast island. Christianity was part of a process of change that had started already several centuries before, with the arrival of Muslims in the coastal settlements. Initially, Christianity came also in confrontation with traditional society and religion, but gradually moved towards a more harmonious relationship with Dayak culture and, as we will see below, sometimes functioning even as a firm consolidator of elements of traditional Dayak culture.

German missionaries starting from Banjarmasin in the 1830s

Apart from the Catholic priest Antonio Ventimiglia who will be mentioned below, there was no Christian presence in southern Kalimantan until the 1830s, when the first missionaries of the Rhenish Mission arrived. The *Rheinische Missionsgesellschaft* (RMG) was established in Barmen in 1828. Their mission magazine published in 1830 a lively description by Walter Henry Medhurst who visited West Kalimantan and Banjarmasin in 1829. The mission leadership received further information from a retired Dutch colonial official in the Rhine region and in 1834 sent two German missionaries to the Dutch colony. The colonial administration was not really happy with the foreign missionaries and only in 1836 were they given permission to start their work in Banjarmasin. Between 1834 and 1859 the RMG could send 20 missionaries to the region but many of them died within a few years and there were, until the beginning of the Hidayat Rebellion, never more than 7 missionaries working in the region. Their solid organiser was J.H. Barnstein who from 1836 until

¹³ "In het begin heb ik dit dikwijls gedaan, vooral bij jonge catechumenen, al heb ik ook eens de rode, Chinese wierookstokjes eruit getrokken; de Dajak is nl. tot syncretisme geneigd." Dunselman 1949:101.

his death in 1863 served the small European congregation of Banjarmasin, managed the sending of food and other necessities to the inland stations and also printed the pamphlets that were the major means of propagation of the Christian faith.

The RMG missionaries realised that they could not secure a harvest in Muslim dominated Banjarmasin but had to go as far as possible inland, “to win the race with Islam.”¹⁴ In 1838 the first mission post was built in Bethabara, 40 km inland along the Kapuas. Later posts were started even further inland. In the early 1850s a post in Maanyan, 300 km inland along the other major river, the Barito, could be opened.

There were two gifted linguists among the early German missionaries. Johann Friedrich Becker was among the first missionaries arriving in Kalimantan in 1836. He translated the first selection from the Gospels and Acts into Ngaju Dayak. After 1843 he was assisted by August Hardeland who had learned some Greek in Germany. In 1846 they were able to publish a full translation of the New Testament (printed in Cape Town, South Africa). Becker died in 1849 and Hardeland continued the linguistic work. In 1855 he finished the translation of the Old Testament, a work that still was in use in the Evangelical Church of Kalimantan (GKE, *Gereja Kalimantan Evangelis*) until the end of the twentieth century. Only in 1999 were a new translation of the New Testament, and in 2004 of the Old Testament, published. Hardeman also wrote a grammar of Ngaju Dayak. He used colloquial speech and not the complicated ceremonial language used during the rituals of traditional Dayak religion. In line with the spirit of the time he had little respect for that aspect of Dayak society.¹⁵

The early missionaries had one peculiar method: buying slaves who thereby gained their freedom. In the period 1836–1859 not less than 1,100 were bought. This method was also applied in other regions but never on such a large scale. The missionaries brought considerable sums of money for this purpose from Germany. However, there was no direct or explicit compulsion to accept Christianity. In 1859 the number of baptised converts was only 261.

In 1859 the Banjarmasin War or Hidayat Rebellion took place. This was the attempt of Prince Hidayat to become the successor to the throne of the sultanate instead of his half-brother Tamjidullah, the candidate of the colonial administration. As part of the violence that accompanied this trouble several colonial buildings, a coal-mining establishment and also several mission posts were attacked. Four missionaries and several members of their families were killed. A number of Christians had to renounce their new faith, because they

¹⁴ Müller-Krüger 1968:177.

¹⁵ Swellengrebel 1974:97–111.

were identified with the foreign power. Only the chief of the Maanyan tribe defended the missionaries in his region. But they left the area also and the initial work was considered to be lost. The Dutch abolished the sultanate and the region was placed under direct military control.

*The reactivation of the Rhenish Mission in 1866 from South Kalimantan.
The GKE, Gereja Kalimantan Evangelis since 1935*

Only in 1866 could missionaries return to South Kalimantan. Initially, they were not allowed to stay in isolated mission posts, far inland. They had to remain close to the military barracks. The missionaries of the RMG in Kalimantan worked along the same method and with similar personal and financial resources as their RMG colleagues in Batakland. But the results were quite different. Notwithstanding a large network of mission stations and schools, in 1911 the number of baptised had risen to 3,000 and in 1935 only 10,000 had accepted Protestant Christianity in South Kalimantan against 100,000 Batak Christians in 1911. In that same period the influence of Islam had grown probably much faster than that of Christianity. As a reason for the rather meagre results in this region, the first Dayak Christian historian, Fridolin Ukur, has suggested the very weak social structure of the Dayak people. There was no central power, not geographically and not along tribal lines. No king or tribal chief could be converted who could have taken the lead in a mass conversion. Dayak tradition was strongly supported by chiefs of clans, heads of family and the religious ritual specialists, the *balian*. Their influence continued in Dayak society. Although their services were rather expensive (and therefore Christianity was, like Islam, cheaper than traditional religion), converts could no longer continue their traditional religious duties and therefore were expelled from their families or at least at major ceremonies considered as outcasts. Muslims therefore built new villages, but Christians mostly tried to seek compromises. Although Christianity was seen to be in line with modernity and also supported by the hygienic measures of the colonial government, such as the ban on great longhouses for extended families, growth remained very modest. Some scholars blame the exclusive attitude of Christian ministers with regard to local customs for this meagre result, stating that Islam showed a much more lenient attitude.¹⁶ Others, however, claim that the firm position of Islam against alcohol and pork in fact has given it more strength in winning souls. Douglas Miles saw a dual religious adherence on the part of

¹⁶ Van den End 1989:168.

many Christians, few of whom ceased to participate in pagan rites, "Islamic principles... obstruct a convert's regression to traditional custom."¹⁷

After World War I, the RMG could no longer guarantee support for mission work in the region and between 1921 and 1926 the like-minded Basel Mission took over the responsibility for their activities. They led the small community to an independent church in 1935. It was spread over a wide territory: along a coastline of some 1,300 km (from Banjarmasin to Kota Waringin) and more than 600 km inland. This was an area with very difficult connections where most posts could be reached only by canoe or by walking. In 1902 a modest seminary for native preachers was opened in Kuala Kapuas, since 1926 developed as a seminary in Banjarmasin. In 1935 the first five ministers were ordained in the *Gereja Dajak Evangelis* as it was called until 1950, when the tribal designation was dropped for a territorial indication, *Gereja Kalimantan Evangelis* or Evangelical Church of Kalimantan. Nine more followed these first native ministers in 1937. Until 1942 an expatriate missionary was the leader of the synod, but already during the Japanese period leadership became fully Dayak.

The GKE that grew to some 260,000 members in 2005 became after 1945 more and more a part of Indonesian Protestantism. In 1950 already a Javanese and a Batak became members of its synod and because Kalimantan has more and more become an area of migration, many other ethnic groups have filled its membership. Although the GKE is numerically weak in South Kalimantan, Banjarmasin remained the seat of the synod and the theological school. Medical work shrunk drastically after independence and also in the field of education the great efforts of the colonial period could not be continued in the same grand style. The GKE, however, became more active in the field of agricultural development through pilot projects, training courses and credit unions.

In Pontianak members who had migrated from southern Kalimantan founded the GKE in 1963, lead by E.D. Tundang, head of the Government Plantation Office of West Kalimantan. He established a branch office of the GKE Synod for that region. Among the first four evangelists we find a Batak, J.P. Hasibuan who lead the GKE members in Singkawang and a Javanese Wibisono, who was the central figure for GKE in Bagok. This showed the development of this Dayak church towards an ethnically mixed Protestant church in Kalimantan. Although other national Protestant churches like the (Chinese) GKI and the GPIB (heir to the *Indische Kerk*) are also established in Kalimantan, finally the GKE became the major Protestant church in the whole of Kalimantan.

¹⁷ Douglas Miles 1976:98–99.

The most important congregations of the GKE are still those in the southern part of the island, in the new province of Central Kalimantan. In its new capital Palangkaraya the GKE established in 1985 its most prestigious institution, the *Universitas Kristen Palangkaraya*. In line with its mission for this region the first two faculties were for fishery and cattle breeding. A training course for teachers of religion was also included in this university, besides a faculty of social science and a faculty of science.

The Catholic beginning in West-Kalimantan, and a modest start in some eastern districts

In February 1688 the Italian Theatine priest Antonio Ventimiglia paid a short visit to Banjarmasin. He returned the following year in the company of a few colleagues. It is reported that he died in 1693 and that this was the end of the first missionary effort in Kalimantan. Not much is known of his activity. It has been speculated that he worked among Dayak who were still independent from the authority of the Muslim Sultan of Banjarmasin. During conflicts between the Dayak tribe and the Sultan, Ventimiglia could have been killed by order of the Sultan.¹⁸ Prefect Lambertus Prinsen mentioned in a report of 1825 that there was in Borneo (Kalimantan) a region “where pagans venerate the cross and images of the saints, a proof of the presence of Catholicism in former days.”¹⁹ In line with this tradition his successor Johannes Scholten suggested in 1844 that the Dayak population was ready to be evangelised, “because they keep traditions that they consider of supernatural origin.” This may have been the reason why in the 1847 concordat between the Dutch government and the Vatican the island of Borneo/Kalimantan was mentioned as a possible mission area “but Catholic missionaries will not settle along rivers where already other missionaries are established.”²⁰

These great hopes did not lead to a Catholic initiative prior to the last decade of the nineteenth century. The first Catholic priests who started work outside Java made contacts with Catholic Chinese in Bangka and from there also Catholic Chinese were visited in West Kalimantan. During a visit to Singkawang in 1865, the Jesuit J. de Vries walked through the Chinese quarter of the town and came in contact with several Catholics of Chinese descent, one even with a certificate qualifying him as a catechist.²¹ More Chinese Catholics,

¹⁸ Coomans in: Muskens 1974–IIIA:399. Wessels 1935:220 after the Dutch traveller Jacob Jansz de Roy.

¹⁹ Steenbrink 2003–I:236: “*In insula Borneo est regio ubi ab infidelibus cruces et imagines Sanctorum venerantur, signum quod olim religio Catholica ibidem extiterit.*”

²⁰ Steenbrink 2003–I:250 and 256–257.

²¹ Boomgaard e.a. 1997:78.

probably already baptised in China, Penang or Sarawak before migrating to this region, were met at later visits of priests. In 1876 a church building was consecrated in Singkawang, served by a salaried catechist. In 1885 Singkawang was selected as the place for a permanent post for a resident priest who from this place had to serve other places in West Kalimantan. On these pastoral journeys the priest went as far as Bangka and even Medan. In some years the priest resided in Singkawang for only two months, leaving the routine work to the Chinese catechist. From Singkawang also an inland mission to the Dayak of Sejiram commenced in 1890. For this inland mission a Manadonese teacher was hired who started a school in 1892. Unfortunately, the West Kalimantan mission was one of the many new endeavours that had to be closed in the later 1890s, due to the lack of mission personnel. In 1896 the permanent station of Singkawang was closed, followed in 1898 by the inland mission of Sejiram. The statistics for 1903 mention 191 Chinese Catholics in Singkawang and other parts of West Kalimantan. The 467 baptisms of the inland Dayak mission of the 1890s were already left out of the statistics by that time.²²

In 1905 the Catholic mission enterprise was resumed with the arrival of the Capuchin Friars as successors to the Jesuits, who were retreating from the outer islands in the period 1903–1918 and concentrated their work on the island of Java. In the first decade of their new mission, the Capuchins (re-) developed eight permanent mission posts in West Kalimantan. Four of these concentrated on the Chinese of the coastal region: Singkawang (1905), Pamangkat (1907), Sambas (1908), and Pontianak (1909, also the seat of the Apostolic Prefect, because the centre of the government was there). Four focused upon the far interior and the Dayak population, Sejiram (1906), Laham (1907: not upstream on the Kapuas but starting from Samarinda upstream on the Mahakam), Lanjak (1909, in 1913 removed to Benua Martinus) and Putussibau (1913). Some of these posts like Lanjak and Putussibau were more than 1,000 km upriver along the Kapuas. From these stations the mission ‘moved back’ towards regions closer to the coast like Sanggau (1928) and Sintang (1932). The major reason for this ‘moving backward strategy’ was the desire to start in a pure Dayak area, to establish a solid mission among this population in the race with Islam for the interior.

The only mixed station, where both Chinese and Dayak were served, was Nyarumkop (1916). This latter settlement, a Dayak enclave amidst a large region with many ethnic Chinese, not far from Singkawang, was developed as the major educational centre for the West Kalimantan mission. It was to become the training centre for teachers (who in the first decades were sought from Minahasa and Flores). In some mission documents even the grandiose

²² Steenbrink, 2003–I:59–62 and 461.

word *schoolstad* or 'educational town' was used for the complex of dormitories, schools and houses for teachers, clergy and other religious personnel like the sisters. Education in Nyarumkop concentrated on Malay instruction and until 1939 the highest type of school was the extended five-year primary school or *Standaardschool*, an extension of the basic three-year primary school that was the lowest type of education in Indonesia at the time. There were also some vocational courses, in 1939 for some 13 boys in agriculture and 42 in carpentry and machine repair, for 78 girls in the household and domestic economics. Further education for the girls was planned in order to have some relatively well educated Catholic girls who had spent some times in the disciplined boarding school of the sisters, and who were to become wives of teachers and heads of villages. In all, the number of pupils was very modest, like anything in the Dayak mission previous to the explosion of conversions in the late 1960s.

Although the majority of pupils were Dayak, there was a small minority of Chinese pupils in Nyarumkop as well. They were educated to become catechists among their community and/or teacher at the nine Chinese-language primary schools that were established since the late 1920s. For the Chinese population initially only Dutch-Chinese schools and a single English-Chinese school were established.

Catholic Schools for Chinese in West Kalimantan in 1939 (after Jaarboek 1940)

	Schools	Boys	Girls	Total
Dutch-Chinese Schools	7	791	621	1412
English-Chinese Schools	1	200	76	276
Chinese language primary schools	9	526	247	773

As in other places, Catholic strategy towards the Chinese population concentrated on schools, most often on Dutch-language primary schools of the highest level available for this kind of population. Besides, there was a Saint Anthony's Hospital in Pontianak, served by the Veghel Sisters since 1921. The result of this was that the mission personnel, until the late 1930s, was quite unevenly divided over the Chinese and Dayak missions. In 1939 113 sisters of the 133 worked in the four stations Pontianak, Singkawang, Sambas and Pemangkat, serving mostly Chinese and European people. Of the 42 religious brothers 19 worked in Pontianak, 13 in Singkawang and one in Sambas leaving only 9 for the more specific Dayak stations. In 1939 the capital Pontianak counted 1,058 Catholics, 210 of them Europeans and the rest mostly Chinese: 8 priests, 19 religious brothers and 42 sisters served them. With the exception of six sisters

these were all Dutch. This is just one example of the great number of foreign mission personnel working in the major cities for the European and Chinese population of the colony. In Dayak territory much more work was delegated to Florenese, Manadonese and a growing number of Dayak teachers.

The quick opening of so many mission posts by the Capuchins was not only related to the rivalry with Islam. The early start of a permanent post in Pamangkat (1907) and Sambas (1908) was also related to the fear that Methodist missionaries, already present in Pontianak since 1906, but without a permit to work as missionaries because of the earlier presence the Catholics, would start a mission in these places. Besides an American missionary in Pontianak, C.M. Worthington, teaching English at a private Chinese school, there was a Chinese medical doctor from Penang, U Chim Seng, who had sent some twelve salesmen with medicines and small missionary tracts to work in the region. Notwithstanding protests from the Catholics, the Methodists received formal permission in 1908 from the Governor General to continue their mission. However, it would not yet be successful. In 1909 Worthington went on leave to the USA and after his return was nominated for Batavia, while U Chim Seng returned to China for health reasons. This was the end of this short Methodist mission that claimed some 210 members in Pontianak, Singkawang and Sambas in 1909.²³

As with the Methodists also among the Catholics, work among the Chinese was for a large part done by Chinese teachers and catechists. Some of the few who are mentioned in the mission documents that usually pay more attention to the Western missionaries deserve a place here. First is the *singseng* or catechist A. Kang in Singkawang who bridged the period between the Jesuit presence (until 1896) and the arrival of the Capuchin Friars in 1905 and still for many years since then. In cooperation with the Dutch *controleur*, Kang became in the early 1900s the coordinator of an effort by the Chinese of Singkawang to establish an asylum for Chinese lepers some 3 km outside the town. Different from the Malay and Dayak lepers, the Chinese could not live amongst their families. In 1909 the asylum had 16 lepers, half of whom turned Catholic. In 1912 a group of 19 lepers from Pontianak was also sent to the Singkawang asylum. In 1917 the Dutch Sister Cajetana, a nurse, started work in the small asylum that gradually developed into a well-equipped hospital for (mostly Chinese) people of the region suffering from leprosy.²⁴

Another noted Chinese Catholic of West Kalimantan in this early period is Bong Sjoen Khin. He was born in 1902 in Montrado, some 30 km. from Singkawang. He went to the Chinese primary school, set up by the mission. Priests regularly visited the town of Montrado from Singkawang. In 1926

²³ Daulay 1996:140–143.

²⁴ Aster 1957:194–207.

he expressed his wish to become a priest, went to the Netherlands where he pursued further religious studies and returned in 1934 to the Indies as the Capuchin Friar Pacificus Bong. He worked as a parish priest in Singkawang, but remained a very modest man. Amidst the quite informal Capuchin Friars, known for their joyful life-style, he was described by a Dutch observer as,

A small, quiet man with a soft voice and quiet manners. In company his presence was barely noticed, because he does not say much and only gives his opinion when asked for it. But then he would give it in short, but precise wording, identifying the matter in a touching way. Someone who knows how to listen, surprising everybody by his balanced wisdom free from emotions.²⁵

During the Japanese occupation the new ruling elite claimed all Catholic buildings, with the exception of the hospitals. Father Bong moved to a private house outside Singkawang with some of the nine Chinese sisters who were already in the Pontianak Vicariate by that time. Notwithstanding his quiet life-style and efforts to remain as invisible as possible, he was taken prisoner because of a statement by a Dayak teacher/catechist who had talked about his wish that the interned Dutch missionaries would return. It was a blessing in disguise because in this way he escaped the bloody terror of late 1944 that caused the death of some 1,400 prominent people in West Kalimantan.²⁶ Pacificus Bong died 11 October 1965 in Singkawang.

It is very difficult to estimate the percentage of Kalimantan Chinese that accepted Catholicism in the period between 1945 and 2000. Chinese were never dominant among the Catholics (as they became in dioceses like Jakarta with 45% of the Catholics or in Bandung with 49.9%). They are small in number in the Kalimantan region where they are the most significant minority group in the diocese of Pontianak. But here also the number of Chinese faithful among the Catholics is even lower than the provincial statistics show for the Chinese population as a whole. What are the reasons for this low figure of Chinese converts to Catholicism in regions with such a high Chinese presence? Is Chinese cultural and even religious identity in these regions (West Kalimantan, Bangka, Belitung and Riau Islands) stronger than in the big cities? Is Chinese Catholicism more an urban than a rural phenomenon? Was there not enough support for Chinese identity among Catholics? This is suggested by Somers Heidhues:

The Catholic Church has strongly supported Indonesianisation since the 1960s and discouraged exclusively Chinese activities. Although some parishes are, by reason of their location, still largely Chinese, the church does not desire ethnic separation, and the liturgy is in Indonesian or a regional language.²⁷

²⁵ The judgement by Capuchin Friar Gentilis Aster 1957:162.

²⁶ Aster 1957:162–172.

²⁷ Somers Heidhues 1998:166.

In some places in West Kalimantan where there is a Chinese majority in parishes, as in Pontianak, Singkawang, Pemangkat and Sambas, the liturgy is sometimes celebrated in one of the Chinese dialects, Hakka being the most favoured. It is quite striking that the most prominent national Catholic weekly of Indonesia devoted an article to this practice and had as comment, "Chinese inculturation in Kalimantan should be a temporary affair." The Capuchin scholar Huub Boelaars quoted this opinion with the comment, "Should Chinese be more strictly Indonesian than the other Indonesians?"²⁸ This matter will be discussed more in detail in chapter nineteen. To support the analysis given above we quote below the last reliable figures from 1980. Especially the figure for Chinese Catholics totalling some 9,102 for the whole of West Kalimantan against more than 300,000 ethnic Chinese in this province in 1980, is very meagre: not much more than 3% of the ethnic Chinese had formally embraced Catholicism.

*Kalimantan Catholics according to ethnic origin*²⁹

	Banjarmasin	Ketapang	Pontianak	Samarinda	Sanggau (then Sekadau)	Sintang
Dayak	16,429 69.0%	20,020 93.2%	103,250 90.4%	28,709 73.6%	31,200 95.3%	36,531 96.7%
Chinese	2,929 12.3%	752 3.5%	7,747 6.8%	1,521 3.9%	524 1.6%	831 2.2%
Javanese	3,548 14.9%	236 1.1%	2,468 2.1%	3,667 9.4%		
Florenese	381 or 1.6%					
Other	523 2.2%	473 2.2%	800 0.7%	3,940 10.1%	1,015 3.1%	416 1.1%

As already mentioned above, the new missionary initiative of the Capuchin Friars of 1905 had reopened the inland station of Sejiram in 1906, some 600 km upstream from Pontianak on the Kapuas and by 1913 already three more inland stations had been founded at even greater distance. One negative criterion for establishing these inland posts was that no Malay and no Chinese should be present. Therefore quite remote places were selected. There was the quest for the 'real Dayak' not yet influenced by the mighty tradition of Malay Islam. Perhaps we should add some reservations to the easy use of this terminology. In his two-volume autobiography Capuchin Friar Herman-Jozef

²⁸ Boelaars 1991:347.

²⁹ Boelaars 1991:420-423.

van Hulten, who served as a missionary in West Kalimantan from 1938 until 1974, noted that there was a great difference between various Dayak tribes. The Iban who were seen as mostly Sarawak Dayak but aggressively seeking land also in Dutch and later Indonesian Kalimantan, are described by Van Hulten as really cosmopolitan travellers. After clearing the forest in the beginning of the dry season, they left agriculture to the women and many of the men sought some money and adventure by working on boats. "Many of them are well-travelled persons. Quite a few of them have been in Jakarta, some even in Singapore."³⁰ Some of them could rise to important functions in Indonesian society, although many of them remained illiterate and poor.

The first post in the middle Kapuas region, Sejiram, in fact served for a long time as a link to the other stations. The small town itself was a mixed Malay-Chinese settlement for trade and administration. A church and school-cum-dormitory was opened and in 1927 a modest hospital. To finance this undertaking a rubber plantation was started that counted some 80,000 trees in the best period, the 1920s.

As a second post, Lanjak amidst the great lakes north of the upper Kapuas was selected in 1909 but there proved to be too few people to start even a school. In 1913 this settlement was moved to Benua Ujung, meaning "the most remote place," later renamed Benua Martinus after Martin van Thiel, the generous Dutch entrepreneur who provided the funds for this mission. The immediate reason for the move to Benua Martinus was the presence of some 16 Sarawak Dayak who fled their country because of a murder committed by one of them. They visited the station of Lanjak in 1909 to see whether the priests who had recently arrived there were of the same kind of Christians they had known in Sarawak. This contact was encouraging enough to stimulate a removal to what was later called Benua Martinus. A school with a dormitory was opened, because in the immediate region there were not enough children to establish a school. This would, for a long time, remain one of the great problems of the inland Dayak mission: the sparsely populated areas that made the classical mission method of starting village schools impossible. The need to add dormitories to a school and to provide food and living for the pupils who came from different places, made the mission very expensive and somewhat ineffective. Nevertheless, a school-cum-dormitory was started in Benua Martinus in 1916. The section for girls failed, although the Franciscan Sisters (Veghel branch, later from Asten) did their best to do well for their pupils. Not only priests and catechists, but also the sisters thereupon decided that touring the countryside was more effective than collecting pupils in schools. In 1938 the station of Benua Martinus, including the various outposts where

³⁰ Van Hulten 1983–I:33.

catechists worked, could claim only 520 baptised Catholics. This would grow to 5,612 in 1996.³¹ In the late 1990s there was a slight majority of somewhat more than 50% Muslims in the middle and upper Kapuas diocese of Sintang, with only 20% Catholics, a smaller number of Protestants and still quite a few people undecided or more firmly devoted to traditional religion.

The same pattern of efforts to establish strong Dayak centres with quite poor results for the first decades is also seen in the station of Putussibau (the government administrative centre in Upper Kapuas) and nearby Bika, transformed into *Rumah Nazareth* by the Capuchin Friars, as well as in Laham, the mission post in Upper Mahakam that was established from Samarinda and therefore is now considered to be part of East Kalimantan.

For the expansion in the Middle Kapuas Basin, the Catholic mission had to overcome several difficulties. The important administrative centre of Sanggau was under the jurisdiction of the *Panembahan* of Sanggau, a Muslim, formally subjected to the Sultan of Pontianak. In 1922 he prohibited the erection of a school by the Catholic mission, but after pressure from the Dutch *controleur* he donated land for a mission compound that would include a church, school, dormitory and a hospital. He sold a prosperous plantation with 12,000 rubber trees to the mission. Bika or Rumah Nazareth was erected because Putussibau was in fact, as an administrative and trading post, a common place for Malay and Chinese people, while the mission wanted to seek its strength in the presence among a purely Dayak population.

As already mentioned above, the station of Laham was opened in 1908 after the Sultan of Kutai had sold his authority over the upriver areas of the Mahakam to the Dutch colonial government. Laham was situated outside the traditional trade posts, just some 30 km inland from the administrative post of Long Iram that was deemed not suited because this administrative post was only populated by Malay and Chinese traders. Long Iram was still some 75 km below the great falls in the river Mahakam that caused a greater barrier in communications. It was hoped that this would be a good starting point for further activities in the interior. However, there were many impediments that caused a delay in the progress of the Catholics here. First, in the 1930s the *Christian and Missionary Alliance* (CAMA) settled along the Kayan and Sesayap and later claimed this territory as theirs. Because of the difficult transport along the Mahakam, it was decided in the 1920s that the centre of the mission should be transferred from Laham to more downstream Tering, where a permanent post was opened in 1928, with boarding schools and a dispensary served by Franciscan Sisters of Asten.

³¹ *Jaarboek 1940*:161; *Buku Petunjuk Gereja Katolik Indonesia 1997*:287–289, where also the parishes that had started from Martinus were taken into consideration.

Only in 1936 were two permanent posts opened upstream of the cataracts, but the breakthrough for Catholicism came in this region in the Japanese period when two native prophetic movements prepared the way for a more vibrant change in the culture and religion of the Dayak in the Upper Mahakam region. The first is connected with the name of Bo'Jurai, a Pnihing Dayak from Long Cihang. Close to this village were caves that were believed to be the dwellings of ancestral spirits. Bo'Jurai received visions that the spirits had left the region and had lost their power. Therefore he felt urged to break the taboo of entering the caves. His co-villagers saw him enter the caves and come back, without being harmed and also without negative effects for themselves. This was the beginning of a movement to do away with the traditional religion. It has been speculated that this was also a subversive social movement directed against the feudal class of *hipui* who could dominate society through the taboos and the many fines they imposed on tribal people for many common offences against the numerous taboos that ruled traditional Dayak society.³² Bo'Jurai himself never even converted to the new faith, but boys of the Pnihing tribe who had for some years attended the school in Laham interpreted his experiences. They urged the tribe now to accept the Catholic faith as the new religion and started to teach the catechism in nearly all Pnihing villages. A schoolteacher translated prayers and hymns into the Pnihing language. A Javanese teacher, Mas Prawira, who had moved to Long Pahangai in 1941, was during this period in fact the leading advisor for one of the few massive conversions in this region.³³

Another prophetic movement took place in mid-1945 in the hamlet of Long Isun, on the Mareseh, a tributary to the Mahakam and in the territory of the Busang Dayak. Some Juk Kavung had received revelations that the ancestors would return to the earth and therefore the village should be prepared in a proper way. Juk Kavung was associated with two young men who had received their training in the school of Laham. They suggested that the new greetings should be partly in Arabic *Assalam Alaikum* and partly in Latin *Laus Deo, Dominus Vobiscum* and *Sursum Corda* (resp. 'Praise be to God,' 'The Lord be with you,' and 'Lift up your hearts'). In advance of the return of the ancestors all noise should be avoided. Barking dogs and cackling chicken should be killed. The people were trained to chant Catholic style Alleluias. When the arrival of the ancestors did not come about, Juk Kavung ordered that the houses should be painted white and many utensils used for traditional ceremonies should be destroyed. When storage of food was exhausted, many people had to sell their valuables in order to buy food. Only when the Japanese surrendered and Father Arts returned to the mission of the Upper Mahakam did the movement

³² Coomans 1980:110.

³³ Coomans 1980:111–112, on the basis of the mission diary of Long Pahangai.

return to less dramatic expressions and this caused an increase of conversions to Catholicism in the region.

The two cases above show glimpses from the real process of cultural and religious transformation that took place in Dayak society. In the 1950s the Catholic mission claimed that along the Mahakam, upstream from the great falls, about 90% of the population had embraced Catholicism. Below we will discuss in somewhat more detail the real meaning of this great transformation.

Another region where Catholicism started in the pre-independence period was the rolling hills of the Tunjung region in East Kalimantan, between the Mahakam and its tributary the Kedang Pahu. This is a well-populated area with much larger villages than those along the Mahakam. This region was still directly under the authority of the Sultan of Kutai who protested for some time against the arrival of the missionaries. Only after some local chiefs had pleaded in favour of the schools of the Catholic mission did he agree to the establishment of a mission post. Barong Tongkok became the centre of Catholic activities in this region that only very slowly and partially accepted a new religious identity. In the late 1980s the total number of people in this region was 23,511 of whom 3,763 were Catholic or 16%.³⁴

Religious transformations of Dayak Catholicism, 1945–2000

The influence of the Japanese period upon the history of Indonesian Christianity is often ambiguous. It is without any doubt that it brought the end of Dutch colonial rule and therefore also the end of the privileged position that Christian mission experienced during that period. It was a period without foreign clergy and in many places without any presence of the clergy that was and still is very dominant in Catholic religious life. Some reports suggest that Catholicism could continue without the foreign missionaries and religious people. On the other hand, in many places in Kalimantan there was a presence of foreign missionaries during only a few decades, but still quite a few facts show that in this period the attachment to the missionaries had taken firm roots. There are several moving stories of catechists and other lay people who at risk of their own lives took measures to ensure that the sacred objects of the Catholic liturgy and of the parish house should be saved. A quite striking and creative example of the respect for the foreign missionaries is the mission post of Sejiram, where teacher Loegit had continued the common prayer services during the absence of the missionaries. In order to keep the memory of the priests alive, during these services a chasuble was placed in front of the altar as a representation of the absent leadership.³⁵

³⁴ Coomans 1980:105–107.

³⁵ Van Hulst 1983–I:99.

The small Catholic communities of Kalimantan showed a quite spectacular development in the second half of the twentieth century. For the period up to 1965 perhaps the political role of the West Kalimantan Catholics was the most impressive, besides a growing role in the field of education. For the period between 1965 and 1980 we can note a very rapid increase in numbers, related to the anti-communist policy of the Soeharto government that obliged all people to register with one of the five recognised global religions, as we have seen already above in relation to the development of Hindu Kaharingan. In this period we also see the double movement of greater independence from foreign personnel (called *indonesianisasi*) but at the same time in this period there was a quick increase in foreign aid related not to evangelisation but to more secular development projects. In the period 1985–2000 we see some kind of stabilisation, no longer this spectacular growth in numbers, while development aid became detached from ecclesial organisation with the establishment of many NGO's, Non-Government Organisations that were only loosely connected to the church and relied more on lay organisations that also sometimes included Muslim people. In this latter period there was also a growing tension between various ethnic communities, especially between Madurese migrants and the Dayak from Kalimantan. Although these tensions, and finally a number of bloody incidents since 1995, were racial and economic rather than religious, they were closely related to religious differences and therefore have to be discussed here as well. Finally, in this section we will have to discuss the move towards a more open recognition of Dayak spirituality that was to be included in a contextualised Kalimantan Catholicity.

In the opposition of Dayak versus Malay it is often stated that 'Dayak' inland people become Malay when they embrace Islam. In this way the word Dayak (meaning 'upstream' or 'inland') would have just a pejorative and negative meaning. In the early period of Indonesian independence, however, the word Dayak received a stronger, more positive meaning, something to be proud of. As opposed to Malay, it became the expression of a distinctive identity. As in the case of the 'Batak'³⁶ where it has been argued that Christianity gave a convincingly solid basis to this new name for a non-Malay and non-Muslim identity, in the period 1945–1965 the proud name of Dayak was also used in contrast to Islam as a self-confident sign of a new and singular identity. This happened with the Dayak political parties of West Kalimantan in the early years of Indonesian independence. It has been argued that already "Dutch colonial rule forged a 'Dayak' identity out of a diverse, autochthonous, non-Islamic population."³⁷ Because of the poor education provided for Dayak people prior to independence, it was first of all the few graduates of the Catholic

³⁶ Hasselgren 2000:135.

³⁷ Davidson 2003:2.

teacher-training course (CVO, *Cursus voor Volksonderwijzer*) that formed the first nationalist activists. It was in 1941, during a retreat in Sanggau for Catholic school teachers, that Oevaang Oeray, then a student at the seminary of Pontianak, started the first movement that later was seen as an organised Dayak movement in West Kalimantan.³⁸ Together or in rivalry with Francis Xavier Palaunsoeka, Oeray founded the Dayak Association (PD, *Persatuan Dayak*, also called *Partij Persatuan Dayak* as a political party). In the early 1950s, they were critical of the preferential treatment of Chinese mission students, and of the colonial thinking and paternalistic attitude of the missionaries.³⁹ In the 1950s the PD was a major party in the elections for the regional assembly: in 1955 they gained nine seats against ten for the major Muslim party, Masyumi, while in 1958 they gained twelve seats, against nine for Masyumi.⁴⁰ In the conflict between the two leaders, Palaunsoeka later left the Dayak Party and joined the national Catholic Party, while Oeray moved to a national party: Partindo. But this was the end of Catholic-inspired regional policy. In the New Order of General Soeharto, after 1966, regional parties were forbidden, because ethnic, religious and regional issues should no longer play a role in politics. In 1966 Oeray, who had become governor thanks to his warm relations with Soekarno, was removed from the governorship and this was the end of the Dayak Party in West Kalimantan. In other provinces of Kalimantan the Catholics never were strong enough to play a decisive political role.

As in other regions of Indonesia, there was also a quick growth of Catholicism in Kalimantan between 1965 and 1980. Below are the figures for percentage of Catholics for the last decades of the twentieth century, for the island, divided over the six dioceses:

*Catholics in the dioceses of Kalimantan*⁴¹

	1950 in %	2000 in %	Catholics 2000	Population 2000	RC per priest (2000)	Priests (2000)
Pontianak	1.1	8.7	201,870	2,321,011	3,873	50
Ketapang	n.a.	18.3	75,247	411,705	2,786	20
Sintang	1.7	20.1	132,078	665,330	2,547	49
Banjarmasin	0.4	0.5	17,278	3,202,300	1,151	15
Palangkaraya	n.a.	2.9	52,660	1,805,208	2,062	23
Sanggau	n.a.	46.2	233,281	505,236	5,689	41
Samarinda	n.a.	5.9	134,937	2,294,851	3,161	50

³⁸ Davidson 2003:7.

³⁹ Davidson 2003:14.

⁴⁰ Davidson 2003:16.

⁴¹ Figures after www.catholic-hierarchy.org. In 2002 the new diocese of Tanjung Selor was established.

It was first of all the inland dioceses (Sanggau, Sintang and partially Ketapang) that took their share of the increase of Catholics that can be noted for the whole period. This has resulted in a quite uneven distribution over the whole island. A growing number of clergy became naturalised Indonesians in this period. It is striking, however, that the number of Dayak vocations for religious orders was far below the average of the Dayak people as a proportion of the Catholics of Indonesia. In 1980 6.9% of the Indonesian Catholics were of ethnic Dayak origin, against only 3.4% of the members of religious orders.⁴² This can easily be related to the overwhelming over-representation of the Javanese and clergy from Flores in this way of life. We could also relate it to the nominal membership, less existential and personal choice among Dayak Catholics. A dramatic development in this respect took place in the diocese of Sintang. Isak Doera from Flores was here nominated bishop in 1976. He gave up the hope for a Dayak clergy and founded in Flores a minor seminary to attract more priests from Flores for the Dayak territories of Kalimantan. He also sought his catechists and teachers mostly from Flores. This was considered as “internal colonialism” and caused such unrest and conflicts in Sintang, that on 1 January 1996 he was forced to resign. His successor Agustinus Agus (nominated administrator on 21 January 1996, full bishop in October 1999) was a Dayak priest from neighbouring Sanggau. Together with another Dayak Bishop, Hieronymus Bumbun (Pontianak), he is a strong fighter for a Dayak character Catholicism in inland Kalimantan.

What did it mean for Dayak people to embrace Christianity? To what extent was this new religion a real fulfilment of Dayak needs? Which aspects of culture, society, world-view and ritual changed and which aspects were resistant to change? The statistics show neatly divided groups, but how was the somewhat chaotic mix of world-views in the mind of the various players in the process of change: the children, the adults, the common people and the ritual specialists? To answer these questions it is better not to look at the concept of God or the hereafter, but to the concepts about marriage, following Father Michael Coomans, the bishop of Samarinda for the period 1987–1992 and before that time a pastor and researcher about the transformation of Dayak religion.⁴³

Coomans looked at the practice of marriage among registered Catholics in the period 1965–1975. In the major Tunjung station of Barong Tongkok there were 51 blessings of marriage. In nearly all cases the couples had already celebrated marriage and the exchange of gifts according to traditional ceremonies. They came to the parish asking that their marriage should be ‘repaired’

⁴² After Boelaars 1991:180 and 219.

⁴³ Unless stated explicitly, the following is an excerpt of Coomans 1980:187–210.

(*beres*). In 22 of the cases no family was present, but it was just a matter of the young couple themselves. In nearby Engkuni there were 39 blessings in the same period, with broader attendance of the family in only seven cases. All these marriages were a blessing of a life bond that had started already some time before and had been accepted by society in general and the mutual family through traditional celebrations. Nevertheless, the priests felt urged to preach the formal doctrine of the Catholic Church that before formal marriage blessing by the parish priest no sexual relations should be maintained. The Catholic faithful showed their loyalty to the new religion not by a full observation of the Catholic rules, but by the willingness to 'repair' the situation after traditional marriage had taken place. Quite a few priests, including Father Coomans, felt embarrassed. They estimated that the basic values of the Catholic doctrine of marriage were validated by Dayak morality, such as the monogamous relationship (not in theory but in practice, because polygamy was a rare exception in Dayak society), mutual love and fidelity, equal rights for man and woman and stability as ideal, although there was a relatively high divorce rate in traditional and modern Dayak society. On the whole, however, marriage remained a social happening where the extended family played a much more important role than the outsider, the parish priest who claimed his role and authority on the basis of the ecclesial law of the Catholic Church, the *Codes Iuris Canonici*. The village head, the parents, the council of elders of the family were still given much more authority in matters of the long process of establishing a marriage than the parish priest who could only act at the end of the long process. Like his colleague John M. Prior in Flores, Coomans also pleaded for a modest role for the priests and a formal recognition of customary and state rules of marriages by the Catholic Church. In daily pastoral practice they had to find their way between the formal law of the church and the reality of the social development of Dayak society. One way out was the procedure of repairing the failure. Another perception was that the faithful often considered the church blessing as just another magical means to *membuang sial*, to protect against evil. In 1980 Coomans estimated that about 60% of the marriages of Catholics in the parish of Engkuni were not yet legalised with an ecclesial blessing.

Divorce was considered as reprehensible in Dayak society, but after much deliberation and payment of a fine, couples could break up their marriage. In most cases that are recorded for this period, there was no consultation with the priests in these cases and they had to find out themselves that divorce had taken place. In one specific case in 1939–1940, the village head of Bika Tengah, close to the mission station of Bika, came to the parish to ask about "the adat (customary rulings) of the Christians in the case of divorce." He was highly surprised to hear that the only ruling was that divorce could not be accepted and should not take place. Also the woman of the quarrelling

couple addressed the priest, telling him that she now knew that it was not allowed and therefore really was prepared to pay a fine, but only wanted to know how much. To the parish priest she let know that his predecessor had told them that she would be condemned for divorce. Therefore she wanted to be informed about the details of the condemnation: *minta dikoekoem*, wanted to know the fine.⁴⁴ Notwithstanding the formal policy of contextualisation in the 1950s and even more explicitly after the Second Vatican Concil, marriage rulings were generally excluded from this strategy. The priests took the double strategy of explaining the official Catholic doctrine and a lenient application of a personalised pastoral approach.

Contextualisation was first of all seen in the cloth of the couple that would marry. Since the 1960s the white robe for the bride and a formal black suit for the man became more and more fashionable as a sign of modernity and prosperity, complete with sunglasses and plastic flowers. In the field of contextualisation, a major problem in Kalimantan was the diversity of Dayak languages that made finally Malay or modern standard Indonesian the religious language. In traditional Kalimantan society the religious specialists used a specific language for religious rituals. This could no longer be continued. There had been already, since 1858, a bible translation in Ngaju Dayak (by the Protestant mission), but the Catholic mission used Malay in its schools and also for common church services. Moreover, it was more the catechists and the new Christians who initiated the practice to establish 'sacred places' in the neighbourhood of the longhouses or small private family houses: they placed a cross in a special room attached to their houses or under a small roof and treated that in the same way as the traditional Dayak sacred place. Although there were doubts among the clergy about the actual strategy, they also were more and more positive in this field.

The 1960s were a turning point in the nationality of the clergy and the members of religious orders in Indonesia. The number of foreign church personnel declined drastically, but there was a quick increase in the number of Indonesian priests, religious sisters and brothers who could take over their positions. This process, called *Indonesianisasi*, found a counter-current in another development of the 1960s, the rise of development aid. While western personnel left Indonesia, more and more western money entered the region. Partially this was done in continuation of traditional activities in the fields of education and health care.

One special field of social service for this region certainly was the efforts done in the 1930s by a Capuchin friar to build longhouses that had more fresh

⁴⁴ *Dagboek Bika-Nazareth*, 28–29 February 1940:102 (Capuchin Archives 's-Hertogenbosch).

air and also better light. Traditional longhouses for extended families were built in a style that made defence against attacks by enemies more easy. With the increasing safety of the colonial rule the practice of building this style of house declined. The colonial government and the independent Indonesian government discouraged the building of these houses, because people were encouraged to live in larger villages where facilities like schools and dispensaries would be available. The disappearance of longhouses, together with the 'secularisation' of the office of village chief (since the 1960s no longer hereditary in the feudal class) was one of the basic conditions for religious change. Many taboos were related to life in the longhouses. Ancestor spirits had their place in these giant structures, while social control made the observance of many precepts easier. With the exception of the proposals for improvement of the houses, mentioned above, the Catholic mission did not directly intervene in the houses of the Dayak, as they did in Papua.

Besides activities in the field of education and health care, there were quite a few initiatives in agriculture. Already in the 1920s the Capuchin Friars taught the boys of their boarding schools how to grow vegetables as an enrichment of the daily menu. They also stimulated rubber plantations, for the financing of the mission itself, but also for the improvement of the financial position of the Catholics. In 1937 an agricultural school was opened in Tering. Father J. Spitters, parish priest of Barong Tering in the early 1950s, reopened the school, but experienced too many difficulties because of a lack of well-trained personnel. In the 1960s and 1970s in many places credit unions were founded under the supervision of the clergy and often with some money from foreign countries.

Kalimantan was not East Indonesia, where Catholics and Protestants in many regions like Flores, Timor, the Moluccas and Papua could dominate the field of education nearly totally in the colonial period, and where they had an important role in development programmes in the 1960s and early 1970s. Catholicism and Protestant churches played an important role in some inland regions, but in no region could they obtain a truly dominating role.

CAMA in East and West Kalimantan

On the west coast of Kalimantan, Protestant mission work had started by the Reformed Church in America in 1839, but this mission field was abandoned in 1850 because of their lack of success. In 1906 the American Methodists came to Pontianak, but when they decided to concentrate in Sumatra they surrendered their work to the *Indische Kerk* (1928). The major Protestant initiative took place from the southern regions, especially Banjarmasin as already depicted above. Another Protestant initiative started in 1929 in East Kalimantan, in the

region of the Kutai, Kayan and Sesayap rivers. This mission was started by CAMA, *Christian and Missionary Alliance*, a missionary organisation founded by an American Presbyterian. The Indonesian branch of CAMA was founded by R.A. Jaffray who had worked in China between 1897 and 1927 and in 1928 started his work in Indonesia with Makassar as the centre for a theological school, but its first important missionary work was done in East Kalimantan. In 1940 this mission counted already some 5,000 baptised in East Kalimantan. This was partly the result of CAMA strategy to baptise people shortly after a positive reaction towards the proclamation of Christianity, sometimes even after a few days. For CAMA missionary George Fisk in East Kalimantan a confession that Jesus was accepted as redeemer could be enough, while the Catholic mission required a minimum of two years discipline in catechism classes. The CAMA missionary and his assistants (Chinese, Ambonese, Manadonese, Toraja and Dayak teachers) concentrated on the region north of Samarinda and the inland Kenyah district, where they had virtually no direct contact with the Catholic mission until the early 1950s.

The situation for West Kalimantan was quite different. CAMA missionary A. Mouw arrived in April 1933 in Pontianak. From here he made a journey on the Kapuas as far as Sintang. The first convert was a Chinese, Lim Hong Lip, from Nanga Sejirak along the river Belitang. Before his conversion to CAMA Protestant Christianity, this man was asked by the medical staff of the hospital of Sintang to accept the Catholic faith, but he had rejected this suggestion.⁴⁵ Although Reverend Mouw settled close to the border with Sarawak in Iban territory, in Balai Sepuak, he had more contacts with the Catholics than with his colleague in Eastern Kalimantan. But his contacts were, as far as we can judge, not with the Catholic missionaries themselves, but with some of their converts. A key figure here was an Embaloh Dayak, Marthen Lombok, born in 1915. He was already a faithful Catholic who could assist at Mass as an altar boy and knew the required Latin phrases by heart, but nevertheless became attracted at the CAMA message and studied at the CAMA Bible school in Makassar between 1936 and 1938, before entering the region as a CAMA missionary.⁴⁶ In 1935 Rev. Mouw baptised 515 people in one ceremony in a river in this inland region of West Kalimantan, close to the Malaysian border. This baptism (as usually administered by CAMA through immersion) is the only mass baptism recorded in the history of Christianity in Kalimantan.⁴⁷

The CAMA mission of Kalimantan probably was the first to make use of airplanes. Rev. Fisk undertook pilot training in the USA in the late 1930s and

⁴⁵ Lewis 1995:196.

⁴⁶ Lewis 1995:203–205.

⁴⁷ Lewis 1995:200.

received a plane from the CAMA headquarters. It commenced work in East Kalimantan among the remote tribe of the Apo Kayan in late 1939. In July 1942 a Dutch officer ordered that the plane be burned, fearing that otherwise it would be captured by the Japanese army. Between 1948 and 1957 CAMA bought six planes for Indonesia: two for Kalimantan and four to be used in Papua. But after 1970 CAMA also used the service of MAF, Mission Aviation Fellowship, to overcome the problems of transportation in East Kalimantan.

The CAMA was not only fast in baptising people; they were also extremely quick in setting up a local church. In 1947 a first synod collected 153 representatives from 26 congregations in Sesayap, the major town on the eastern coast, only some 50 km. south of the Malaysian border. This small harbour town was one of the major openings to the upper Kayan region that became the most important field for CAMA in East Kalimantan. In 1950 the number of congregations in this remote region had risen already to 42. The first president of the synod, Rev. A. Dumai was a first generation convert like the whole leadership of this young church. Only the few foreign missionaries received foreign aid. For the rest the congregations had to pay all expenses. For the period 1956–1977 there were no resident expatriate missionaries in the region and the congregations managed to survive and to grow through their own initiative.⁴⁸ The church was later part of KINGMI, *Kemah Injil Gereja Masehi Indonesia*, Tabernacle Gospel Messianic Church of Indonesia.

The young church proved not to be really stable yet in this period. Already in 1954 there was a schism in Sesayap, because one church worker was accused of sinful behaviour. He protested and erected the *Gereja Kristen Pemancar Injil* or Gospel Propagating Christian Church. According to later internal sources the major cause of the secession was the wish to be more relevant in social, agricultural and medical work than the major CAMA church.⁴⁹

As in Central Kalimantan where the Kaharingan movement caused a revival of traditional religion, also in East Kalimantan a local revival of traditional religion took place. This was the 1940s revelation to an Upper Kayan Kenyah person, Jok Apuy. Although first converted to Christianity, he was at the beginning of what is now called the Bungan Movement. In dreams he met the spirit Bungan who told him that he should return to the simple basic rules of the old religion, not the complicated rituals of the later periods. Also many taboos were abolished. This Bungan revival was quite successful. It spread slowly in the 1940s and 1950s, but in the 1960s more and more people who had opted for Christianity returned to the ancestral religion in this new form. Most of these, however, were people from the Malaysian side of the border.

⁴⁸ Lewis 1995:178–179.

⁴⁹ Lewis 1995:180; Bauswein & Vischer 2002.

K. Muller⁵⁰ estimated that on the Indonesian side most accepted Christianity, at least nominally. 75% of them had joined CAMA churches, and 25% were Catholic. The Catholics were rather late in the Kayan region of Northeast Kalimantan, but they were quite soon known as the more easy-going missionaries. One of the difficult points in the region was the absolute ban on alcohol by the CAMA churches, while the Catholics under conditions could allow the drinking of alcohol.⁵¹ In the turbulent 1970s, another period of church growth in Indonesia, the KINGMI mission also started work in the southern regions of East Kalimantan.

In West Kalimantan CAMA had also started close to the Malaysian border, north from the important river connection of Sintang, as already noted above. Work for CAMA in West Kalimantan grew much more slowly than in East Kalimantan. Pioneering missionary Mouw was jailed for a short period in February 1942 by the Japanese invaders, but was able to escape from Japanese-occupied territory and never returned to his mission stations. After independence, in September 1946, out of the ten bible teachers, only five were left in the Melawi area, north of Sintang. The mission remained difficult, even when in 1951 quite a few American missionaries came to the region after they were expelled from China. West Kalimantan was known as Chinese territory, but several of the expatriate missionaries entered work for the Dayak mission. In the mission history this period is known as the Sour Period (*Masa Suram*),⁵² because of the slow growth. For the year 1957 only 39 baptisms were registered and there was no real progress in the following years, until in 1962 a step forward was taken with the opening of a mission station in the central place of Sintang. This was the period of the Indonesian struggle against Malaysia (the 'Crush Malaysia Campaign' or *Ganyang Malaysia*). This turned, after 1965, into the fight against communism, when many of the Chinese of the region were suspected of communism. The army and the local government supported the spread of Christianity in the remote regions. Quite famous in CAMA circles is the request to cooperate with the government in the transformation of the lower Kayan tribes who still lived by shifting culture thanks to yearly burning of pieces of virgin forest. The government wanted to halt this practice for environmental and financial reasons but also for safety strategies. In 1969 the MAF, Mission Aviation Fellowship, had started work for CAMA in West Kalimantan and in this way the rich and eager mission and

⁵⁰ Muller 1991:87.

⁵¹ See also Rousseau 1998:21–37 for the development of the Bungan revival. On p. 29 he relates about joyful receptions at the Chinese New Year where he had to help one of the Catholic missionaries home. "The next day, I was interviewed by several Kayan who wanted to know whether these were indeed missionaries. . . . They opined that if these missionaries have a good time in this way, it must be a good religion!"

⁵² Lewis 1995:225–227.

the poor military and government officials could join their goals in a mission to the upper Kapuas regions in early 1971. CAMA reported that “199 people received Christ as their saviour” in this joint mission.⁵³

CAMA in West Kalimantan remained subordinated to the more prosperous Christians of the eastern regions. In 1978 an evangelising team from the eastern province came by plane to the congregations of West Kalimantan to start a campaign “and many surrendered to the Lord, in the hope to be filled by the Holy Spirit and be sanctified. Many amulets and writings about traditional healing were handed over to be burnt. Jesus was pronounced as the Healer and quite a few people were restored to health.”⁵⁴

In 1978 CAMA made the move to Pontianak, the capital of the vast province on the most western shore, at the mouth of the Kapuas river. After starting in remote villages more than 1,000 km. inland in the 1930s, the theological seminary was established in the western capital Pontianak, the region of the Malay and the Chinese. It was a sign that also in West Kalimantan the KINGMI church had become an inter-ethnic and widespread religious denomination. Statistics of 1990 show for East Kalimantan nearly 98,000 members, with 67,000 not yet baptised (KINGMI is a church that opts for adult baptism and many were children). For West Kalimantan the numbers were more modest: 62,252 members, 15,234 of whom were baptised. This made KINGMI the third largest Christian church in Kalimantan, after the Catholics with their centre in West Kalimantan and the Reformed Protestants with their centre in Central Kalimantan. KINGMI with its centre in the East Kalimantan highlands where it accounted in the early 2000s for roughly $\frac{1}{4}$ of the total number of Christians holds the third ranking in membership numbers.

*The difficult decade 1995–2005:
socio-ethnic conflicts with religious side-effects*

For centuries there has existed a rather ambivalent relationship between the Malay Muslims of the coastal area and the non-Muslim Dayak tribes of the interior. Several Muslim rulers developed special ties with specific Dayak tribes. In the field of popular religion Muslims sought the services of Dayak healers. But there have also been hostilities related to difference of religion. This socio-religious complex became more complicated when in the last decades of the nineteenth century small pockets of Dayak people converted to Christianity, to reach finally a quite substantial part of the population of Kalimantan. The Chinese more or less remained a distinct group. The situation became even

⁵³ Lewis 1995:233.

⁵⁴ Lewis 1995:235–236.

more intricate with the arrival of a rather large group of migrants from strongly Muslim Madura, to settle in several regions. The Madurese are a fierce, proud, and outspokenly Muslim people who have a culture linked often to violence. The island of Madura is frequently called the Sicily of Indonesia.

The first serious conflict in the violent decade 1995–2005 was the bloody riot of Banjarmasin, 23 May 1997. As also described in chapter six, this was the most violent incident during the election campaign of 1997 when Soeharto for the last time was re-elected as the Indonesian president. The party of the government, Golkar, held its campaign with much public funds, supported by several national Muslim leaders, while the other two parties experienced all kinds of obstruction. In strongly Muslim Banjarmasin the Islamic party, PPP, was rather frustrated. On Friday 23 May scores of members of PPP joined a Golkar meeting, disguised as Golkar supporters by wearing the yellow shirts of Soeharto's party. All of a sudden, just before the official speeches started, one PPP member gave a special sign, and the PPP activists took off the yellow shirts of Golkar and showed their green PPP shirts. They burnt the yellow shirts and shouted "Slay Golkar," while starting to attack Golkar members, several of whom were killed because their throats were cut. Shortly afterwards they not only gave attention to the Golkar supporters who ran away, but also started attacking churches, Christian schools, a Buddhist monastery, office buildings and shopping centres. Due to panic several hundreds of people were kicked to death or burnt in the fire of the shopping mall Mitra Plaza.

The Catholic Church was most seriously hit by the turmoil, with the destruction of Saint Mary's Cathedral, two other churches, parish houses, a home for elderly people, and several schools. Also a major building of the Batak Church, HKBP, one belonging to the GKE, and churches of seven other denominations were severely damaged. Of all the incidents related to inter-religious tensions in the Soeharto period, 1965–1998, the Banjarmasin riots caused the highest loss of human life and material damage.⁵⁵

In the 1960s and 1970s large groups of poor farmers from the dry and overpopulated island of Madura settled in what were considered empty regions by the Indonesian government.⁵⁶ Substantial groups were sent to West Kalimantan where they, as in other regions, received pieces of land in the Sambas region, or started work in the new palm oil plantations. A side-goal of the Indonesian government was the protection of its border with Malaysia. The presence of many Chinese in West Kalimantan, suspected of cooperation with mainland Chinese communism, could be counteracted in this way by the fiercely Muslim Madurese. In the period December 1996 until January 1997

⁵⁵ Aritonang 2004:475–478.

⁵⁶ For this section Aritonang 2004:560–564 is used besides the ICG Report no. 19 (27 June 2001): *Communal Violence in Indonesia: Lesson from Kalimantan*.

serious conflicts between migrant Madurese and local Dayak in the Sambas region of West Kalimantan caused loss of lives and material damage. The source of these conflicts was that the Madurese were treated as if they were sent as farmers to empty areas, while the Dayak people as shifting cultivators needed these lands once in 10 or 20 years. Besides, several sacred and taboo places of the Dayak people were used in a sacrilegious way. In many cases Dayak communities were dislocated, undermining the authority of traditional village leaders and the cohesion of their former life. The Sambas conflicts lead to an effective ethnic cleansing of the region: virtually all Madurese of the area returned to their homeland.

The conflicts of Sambas spread to East and Central Kalimantan. In the Sampit region the most dramatic conflicts took place in February 2001. In the whole province of Central Kalimantan the Madurese counted 6–7%, or about 120,000 people. They were most numerous in the region of Sampit where they were up to 40% or according to other assessments even 60%. As in smaller incidents in the region, so also in Sampit the affair started with a quite trivial event. On 15 December 2000, in a karaoke bar in the small town of Kereng Panggi, halfway between Sampit and Palangkaraya, a Dayak was stabbed to death by three Madurese who then fled. Soon after this event several hundred Dayak arrived to seek revenge for their companion. They could not find the three Madurese involved, but set fire to several Madurese-owned bars and houses. This was the beginning of inter-ethnic fighting that culminated in a massive attack on the town of Sampit and its whole surroundings on 18 February 2001. The number of Madurese killed was, according to official report, 456 and 108,000 Madurese fled the province, most of them returning to Madura.

There are several religious aspects in this complicated series of conflicts. With the reality of a weak government (people did not trust a corrupt police but took revenge for themselves) religious sentiments could easily creep in. The Dayak had been considered second-class citizens for centuries. Since the 1970s even their conversion to Islam could no longer give them equal rights with the Malay, because since that time it became common practise to label converts *Bakumpai* (after an isolated small tribe of the Upper Barito). In the fighting against the Madurese several Christian Dayak returned to traditional practices like the use of amulets, invocations by traditional religious leaders and even traditions related to headhunting.

In the aftermath of the troubles the senior church leader, Dr. Fridolin Ukur, blamed the Soeharto government for giving priority to economic development by migration, by gold mines and palm oil plantations, without taking into account the original inhabitants of the region. The workers who had arrived recently were given priority over the local population. Junior anthropologist and lecturer at the theological school of the GKE in Banjarmasin, Marko Mahin, even stated that the GKE itself was among the colonising powers, a

global player destroying a local religion. He criticised the title of one of Ukur's books: *The Rich Harvest* as the result of the thinking of his church in the 1960s when tribal culture and the religion of Kaharingan were considered a rival to Christianity. He asked his church to convert, and joined the call that Kaharingan should be recognised as a full religion in its own right and not as a branch or local development of worldwide Hinduism. In various regions of Kalimantan traditional religion had been able to survive the religious developments of the last 150 years and it looks as if this may result in a more mature relationship with Christianity as well.⁵⁷ This has made Kalimantan one of the most religiously diversified parts of Indonesia.

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⁵⁷ Fridolin Ukur gave an interview to the weekly *Tempo*, 26 March 2001; see Ukur 2002; the comment on Ukur is from his summary of a speech at the theological school in Banjarmasin, early 2005, in: <http://www.mail-archive.com/kmnu2000@yahooogroups.com/msg02613.html>, consulted on 7 February 2006.

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CHAPTER THIRTEEN

THE SHARP CONTRASTS OF SUMATRA

The cultural, economic and religious pattern of Sumatra was, around 1800, much more diverse than that of any of the other greater islands such as Java, Kalimantan, Sulawesi or Papua. This diversity was not only evident among the inhabitants of the inland regions, the population of the mountain chain of the Bukit Barisan that runs along the western coast from Aceh to the south, the home of the inland tribes of Batak, Gayo-Alas, Minangkabau, Kubu (Jambi) and Lampung. There were also, and still are, great differences in the coastal regions: the Malay Sultanates of the East Coast, Java-oriented Palembang, the proud and independently distinct identity of Aceh, equally distinct Minangkabau, just to mention some of the major cultures. Besides, there were quite significant differences in culture in the numerous smaller islands surrounding Sumatra. Since the 1860s large numbers of migrants had arrived from China in the islands of Bangka, Belitung and Riau. Many more Chinese, and later many poor coolies from Java, came to the new plantation area of Medan. These migrant workers dominated the tin mining, rubber, tobacco and pepper plantations, and much of the non-agricultural smallholder economy. The islands of Nias, Batu, Mentawai and Enggano preserved different cultures again. Many of the Sumatran coastal cultures had been Muslim for several centuries. The most assertive of these were the Acehnese, as well as the smaller coastal settlements like Bengkulu and, on the Eastern coast, the sultanates of Deli (Medan), Serdang, Langkat and Siak. There were also strong inland Muslim traditional societies in the mountainous regions of Minangkabau, Gayo-Alas, Palembang and Lampung.

Confronted with all this diversity it will be necessary to concentrate on two major regions of mission and church development, those of the Toba-Batak and Karo homelands in what is now North Sumatra, and more specifically on two churches, HKBP and GBKP. Different in many ways, the developments in these two regions and churches yield insights into the processes of religious change in Sumatra without overshadowing the very important developments in other regions and churches.

Missionary initiatives prior to 1857

The Batak homeland, (today the larger part of the Indonesian province of North Sumatra) lies between Aceh in the north and the provinces of West

Sumatra and Riau in the south, approximately 50,000 square km in extent, or one ninth of the land area of Sumatra. Dominant geographical features are Lake Toba and the extensive mountain ranges and highland, which form part of the Bukit Barisan range that runs through the length of Sumatra. Among the high peaks are active and dormant volcanoes, a number reaching height of over 2,000 m. The highland area has a cool, wet climate.

Lake Toba, which has a central place in Batak folklore and tradition, lies in the bed of an extinct volcano in the heart of the Batak highlands. A large island, Samosir that is about 50 km long and about 16 km at its widest point, dominates it. A narrow plain on the west coast, and the extensive lowlands of the east coast, while not part of Batakland proper, have had extensive Batak populations since pre-colonial times.

In scholarly discussion the name Batak refers to an ethnological grouping of peoples who share differing but similar cultures and whose languages, while too distinctive to be regarded as dialects, are closely related. These people are the Toba, Dairi or Pakpak, Simalungun, Karo and Angkola-Mandailing Bataks, each with their own homeland although in modern times many have migrated into neighbouring areas or to other regions of Indonesia. Whether 'Batak' is an indigenous name or one applied first by outsiders, remains controversial. The Toba Batak, who are often simply called 'Bataks' and whose folkways are considered by many Indonesians to be characteristic of all Bataks, in fact refer to themselves more readily as Tapanuli people, taking the name of the great bay that is a feature of their region. Similarly the Karo and others do not readily refer to themselves as 'Bataks'.

In a discussion of the processes of religious change among the Batak peoples in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries two regions are of particular interest. These are the region of North Tapanuli, which was the scene of the German Rhenish Mission's most rapid and spectacular successes, and the region on the east coast of North Sumatra and the neighbouring highland plateau, the homeland of the Karo people who resisted Christianity, as they had resisted Islam, until the period of rapid church growth after Independence. Both these regions, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, were in reality outside the sphere of influence of any of the European powers. The mountain regions were secure in their isolation and although accounts were emerging of Batak life, such as William Marsden's report of a journey made in Sumatra in 1783, little account had been taken of the region by the European powers.

In 1824 the Treaty of London regularised Dutch and British interests in the Malay Archipelago by establishing Malaya as a British sphere of interest, and recognising Sumatra (where the British had had a foothold at Benkulen or Bengkulu since 1685) as a Dutch sphere of influence. Distracted by their Aceh War and other concerns the Dutch colonial administration did not seek to extend its rule to the east coast and North Tapanuli regions for at least forty

years after the Treaty, and then unevenly. The final occupation of the Karo plateau, for example, did not take place until 1904.

In this situation, missionaries in Tapanuli and planters on the east coast of Sumatra entered areas that were completely independent of colonial rule or significant European influence. Having established their enterprises they continued, for some time after colonial penetration began, to overshadow the colonial administration and its officials who often depended on their local knowledge and their ability to speak local languages and to negotiate with local leaders and rulers.

The Protestant mission among the Angkola, Toba and Simalungun Batak peoples is widely, and appropriately, associated with the German Rhenish Mission, which entered Batakland in 1861, and with the name of the great missionary strategist Ludwig Ingwer Nommensen (1834–1918) who arrived in Sumatra in 1862.¹ However, the *Rheinische Missionsgesellschaft* (RMG) was neither the first, nor the only, pioneering mission agency to enter the Batak world during the nineteenth century, and Nommensen himself undertook his pioneering work in North Tapanuli in company with others (among whom P.H. Johannsen and August Mohri) and from a basis already established by the Mission in the southern Bataklands.

The death in 1834 of two missionaries sponsored by the *American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions*, Henry Lyman and Samuel Munson, on their first entry to the inland Batak territory, is also well known, but over a decade before this tragic event British Baptist missionaries had been active in the region. This earlier activity was closely associated with the British presence on the west coast of Sumatra and the personal interest the British Lieutenant-Governor, Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles, had taken in the evangelisation of the indigenous peoples of the Indonesian region.² In 1824, the year in which he finally left the east, Raffles had commissioned Richard Burton and Nathaniel

¹ On the life of Nommensen, there is a note of the more accessible, modern European studies attached to Schreiner 1998:499–500. In what follows Jonathan T. Nommensen 1974 was used, being an Indonesian translation by E.I.D. Nababan-Tobing, of the Toba Batak life, written in Sumatra by Nommensen's missionary son soon after his father's death, and published in 1925. This work is written out of, and into, a Batak rather than a European or mission board context. It is based on recollections and interviews and is largely free of the RMG image of Nommensen and of the idealistic veneration that later grew around the first Ephorus of the Batak church. Intent on telling the story of his father's life the younger Nommensen provides raw data, rather than an interpretation. In doing so, so closely after the events, he presents also the unmistakable flavour of missionary life: piety, family tragedies, political manoeuvring with respect both to Batak chiefs and the Dutch authorities. A second edition was published in two parts in Pematangsiantar about 1963/4. It was not possible to use recent publications on L.I. Nommensen, written by Martin E. Lehmann (1996) and Lorman M. Peterson (Nommensen's grandson-in-law who lives in San Diego USA), published in 2001.

² Payne 1945:38–56 offers a comprehensive account.

Ward to explore the central Batak region, preparatory to setting up a mission to the people around Lake Toba.

This party appears to have been well received, after a difficult journey through the rugged territory from Sibolga to the Silindung valley.³ From there they were forced to return to the coast when Burton became ill with dysentery, and their consequent failure to honour the summons of the principal Batak ruler, Si Singamangaraja, may have influenced the later Batak response to the tragic Munson and Lyman expedition of 1834.⁴

The British Baptist Mission terminated its work in Sumatra when the island was returned to Dutch rule in 1825 but some British mission activity continued on the west coast. While Richard Burton relocated to Bengal, in India, where he died in 1827, Nathaniel Ward moved to the principal local settlement, Padang, where he supported himself while engaging in evangelism and translation work among the coastal Malay population.

The missionaries' assessment of prospects in the Batak region is presented in an 1846 Memorandum by Ward, written in response to an enquiry from the Dutch Bible Society (*Nederlands Bijbelgenootschap*) about missionary prospects among the Bataks. In the Memorandum Ward notes that Richard Burton had established himself at Sibolga in 1821–1822 as a missionary to the Bataks, supported by the English Baptist Missionary Society, and remained there until he moved to Bengal in 1825. Burton, it seems, made some progress in the study and documentation of the 'Batta' language, but took all the results away with him. He had investigated a font to print a translation of John's Gospel in 'Batta' script although there is no evidence that any Batak material was printed at this time.⁵

In describing his 1824 journey with Burton, "at the expense of the British Government," Ward reported that they had moved in a north-westerly direction from the Bay of Tapanuli, to the region of the great lake, in the heart of the Toba country, near the seat of the principal Batak ruler, Si Singamangaraja. After crossing a triple chain of mountains, where there were occasional villages, they came into the clear open Silindung valley, which they found cultivated

³ Payne 1945:46–48.

⁴ Document H 302, KITLV, Leiden, edited by Schreiner as, "N.M. Ward's Report on a Visit to the Central Batak-Land in 1824," pp. 59–65 in: Schreiner 1971:57–71, at pp. 60–61. The Report, dated Padang 19 September 1846, is actually addressed to Major-General Michiels, the Dutch Civil and Military Governor of the West Coast of Sumatra.

⁵ It was common to spell Batak as 'Batta' in the 19th century, the final 'k' being indistinct in pronunciation. More confusing is the use of 'Batak', which unites several very distinct but related peoples (the Toba, Karo, Simalungun, Pakpak and Angkola Bataks), with specific reference to the Toba Batak, or their culture, language or religion. This practice is so established that it can no longer really be avoided.

and occupied by 20 to 30 populous villages, of solidly constructed communal houses.

Here they were received with respect and kindness and their very simplified presentation of the Christian gospel, limited to reading out tracts on creation, the Ten Commandments and the way of salvation, was heard with respect, although the Bataks sensibly declared that they would have to consider these matters further before accepting the new teaching.⁶

A modern Batak commentator has suggested that the response of the spokesman for the assembled people might have been, "we cannot desert our custom (adat) which has become part of our living being, but if you lead us to wealth and glory we are willing to welcome you among us."⁷ It is an apt observation in light of the focus of Batak religion, ancient and modern, on the increase of *sahala*⁸ by promoting an increase of wealth, power and status. As the nineteenth century advanced, progress (*hamajuon*), would become a driving force for religious change in each of the Batak societies of North Sumatra.

In his report Ward had come to the conclusion that the traditional religion of the Batak would fall before the first assault made on it, by either Muslims or Christians. Expanding colonial influence was bringing this day closer so, he argued, it was important for Christian missions to seize the opportunity. Given their openness to something new, the Bataks in Ward's view were unlikely to oppose the introduction of the Bible and Christianity.

The American Board of Commissioners appointed one further missionary, the Rev. Jacob Ennis, in 1837. Based in Padang, Ennis visited the southern Batakland without problem,⁹ but this work was not continued, seemingly because of Dutch government opposition. Further missionary initiatives in the Toba Batak homelands, after Burton and Ward's 1824 expedition, were prevented, for the time being, by renewed incursions of militant Minangkabau Muslims northward through Mandailing and Angkola as far as the Silindung valley and Lake Toba, making converts and spreading alarm wherever they appeared. An extension of the Padri struggle of 1818–1820 in West Sumatra, this conflict resulted in forced conversions to Islam, the carrying off of captives and many deaths in the Silindung, Pahae and Tarutung areas.

The Padri combatants opposed the extension of Dutch colonial rule in their home territory while at the same time attempting to extend Islam by force into the neighbouring Batak homelands. In the south the result was decisive in two

⁶ Schreiner 1971:60.

⁷ A. Silitonga 1965:64–70 at p. 65.

⁸ *Sahala* is a Toba Batak concept similar to the Polynesian *mana*. Bishop Anicetus Sinaga defines it as the "power of the soul and its authority which is seen as a living and effective power in real manifestation," Sinaga 1981:233, cf. Lumbantobing 1961:7–12.

⁹ Lempp 1976:110.

ways. Angkola and Mandailing have been predominantly Muslim since the 1830s, and the colonial government, seeking to pacify the region and disable the Padri movement, quickly consolidated their own rule in these southern Batak territories.

In the north many Batak communities were devastated. Although the Islamic fighters were forced to withdraw, leaving the free Bataks bitterly opposed to militant Islam, insecurity and fear were to be a continuing feature of Batak society until the colonial power eventually established a substantial measure of peace and order. Fighting in some areas had left communities unable to bury their dead or to fulfil the requirements of their *adat*, a circumstance to which some Bataks attributed later calamities that befell them. Unburied bodies led to outbreaks of disease, culminating in an extensive outbreak of fever and cholera.¹⁰

A modern Batak historian has described this invasion as an “impasse” that disrupted every aspect of Toba Batak society,¹¹ causing a serious breakdown in social order, in patterns of belief and in the standing of the Singamangaraja dynasty of ruler-priests whose head, the hitherto never-defeated Si Singamangaraja X, had been killed in battle early in 1819.

This sense of perilous insecurity remained a constant in the Batak areas unoccupied by the European colonial power and it is against this background that we can begin to understand both the hostility of those who killed S. Munson and H. Lyman in 1834 and the openness of some north Tapanuli raja, thirty years later, to both the German mission and the Dutch colonial administration.

Burton and Ward, as we have seen, were not able to complete their journey as far as Bakara, the headquarters of Si Singamangaraja XI, and some Bataks attributed the Padri assault and its horrific consequences to the failure of the foreign visitors to observe the basic requirements of Batak *adat*. Totally unprepared for their encounter with free Bataks, Munson and Lyman fell in with a band who had determined to allow no other Europeans to enter their territory and were killed.¹²

By the time Nommensen entered the free Batak territory of north Tapanuli the social disruption following the Padri incursions had led to frequent inter-village conflicts and a general breakdown of peace and security. In fact Nommensen and his party, on their first night after crossing from the Dutch-controlled area, shared a cave with fugitives from inter-village warfare, and the

¹⁰ Tarigan and Emilkam Tambunan 1974:35–37; J.T. Nommensen 1974:chap. ix.

¹¹ Batara Sangti [Ompu Buntilan Simanjuntak] 1977:24–25.

¹² This was the reason given to Nommensen by Raja Panggalamei, one of the leaders of the band who killed the two missionaries. Cf. Nommensen 1974:62–63.

insecurity and distrust pervading the region remained a feature of the early years of the mission in north Tapanuli.

*The beginning of sustained mission to the Toba Batak:
Nommensen since 1862*

The movement for the Christianisation of the Toba Bataks had commenced in earnest in January 1857 with the settlement of the Dutch missionary G. van Asselt in the Sipirok high country, in Angkola in the southern Batakland, by this time already under effective Dutch rule.¹³ Here he was joined by three fellow missionaries, Dammerboer, Van Dalen and Koster,¹⁴ all like himself, sent out by an independent revivalist church in Ermelo, in the Netherlands. Without financial backing the Ermelo missionaries supported themselves, in G. van Asselt's case by working as a coffee warehouse overseer in Angkola and Sipirok.¹⁵ To this day, and notably at the time of the HKBP centennial in 1961, the Sipirok Protestants, a minority in the now overwhelmingly Muslim southern Batak homelands, assert their place as the pioneer Batak Protestant community. Recalling the pioneering mission activity in Sipirok in the 1850s they celebrated their own counter-centennial celebrations.¹⁶

The first missionaries of the *Rheinish Missionary Society* (RMG) arrived in North Sumatra in the aftermath of the 1859 Dayak rising in Dutch Borneo (Kalimantan), when the mission withdrew after some of its staff were killed and the colonial government prohibited further entry, or re-entry, to inland areas.¹⁷ In the same year the RMG Inspector, Dr Friedrich Fabri,¹⁸ while visiting the Netherlands, became aware of the publications of Dr Herman Neubronner van der Tuuk who, from 1849, had undertaken a very productive survey of Batak languages on behalf of the Netherlands Bible Society, operating from a base in Barus.¹⁹ After discussion with Dutch mission leaders Fabri returned to Barmen convinced that his mission should send workers to Batakland. His

¹³ Susan Rodgers Siregar 1981:chap. 1. describes modern Sipirok and Angkola.

¹⁴ Nommensen 1974:44. Lempp 1976:111 names Dammerboer [sic], Van Dalen and Betz. Betz, also from the Ermelo Free Congregation, seems to have arrived separately.

¹⁵ Schreiner 1972:116, 141; Lempp 1976:110–111. 'Christianisation' (German *Christianisierung*, Indonesian *pengkristenan*) has proved to be an unfortunate term in respect to inter-faith relationships in modern Indonesia, heightening Muslim suspicion that Christians aim to overwhelm the Muslim and other religious communities altogether.

¹⁶ Susan Rodgers Siregar 1981:41.

¹⁷ Fridolin Ukur 1971:90; cf. chapter twelve.

¹⁸ F. Fabri, 1824–1891, was Inspector of the RMG 1857–1884. Cf. Schreiner 1971:58–70, and Hans-Werner Gensichen 1998:207.

¹⁹ Van der Tuuk was a colourful and eccentric scholar who entered well into Batak society and was warmly accepted by the Bataks, who made a friendly pun on his name: 'Pandortuk—Big Nose.' He may have been the first European to see Lake Toba.

board agreed and on 7 October 1861 three RMG missionaries, J.C. Klammer, C.W.S. Heine and W.F. Betz joined Van Asselt for a discussion, in the home of Bondanalolot Nasution in Parau Sorat, in Sipirok, where they established the Batak Mission, assigning to themselves particular areas of responsibility.²⁰ The missionaries Dammerboer and Van Dalen declined to serve under RMG oversight and sought other employment, while Koster died in Pagarutan.²¹

The date of this meeting has since been recognised by HKBP as the date of its foundation, with some Bataks later claiming to find a mystical significance in the names of the four pioneers: Heine, Klammer, Betz and Van Asselt. With *v* being pronounced as a *p* in Batak speech, the initials formed the now familiar HKBP, *Huria Kristen Batak Protestan*, the Christian Protestant Batak Church.

On 2 April 1861 Van Asselt had baptised the first Batak Christians, Jakobus Tampubolon and Simon Siregar.²² Known locally as the ‘Rijnsche Zending’ the RMG appointed a number of missionaries to work in the south from the 1860s. Batak lay assistants were appointed and Bible schools were established in some villages. From the time of the Padri war the southern Batakland has been substantially Muslim with Christians forming a vibrant minority community that by modern times was stable at about 10% of the population of Sipirok.²³

Herman Neubronner van der Tuuk had concluded, from his researches among the Toba Batak, that the mission organisations should withdraw their personnel from the southern Batak regions of Angkola and Mandailing, already substantially converted to Islam, and relocate them in those regions as yet uninfluenced by outside religions. He considered the time available for a successful mission to the free Bataks to be short, anticipating that with the expanding Dutch colonial enterprise would come the Malay language, the *lingua franca* of the archipelago, and in its wake Malay Muslim evangelists from the coast.²⁴

It was this vision that directed the attention of Ludwig Nommensen and his contemporaries to the region of northern Tapanuli and the free Batak territories as yet beyond the range of the Dutch colonial system, which at this

²⁰ Nommensen 1974:35, 44 [which records Betz’ transfer to the ‘Barmen Mission’]. Schreiner 1971:65–66; Susan Rodgers Siregar 1981:44.

²¹ Lumbantobing 1961:25 n. 46; Susan Rodgers Siregar 1981:44; Nommensen 1974:44.

²² Lempp 1976:111. Pedersen 1970:49 suggests that an army chaplain may have earlier baptised two Bataks returning from the Padri wars, but offers no names, time, place or evidence in support.

²³ Susan Rodgers Siregar 1981:2.

²⁴ Cited in: Theodor Müller-Krüger 1966:210. In translating *orang-orang Melaju* in this citation as “people from Malaya,” Pedersen 1970:54 creates a misleading impression. Van der Tuuk was not suggesting that Islamic missionaries might come from British Malaya.

time was limited in the north to the port towns of Sibolga and Barus. Work continued energetically in Angkola and Mandailing, particularly in areas such as Sipirok, Bunga Bondar, Sipiongot and Padang Bolak, under both RMG and a Dutch mission usually referred to as the 'Java Committee'.²⁵

Adding ecumenical and international colour to the region was a small Russian Mennonite community from the Ukraine, which settled in Pakantan, in Mandailing, in 1838. In 1871 the Dutch Mennonite mission established a station at Pakantan under Heinrich Dirks, followed later by two further stations, several subsidiary stations, two hospitals, an orphanage and schools. These congregations joined themselves to the Batak Church, HKBP, in 1931, along with congregations founded by the Java Committee,²⁶ but the Mennonites re-formed their own community in 1951.²⁷

Müller-Krüger has observed that one important element in the extraordinary success experienced by the RMG mission amongst the Toba Batak was its organisation and cooperative strategies, and a strong backing from Germany at least until 1914.²⁸ From the meeting of the four missionaries in Sipirok in 1861 a plan was evolved and adhered to, and missionaries were located, and relocated, to strategic areas as situations changed and opportunities developed. Decisions were made on the field by consultation and consensus.

This feature must be kept in mind as the crucial contribution of Ludwig Nommensen is considered. Of immense and increasing influence, he too was part of a team and his work formed part of an overall strategy. Increasingly his ability to understand the Batak and to relate to them on their own terms opened new strategic opportunities. But of equally crucial importance to the survival and then to the success of the mission in Silindung and Toba was the early adherence and support of strategic Batak leaders, pre-eminent among them the young Raja Pontas Lumbantobing.

Ludwig Ingwer Nommensen was born on 6 February 1834 on the Danish North Sea island of Nordstrand that was later absorbed into Germany. His family was very poor and as a child Nommensen had to work to support himself and to help his family. He suffered ill health and it was in response to healing from the effects of an accident that he committed himself to a life of missionary evangelism. His religious education was Lutheran, outwardly conventional although marked by the warm piety of the revivalist tradition. His son's account of Nommensen's youth reveals an emphasis on individual profession of faith, and the strong influence and support of his widowed mother.

²⁵ The Java Committee was Dutch and Reformed, basing its teaching on the Heidelberg Catechism. Its congregations united with HKBP in 1931 (Müller-Krüger 1966:212).

²⁶ H.S. Bender et al. (eds.) 1955/1969, vol. 1:248 (sub *Batta*).

²⁷ Müller-Krüger 1966:212, Lempp 1976:111, Pedersen 1970:56.

²⁸ Müller-Krüger 1966:217.

Nommensen sought what opportunities there were for education during the winter months, when farm work was not available, and when his family's circumstances finally permitted he left home to find work and education as a pupil-teacher. Finally he came to Barmen, headquarters of the Rheinisch Mission where after further part-time instruction he was admitted to the Mission Seminary for a four-year course leading to his ordination, in October 1861, as a missionary pastor.²⁹

The Mission Seminary (*Missionsseminar*) provided a full training for missionary candidates leading to ordination but it operated independently of the theological faculties of the universities at which German Protestant ministers were educated. The Seminary provided both theological education and missionary formation in the conservative pietistic and revivalist traditions that undergirded the nineteenth century Protestant missionary movement.

A strong emphasis was placed on developing an ability to communicate the Christian gospel and to seek the conversion of non-Christian people overseas. There was less attention paid to the critical biblical and theological scholarship of the day, or to developing a critical understanding of the missionaries' own society and culture. Practical preparation included language study, some medical instruction and the practical skills necessary to construct and maintain church buildings, houses and schools.³⁰

The missiology of the Seminary was influenced by early nineteenth century German theology, including the work of major theologians such as Schleiermacher, and by the intellectual and spiritual impact of teachers and mission leaders whose ideas had been shaped by influences from the revivalist movement and German idealism. Of particular significance was romanticism with its emphasis on a quasi-mystical concept of ethnic identity, *Volk* in German, leading to the concept of the Ethnic Church (*Volkskirche*) that was to be crucial in the strategy of the Batak mission.

Socially the Seminary was conservative, representing the nationalistic German Protestantism of the day, and Fabri, for example, was a strong advocate of German colonial expansion. Ecclesiologically the mission saw its link with the life and calling of the German Protestant church as important.³¹

²⁹ Biographical details from Nommensen 1974:chapters 1–4. It is not possible in this context to offer an adequate biographical study of Nommensen. For bibliography see Schreiner 1998:499–500. The theology of key teachers in the Seminary, and leaders of RMG, is discussed in Schreiner 1972:33–70.

³⁰ There is a fine study by Lothar Schreiner 1972:chapter II, where after a general introduction he discusses the specific theologies of mission leaders and teachers who shaped the RMG missionaries' tradition of faith. See also Jan S. Aritonang 1994:70–96 on the Seminary, the Mission teachers and their theology.

³¹ Aritonang 1994:72–74, 76–77; Schreiner 1972:35; A. Lumbantobing 1961:47–51; Schreiner 1972:79–85.

Theologically, the Seminary programme focused upon the need of humankind to find individual salvation from sin. The pietistic and revivalist influences gave warmth to what might otherwise have been a cold Protestant scholasticism, and produced a religion of the heart, in which redemption brought a close, personal and individual, relationship to God through Jesus Christ. There appears little evidence of an understanding that sin also operated in the orders of society and Jonathan Nommensen's account of the early preaching in Batakland illustrates a dualism that attributed blessing to God and evil to the work of an active, personal Devil (*Iblis; Sibolis*).³²

On 1 November 1861 Nommensen left Barmen for the Netherlands, where he met the leader of the Ermelo congregation. He also had discussions with Neubronner van der Tuuk whose strategy of moving into areas untouched by either Islam or the colonial administration Nommensen seemed to advocate from his first arrival in Sumatra. On 24 December he finally left Amsterdam and joined the collier *Pertinax* for a 142 day long, and unpleasant, voyage to Sumatra, disembarking at Padang 16 May 1862.³³ He was to remain in Sumatra, apart from four furlough periods in Europe, until his death in 1918.

Forbidden to enter the hinterland by both the colonial authorities³⁴ and the local leadership of the mission, Nommensen took ship to Barus, where he continued his study of both Malay and Toba Batak. By the end of 1862 he had moved to Sipirok, realising that Barus with its mixed coastal population was not a suitable base for a Batak mission.³⁵ By the end of 1863 Nommensen was in the Silindung valley, with the permission of the Dutch authorities although this area, like most of the northern Batak region, was part of the *onafhankelijk gebied*, the free territory that remained for the time being outside effective colonial rule and administration.

With his initial goal to get beyond the effective reach of either colonial or Islamic influence now realised, Nommensen was ready to begin the work of winning the free Batak people for the Gospel. It was a strategic move, strategically timed, for the Padri wars had unsettled Batak society and left a fear of Islamic incursion that was again heightened in the 1860s. Conflict between clan groups and even between villages created insecurity and a loss of confidence in the traditional ways and values to hold Batak society together. In the face of outside pressures many Batak were, consciously or unconsciously, looking for some new and secure ground to stand on.

Feeling themselves pressed between Islamic forces to both north and south, and the colonial regime on the coast and to the south, some at least among

³² Nommensen 1974: *passim*.

³³ J. Sihombing 1961:19; Nommensen 1974:33.

³⁴ Nommensen 1974:40.

³⁵ Nommensen 1974:chapter 4; Aritonang 1994:111.

the free Bataks were now ready to consider the possibilities of a new religion, which seemed willing to take their language, their social structures, and even the major elements of their custom (*adat*) seriously. Missionary efforts in health care, in education and in the ransoming and education of prisoners and slaves demonstrated new social values that came gradually to be appreciated by the democratic Batak communities and their leaders.

The village leaders (*raja huta*) who chose decisively to opt for this new way determined the response of their communities to Christian preaching, and became essential allies of the missionaries. Such a person was Raja Pontas Lumbantobing, an intelligently pragmatic young leader from Pearaja who saw alliance with the mission and acceptance of colonial rule as appropriate responses to the social crisis of the free Batak communities.

Raja Pontas believed that the time of the Si Singamangaraja dynasty had passed, along with the old Batak religion it steadfastly upheld, and he was baptised by Nommensen 27 August, 1865.³⁶ His authority, which was widely respected as far as Lake Toba, in effect secured the Silindung valley for the mission, and his ceaseless urgings to embrace literacy and the Christian faith encouraged both conversion and education in the region. His own standing and personal authority enabled Raja Pontas to travel freely wherever he chose, and his name afforded right of passage and protection to the missionaries in their travels.³⁷ He died on 18 February 1900, described by Jonathan Nommensen as the chief pillar of the Batak Church in Silindung.³⁸

There were other strategic indigenous leaders,³⁹ but there were also many who, from the first arrival of the missionaries, rejected both them and their teaching. Always alert to the outside world, many Batak leaders suspected that Nommensen, in spite of his fine words, was a spy for the *Gomponi*, as the whole colonial enterprise was long known in Batakland, and a forerunner of colonial occupation of the free territories which, they feared, would bring traumatic disruption to their traditional societies.⁴⁰ The most dramatic Batak opposition was mounted by the paramount leader, Si Singamangaraja XII.

Mission relationships with the colonial administration developed to the mutual benefit of both parties, although there was competition in some areas between government and mission schools. The colonial authorities reserved

³⁶ Müller-Krüger 1968:256; Pedersen 1970:58–59.

³⁷ Nommensen 1974:45, 90. Raja Pontas was given the name 'Obaja' (Obediah) at his baptism, and is sometimes referred to by this name in missionary writings. It is a mark of his standing as a traditional leader that his new name faded from sight in time.

³⁸ Nommensen 1974:185.

³⁹ Aritonang 1994:118 mentions several.

⁴⁰ Nommensen 1974:49, 51. *Gomponi* (*Kompeni* in Malay and Indonesian): the colonial administration and its associated interests and activities were so termed until 1942—from the Dutch East India Company—the Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie (VOC 1605–1799).

the right to permit or forbid missionary entry into even the free territories, and to prevent mission competition. This latter restriction long delayed the entry of Catholic missionaries into the Batak territories. Missionaries, for their part, felt secure under Dutch protection, a not inconsiderable factor in the wake of the RMG experience in Borneo.

Like most nineteenth century European missionaries the RMG workers saw the civil mission of the colonial government as parallel and allied to the task of Christian mission. Nommensen, as his son records, was quite ready to appeal to Dutch colonial authority when his first intention to settle in Silindung was challenged, although this region was still at that time free territory. With every attempt to build a house and begin his work thwarted, Nommensen invited local leaders, including the four raja recognised by Si Singamangaraja, and confronted them with documents signed by the governor of Padang and by the governor general of the Indies, permitting him to live in the region.⁴¹ Later, at a time when Silindung was still free territory, the Dutch Governor of Padang, P. Arriens, paid an extended visit to the mission, from December 1868 until January 1869. Soon after, a district officer (*controleur*) was appointed and the process of 'pacification,' as the colonial administration termed it, of the inland Batak territories was commenced.⁴²

The strategy for Toba Batakland: 1860s-1900

Having achieved his goal of entry into the free territory Nommensen at first attempted to establish his home, and base, in a settled village. Batak leaders who had come to associate the visits of foreigners with outbreaks of disease and other calamities opposed this. As the number of converts grew, to the point where they could no longer be dismissed as village eccentrics, Christians were expelled from their villages and Nommensen was forced to establish a Christian village, Huta Dame, Village of Peace, with its own school and church.

⁴¹ Nommensen 1974:57–58. It appears that the Si Singamangaraja dynasty exercised a moral authority in the wider Batak world that was much more extensive than that of a Raja Huta, or village chief. The title *singa* or lion (an animal not found in Sumatra but represented in Batak architecture) and *mangaraja*, maharaja or 'great king' is clearly Indian, probably Hindu-Javanese, in origin. There is evidence that an earlier Si Singamangaraja had designated four traditional leaders in each of the Batak societies to function as a tetrarchy. Even in his own Toba Batak society this institution never became established, but the designated chiefs, and their descendants, were remembered, and respected as representatives of the priest-king dynasty. Nommensen names the four his father challenged by their personal, but not by their clan (*marga*), names (p. 58).

⁴² The visit is described Nommensen 1974:98–100.

An unexpected outcome of this development was that the Bataks now expected Nommensen, as a village founder, to act as a raja and take responsibility for administering the affairs of his villagers. There were other unanticipated outcomes to the encounter of the two radically differing worldviews of the Bataks and the missionaries, and the 'church-state' relationship in Tapanuli was influenced in this initial period as much by Batak cultural expectations as by German political theology.

The tendency to relate events, such as an epidemic coming after a visit by someone who may have unwittingly offended against an aspect of Batak customary law, sometimes had unfortunate consequences. Similarly, Bataks sometimes interpreted conventional European objects in their own terms. Accustomed, for example, to the magical staff carried by their own *datu* and used to assert his power, Bataks were in great awe of Nommensen's walking staff. "At the beginning they were more afraid to see this staff of mine than they were to see me," Nommensen recorded, "and often this staff became God's means of protection for me in their midst."⁴³ This raja with his symbol of priestly power, his coolness in the face of danger, his patience in facing all kinds of provocation, his kindness and friendly interest, and his growing mastery of the Bataks' complex customary law was clearly someone to be taken account of. Nommensen's dialogical approach to evangelism was particularly suited to the Batak, who enjoy intimate debate and the vigorous exchange of ideas and viewpoints. He posed questions and raised possibilities for consideration even in baptismal instruction, rather than setting out to present in formal mode the whole biblical history, from creation to the return of Christ.

In February 1866 Nommensen had been joined in Sibolga by his fiancée, Carolina Margaretha Gutbrodt (1837–1887), and a new colleague, Peter Heinrich Johannsen.⁴⁴ Carolina Nommensen shared the hardships and heart-breaks of many missionary wives and mothers, and died in Europe, 29 March 1887, having taken their children home to continue their education.⁴⁵

Johannsen, the second European missionary to be based in the Silindung valley, was a scholar, writer and translator. He would train the first local teachers, writing or translating the course materials himself, and his very fine Batak translation of the Old Testament is still widely praised.⁴⁶ Johannsen has tended to be overlooked in the early history of the Batak Mission, in large part because Nommensen's work was consistently highlighted in European mis-

⁴³ Recorded by his son, Nommensen 1974:49.

⁴⁴ Nommensen 1974:77, 35.

⁴⁵ Nommensen 1974:159.

⁴⁶ Bishop Andar Lumbantobing, a modern Toba Batak theologian, dedicated the published version of his doctoral dissertation 1961:3, "Dem Gedächtnis von Missionar P.H. Johannsen, dem unübertrefflichen Übersetzer des Alten Testaments in die Toba-Batak-Sprache."

sionary publications, in the later histories, and finally in what became almost the cult of the first *ephorus* or superintendent of the Batak Church.

In more recent times Lothar Schreiner, whose work greatly advanced our understanding of both the theology and the history of the Batak Mission, has clearly established the significance of the three-sided partnership between Nommensen, Raja Pontas and Johannsen. This was to be a crucial factor in the initial acceptance of the Christian Gospel in Silindung, and ultimately in the dramatic success of the Batak Mission. Nommensen he sees as a man of initiative and vision, “a spiritual personality with an unflinching vision, related to the religious renewal.”⁴⁷

Raja Pontas Lumbantobing may be characterised as a radical cultural negotiator, who has suffered some eclipse in Batak history because of his ambiguous role in welcoming the western influences intruding on traditional Batak society. Open to both the mission and the coming of the colonial administration he was able to influence other rajas to accept the new order. His was a political role. As Schreiner notes, “His spiritual strength and insight into the mind of his fellow men influenced the *parbaringin* organisation to give way to the new faith. . . . His stand with the missionaries and the Christian congregations helped the new faith to stay among the Batak.”⁴⁸

Johannsen, for his part, provided the basis for teaching and preaching in the local congregations. Schreiner sees him as a scholar and teacher concerned with “the reconstruction of knowledge” in Batak society.⁴⁹ Resting on a shared insight, these three pioneers recognised clearly that historical continuity with the social and cultural past was vital if Batak people were to be able to accept a new faith, and with it a reconstructed world-view. The three-fold kinship structure of Batak society (the *dalihan na tolu*), and the customary law (*adat*) were to be safeguarded. Batak converts would become Batak Christians, living in a society that would change with time but remain clearly and distinctively Batak.

By 1876 there were about 2,000 Christians in the Silindung region and the missionaries felt assured that the community would endure in the face of strong reaction from the leaders of the old religion, and the opposition of those who distrusted the motives of the mission and its close association with what they still called the ‘Company’, the Dutch colonial administration and its agencies. Characteristically, Nommensen’s reaction to this improved situation was to move further north and engage in a new encounter, this time with the people in the region around Lake Toba. He was careful to maintain

⁴⁷ Schreiner 1987:179–187, at p. 185.

⁴⁸ Schreiner 1987:184.

⁴⁹ Schreiner 1987:185. Compare also Schreiner 1992:241–251, which includes a bibliography.

a formal relationship with Si Singamangaraja XI, and his successor, the most prominent Batak leaders in the region, and the most prominent and enduring stalwarts of the old ways.

Another feature of Nommensen's strategic insight was the move made, from the late 1870s, from emphasis on individual conversion to emphasis on the conversion of family groups, or even whole communities, to the Christian faith. Admission to church membership was always, and only, by means of an individual profession of faith and baptism, but the missionaries had come to realise that in Batak society the decision to accept instruction and then to seek baptism was often a communal one. It was this move in strategy that opened the way for the development of a genuine People's Church (*Volkskirche*) in Toba Batak society.

The mission theology in which Nommensen and his colleagues had been trained lent itself to this rather pragmatic approach to Batak society. The view of 'salvation history' taught by Friedrich Fabri and Georg Ludwig von Rohden emphasised renewal as a paradigm for evangelism. New life in Christ could penetrate and renew, rather than annihilate and destroy, the traditional world of the Batak. Nommensen's own method of evangelism emphasised instruction by question and answer, a dialogue to determine what the seeker was looking or hoping for, rather than a dogmatic proclamation of religious truths. Above all, the early missionaries lived within Batak society, in solidarity with local people and communities, both confronting the old religion and its practices and demonstrating in their own lives that the new religion was a practical, and promising, alternative for people seeking harmony and a renewal of their social order.

Nommensen's theology has been described as anthropocentric and this enabled him to conceive of, and to present, a Christian life and ethos growing organically within the actual life of Batak communities.⁵⁰ This theological orientation enabled Nommensen not only to develop and present a doctrine of human solidarity in Christ but also to accept as something quite natural and proper his own human solidarity with Batak people, whose life ways he respected and entered into as fully as he was able, for the rest of his life.

Nommensen's ecclesiology has more complex roots, although again his openness to human life and its potentialities is pivotal. He developed what Lothar Schreiner has called a 'contextual ecclesiology', which took the *adat*—the Batak customary law—and the social structures of Batak society seriously, unless they were in clear contradiction to Christian faith and teaching. But his ecclesiology is also rooted in the Lutheran Reformation, which identified the congregation with the *commune*—the socio-political entity—rather than with the idea of a

⁵⁰ Schreiner 2000:81–84, at p. 81.

distinct religious community.⁵¹ This Lutheran heritage, and the more modern Folk-Church idea with its roots in the German Romantic Movement, facilitated the development of the unique *Huria Kristen Batak Protestan* (HKBP). *Huria*, a Batak word denoting community rather than church,⁵² catches well the sense of identity between church and society. For this people's church Nommensen set apart appropriate lay leaders, the elders, more associated with a Calvinist or Reformed church order but significantly appropriate to Batak society. The kerygmatic paradigm employed by Nommensen in both evangelism and the nurture of converts was the concept of 'New Life' that had been strongly emphasised in the Barmen seminary.⁵³

Put together these elements of theology, evangelism, missiology and ecclesiology represent an astute and sensitively contextual response to the task of introducing a new faith for consideration by a people whose confidence in their own social order and system of belief remained intact, although under severe stress. As the Christian community in Tapanuli moved beyond its initial phase, 1864–1878, the small groups of baptised Christians began to take more recognisable shape as local congregations. In this situation the mission leaders began to seek out and train local leadership, to enlarge their outreach as well as to educate members of existing congregations. Church elders, appointed in congregations, worked closely with Christian rajas where the offices were not actually held by the same person. Thus a German Lutheran model of the relationship of 'church and state' came, quite naturally, to find an appropriate incarnation in Batakland.

As suspicion of the missionaries' association with the 'Company' diminished villages began to ask for the appointment of a mission teacher and the opening of a school. The desire for *hamajuon*, progress and advancement, always to the fore in Batak motivation, and the added prestige a village would enjoy in having a school and teacher, lay behind these requests.⁵⁴

Initially these elementary schools doubled as preaching posts and places of worship and were open to all children, in the hope that some might become Christians. Later they were restricted to baptised children, not for religious reasons but out of mission experience; the attendance of non-Christian pupils was too erratic to be of any educational value. Later, schools were restricted to larger villages, where there were fifty or more Christian families.⁵⁵

⁵¹ A recent statement by Peter Matheson 2000:137 and *passim*.

⁵² *Gereja* in modern Indonesian, and most of the regional languages, derived from Portuguese *Igreja*.

⁵³ Schreiner 2000:81.

⁵⁴ Aritonang 1994:118 and n. 21.

⁵⁵ Aritonang 1994:124–125.

At first the teachers were missionaries, and therefore restricted in numbers. As early as 1862, while still in Barus, Nommensen had proposed the establishment of an institute for training local teachers, but it was only after the arrival of August Schreiber in Sipirok in 1866, to be leader (*Praeses*) of the mission, that anything could be done. The first RMG missionary in this region who was a university graduate in theology, Schreiber, remained in Sumatra until 1873 when he succeeded Gustav Warneck as inspector general of the mission in Barmen. In April 1868 he opened a Catechetical School for adult students in Parausorat. The mission personnel involved with the School saw their efforts as an endeavour to nurture a self-supporting church, the ultimate goal of Protestant mission activity.⁵⁶

As the centre of the mission's activity moved from Angkola into the northern, Toba Batak speaking, regions the Catechetical School could no longer provide appropriate locally trained congregational teachers. Both distance and the language difference made the school at Parausorat unsuitable for Toba Batak candidates, and Schreiber had become anxious about Malay influence in Angkola, where the Angkola Batak language, he reported, was becoming 'Malayised' (*vermalaisiert*).⁵⁷ Like the later Dutch missionaries in Karoland, he feared that learning Malay, instead of holding to their own languages, would open the various Batak communities to Islamic influence.

An emergency effort was made to meet the needs of Toba Batak students in Silindung, in 1874, a Wandering School (*Sikola Mardalan-dalan*) which saw 20 students selected from the best elementary school graduates taught by Nommensen on Mondays and Tuesdays at Saitnihuta, on Wednesdays they were with Johannsen at Pansur Napitu and on Fridays the students were taught by August Mohri, missionary in Sipoholon. Apart from walking from one centre to the next the students filled in their week with study and congregational activities.

This course, like that at Parausorat, lasted two years. Nommensen taught biblical background, preaching, history, natural science, elementary medicine and German, the latter causing some amazement when reported in Germany. Johannsen taught biblical studies, geography, world history, church history, arithmetic and the catechism, and Mohri Islamic history, dogmatics, Malay language and music.⁵⁸ This venture produced so pleasing a level of achieve-

⁵⁶ Aritonang 1994:89–92, 137–139.

⁵⁷ Aritonang 1994:137–139 and n. 66.

⁵⁸ Aritonang 1994:140 and n. 67, 68 which record the surprise of an RMG editor who added emphasis ('?!') after reference to German—which had been taught at Parausorat also. Elementary medicine was offered as an alternative to the traditional *datu's* remedies. Nommensen translated Luther's Smaller Catechism in 1874.

ment that a decision was made in 1877 to establish a permanent catechetical school, later called a seminary, at Pansur Napitu and to amalgamate the Parausorat school with it.

Initially Johannsen was sole teacher in this new establishment, and had to set aside time each day for writing and translating, to prepare the texts his students required. The first thirteen graduates completed their courses in 1879 and were placed as teachers in various congregations, where they served also as evangelists and educators. Although a heavy work load combined with inadequate remuneration and lack of status led some Batak teachers to transfer to the government service, these teacher evangelists became key persons in the expansion of the Batak Christian community.⁵⁹

By about 1910 a network of mission stations and village schools had been established throughout North Tapanuli and the Toba Batak were well on their way toward the progress that would give them a prominent role in the yet undreamed of Indonesian republic. By 1918, the year of Nommensen's death, the Batak church was firmly established with a membership of 180,000, served by 34 ministers and 788 teacher-preachers. At this time there were 60 RMG personnel, men and women, serving with the Batak church, which entered a new phase in its life after World War I.

In a mere half-century the whole Toba Batak region had become accessible to the Christian gospel. Seen against the very difficult situation Nommensen and other pioneers faced in the 1860s, not to mention the tragic fate in 1834 of Munson and Lyman, this requires some explanation beyond the affirmation that this was the time determined by God.

Politically the Batak leaders of North Tapanuli were faced, as the mission entered their area, with the prospect of a steady advance of Islam from the south. In a society that had been thrown into internal disorder by the earlier Padri incursions endemic village and clan conflicts undermined any sense of security or prospect of prosperity. The coming of a new force into the Toba Batak area was seen, in time, as a possibility that could be embraced and utilised.

At first the Batak rajas were as suspicious of Nommensen and his colleagues as they had been of earlier European visitors, and time has shown that Batak leaders were realistic in associating the coming of missionaries with an extension of colonial rule. However, as the missionaries were able to demonstrate both their goodwill and their usefulness, some Batak leaders came to see them as potential agents or advocates in dealing with the encroaching colonial regime.

⁵⁹ Aritonang 1994:141, 146–148.

The Rhenish missionaries, mostly German by nationality, did not intentionally facilitate the extension of colonial government, but they found the protection offered even in the free territories, and the relative peace and good order that followed colonial 'pacification', very beneficial in the advancement of their own labours. Some Batak raja also came to see European rule as preferable to endemic social disorder and the threat of further Islamic incursions. They were also well enough informed to know that European rule would bring social benefits, particularly in health and education.

In the resulting political changes the mission showed remarkable insight into Batak social values. Nommensen's introduction of the office of lay elder (*sintua*) and his care that, wherever possible, this new office be held by the village raja, gave the traditional rulers a high stake in the local congregation and its advancement, and ensured that people saw a continuity rather than a disruption in the changing social order.

The elders came to carry heavy responsibility and the rajas to play an increasingly important role in the rapid territorial expansion of the Batak Mission. The two offices, particularly when combined locally in the one person, were the twin pillars of the local church and ensured that the lay membership, directly or through their raja, were identified with the new religious enterprise.

The Batak Mission from the outset addressed the problems Batak people faced in their society. The 'Good News' of the Christian Gospel was contextualised—embodied in practical responses to the concrete issues of Batak life. Illnesses and accidents were attended to with the basic medical knowledge the missionaries had gained in their training. Slaves, and people made prisoner for debt or other reason, were purchased, set free and often educated. Village schools opened a new world of knowledge to the Bataks whose alert and inquiring minds, and quest for advancement, made them keen learners. Thus the mission quickly established itself as a useful and progressive agency in Batak society, seeking to serve, and respectful of Batak leadership and values.

The particular style of mission, embodied particularly in Nommensen's praxis, encouraged a perception that Christianity was a development of the traditional wisdom and values inherited from the ancestors. Evangelism was often by dialogue rather than dogmatic preaching, taking seriously the intellect and understanding of the hearers. The combination of courage in danger, steadfastness in difficulty, humility in service and a willingness to enter as far as possible into Batak life in terms of its own patterns and values proved an attractive combination to Batak observers, who came as time passed to see in the missionaries something more than agents of an encroaching colonial regime.

In the economic sphere missionaries actively advanced the opportunities for a people long isolated from the commercial mainstream. In time the mission introduced, developed and promoted commercial crops and actively sought

technical information and new vegetable and plant varieties for the development of village agriculture.

Entering the Batak homeland at a time of social disorder the mission strived to develop a Christian community, in which individual converts, and later groups of new Christians, could find the new life that was central to the missionary theology of Nommensen and his contemporaries. That it enabled a whole society to make the transition into a wider and more complex world without losing the patterns and values of their own tradition and culture is evident in the vitality of the modern Batak churches and in the contribution individual Bataks have made to the now independent Republic of Indonesia. There have been several large schisms from HKBP, and some bitter conflicts, but the people of Tapanuli have found a new spiritual orientation for themselves and an orientation for life in a new age and a changed order that has transformed their society in just over 150 years.

*1900–1945: the difficult struggle for the independence of the major
Batak church*⁶⁰

The success experienced in the early decades of the Batak Protestant church also presented elements of challenge. Nommensen and his contemporaries knew that their enterprise could not remain forever dependent on overseas mission support. The magnitude of the task and the danger of producing a passive, dependent Batak community both demanded a change in direction, toward self-reliance and ultimately independence. To this end a Batak Missionary Association, the *Pardonganon Mission Batak*, known more familiarly as the *Kongsi Batak*, and later as the *Zending Batak* after it was integrated into the HKBP structure in 1921, was formed in 1899. Henoeh Lumbantobing, a *pandita Batak* (Batak pastor), enjoyed some success in isolated areas such as the district around Samosir, and on islands near Sumatra: Enggano, and the Mentawai group, where an independent church, the *Paamian Kristen Protestan Mentawai* was established.⁶¹

But not long after entering the twentieth century the Batak church faced and experienced a series of waves of rapid and decisive change. Through some channels of information, though still very simple and limited, the Batak Christians knew that there was an emergence of nationalism among Asian nations. Japan's victory against Russia in 1905 raised a consciousness and pride among Asian nations that they were not always behind and weaker than

⁶⁰ A thorough study on this subject was provided in J.R. Hutaaruk's dissertation 1980 and the Indonesian translation 1993.

⁶¹ Müller-Krüger 1968:286–287.

the western nations. The emergence of Indonesian nationalism, as indicated, among other influences, by the forming of *Budi Utomo* in 1908, followed by some other parties—Islamic (like *Sarekat Islam* and *Muhammadiyah*, both in 1912) or secular (like the *Indische Partij*, also in 1912)—in Java, in a short time found echoes in many other places.

World War I (1914–1918) was a turning point in relations between the European missionaries and the Batak Church. The prestige of Europeans in general suffered an irreversible setback in Asian eyes, and German resources after the war were much reduced. The death of Nommensen in 1918 removed the one leader who stood beyond criticism at a time when Batak church leaders were better educated and increasingly influenced by the growing spirit of Indonesian nationalism. The paternalistic pietism of the mission seemed to many younger Batak Christians to be holding their people back from a fair participation in the opportunities of the modern world. Their protest manifested itself firstly in vigorous journalism, critical of both the colonial government and the German mission.

One of the main indicators of the emergence of nationalism in Batakland (more accurately described as regional nationalism) was the forming of *Hatopan Kristen Batak* (HKB, Batak Christian Association) in 1917, led by Mangihut Hezekiel Manullang (more popularly called Tuan Manullang), a former student radical returning after a decade overseas.⁶² Politically the Association was linked to early nationalist movements and on the church front they challenged the religious monopoly, as they saw it, of the mission. The initial motive of HKB was the social and economical enhancement and independence of the Batak within a Christian environment through achieving higher status, or even equality with the westerners in all fields of life, including the church. This enthusiasm became stronger when HKB knew that Germany was defeated in the World War I with all of the consequences: political, economical, spiritual, and that the RMG had also to bear these consequences.⁶³ HKB appealed to the Batak Christians to take over the leadership in the church from the German missionaries, and the political leadership from the Dutch.

⁶² For a further description and analysis of HKB and M.H. Manullang see Hutaaruk 1980:144–188.

⁶³ One of the serious consequences was financial. Not only was its budget for its mission field reduced significantly but RMG was also called to overcome the financial difficulties faced by the churches in Germany. In some editions of *Immanuel* monthly in Batakland in 1925 we read RMG's appeal to the Batak Christians and local congregations to collect funds *bahen manumpahi Rijnsche Zending na targogot di tingki on* (to aid the RMG in its dire financial straits). A number of laymen and HKBP pastors even formed a Committee to Help the Barmen Mission and Elders' Mutual Aid Society that succeeded in collecting a sum to be sent to Barmen: Aritonang 1994:276.

The missionaries accused HKB of bringing danger to the church and to society, and acting together with the colonial government had its leaders jailed. This only sharpened hostile feelings among the HKB leaders and supporters. When Sarekat Islam entered Batakland, HKB showed its sympathy and support, although politically HKB was more closely affiliated to *Insulinde*, a secular party. This support was shown in the case of Sjech Haji Ibrahim Sitompul who proclaimed himself to be “Leader of Islam, President of Sarekat Islam, and raja of Janji Angkola.” He won the election of *kepala negeri* (head of district) of Janji Angkola (in North Tapanuli but close to the border of South Tapanuli, inhabited by Christians and Muslims) but the colonial government through J.W.Th. Heringa, the *controleur* in Silindung (that covered Janji Angkola), cancelled the counting of votes and planned to appoint his competitor, Aristarchus Sitompul, a Batak pastor. HKB joined the protest to bring the case to the resident of Tapanuli, F.C. Vorstman, to secure Haji Ibrahim’s victory.⁶⁴

HKB’s protest against the western (colonial as well as mission) domination continued. Their demands for indigenous participation in church decision-making, as well as the establishment of local boards for church governance and financial management, were denied. Thereupon they formed their own church in 1927, *Christen Batak Hoeria* (Batak Christian Church), led by Tuan F.P. Sutan Maloe Panggabean.⁶⁵ This new church represented a first schism in the great Batak Church. The leader of the ‘official’ Batak Mission/Batak Church—the *ephorus* at that time (from 1920)—was Johannes Warneck, son of Gustav Warneck the founder of modern Protestant Missiology, nicknamed by the HKB, “The Batak Church Pope.” Johannes Warneck tried to block this nationalist Batak action by saying that a new church order for a self-reliant Batak Church was in the process of composition, and would be soon launched and ratified, but in this he failed.

The plan to compose a new church order to parallel the new name (*Huria Kristen Batak*), and to define the nature and structure of the Batak Church was actually not wishful thinking; the process was already initiated by 1925. But the leaders of the Batak Mission, who were simultaneously the leaders

⁶⁴ For a further information and analysis see Castles 1972:98–104 and Aritonang 2004:116–118.

⁶⁵ A similar spirit of independence and demands for indigenous participation was also seen in the establishment of *Punguan Kristen Batak* (PKB, Batak Christian Gathering) at Batavia on 10 July 1927, that later grew to be a new church split from the great Batak Church, as well as the *Gereja Mission Batak* (GMB, *Batak Mission Church*) at Medan on 17 July 1927. In November 1946 most of the HChB members founded *Huria Kristen Indonesia* (HKI, Indonesian Christian Church), while some of them remained in HChB that in 1950 changed to become *Gereja Kristen Batak*. For a further description see Pedersen 1970:149–156; Lempp 1976:232–272; Hutauruk 1980:204–208; and B.A. Simandjuntak 2001:476–490.

of the Batak Church, felt that they still needed time to establish a truly self-reliant church, since they perceived that the Batak Christians were not mature enough, especially in terms of spirituality and mentality. The attempt was, however, intensified after the visit of Dr. Hendrik Kraemer in February–April 1930 and the receipt of his critical report. Kraemer concluded that the Batak Mission showed a very strong possessive paternalism or patriarchalism, “the pattern of relations was mostly patriarchal;” therefore he advised the German missionaries to give the opportunity and trust to the Christian Batak.⁶⁶ This assessment was based on a very basic change in the theology of mission in Europe after World War I. Strongly influenced by Karl Barth, one of the most prominent Protestant theologians, Kraemer stated that the maturity of a church did not depend on the evaluation of, and was not determined by, the missionaries, but merely by and under the judgment of the Word of God. World War I had proved that the so-called Christian nations and churches were not reliable anymore as the best examples.⁶⁷

The Batak Mission called a synod in 1930 with the approval of the board of RMG in Germany. This Great Synod (*Synode Godang*) produced a unique church order or constitution and established a new name, *Huria Kristen Batak Protestan*, as a fully recognised church, separated now from the founding mission. It was actually stated that the Batak Church should be led by the Batak Christians and will become self-reliant (Batak: *manjujung baringinna*) and an attempt was made to incorporate the wishes of the dissident groups into the church order. In Kraemer’s words, “in this Constitution the Bataks have been assigned a larger measure of independence and participation than they had before.”⁶⁸ But the bitterness of the division ran too deep. Moreover the foreign leaders of the Batak Mission still needed time for the handing-over of the leadership so that in the time of transition the top leadership positions should be still held by the German missionaries. That happened when P. Landgrebe replaced Johannes Warneck in 1932 and E. Verwiebe replaced Landgrebe in 1936.

This postponement of the transfer of leadership brought restlessness in the Batak Church. It was no wonder then that not long after the Dutch colonial officials interned the German missionaries, on 10 May 1940, as a retaliatory response to the German occupation of the Netherlands, the Batak Christian leaders held an Extraordinary or Special Synod on 10–11 July 1940. They refused the agreement made by the Dutch colonial government, the

⁶⁶ English translation of H. Kraemer’s report on Batakland and the Batak Mission/Church is available in Kraemer 1958:43–72. The term ‘possessive paternalism’ was also used in Pedersen 1970:151.

⁶⁷ Van den End 2002:15.

⁶⁸ Kraemer 1958:63.

Zendingsconsulaat and the Batak Mission that the management of the Batak Mission would be transferred to the Batak Nias Zending (BNZ), a special mission institution established during the war to manage or to take over the work and property of RMG in the Batak and Nias areas. In the election of *Voorzitter* (Chairperson) of the HKBP (equivalent to the Ephorus) during that Extraordinary Synod Pastor Kassianus Sirait, respected for his firmness and willingness to confront foreign representatives at a time when independence from the mission was at stake,⁶⁹ won against Pastor Hans de Kleine, proposed by the BNZ. Dr. J. Winkler, one of the officers of RMG, called this synod *Räubersynode* (Synod of Robbers) and refused to release all property of the Batak Mission to the “really self-reliant HKBP.”

The RMG could not understand how the HKBP could proclaim itself an independent church without regard to the RMG, without expressing even a few words of thanks for its ministry and without taking proper steps to effect the separation. This disappointment increased when they read that the ‘radical group’ in the Special Synod had laid claim to ownership of all RMG property in the Batak area without buying it with money from the Batak Christian community.⁷⁰

While RMG was busy with the Dutch government and the *Zendingsconsulaat* discussing how to continue administering its work and property, and while BNZ was debating in a harsh quarrel with the HKBP leaders, Japanese troops landed in March 1942, to occupy Indonesia. This Japanese occupation also brought HKBP into a very difficult situation, among other factors due to the Japanese suspicion that Christianity was a western religion, the religion of the enemy and the religion of the colonialists, and that HKBP, like the other churches, was pro-Western in its sympathies. During the short period of 1942–1945 many church buildings and practically all schools, hospitals and many other buildings and property were forcibly taken over by the Japanese to be used as warehouses, military barracks, etc. The seizure of property had long-term consequences because this property sometimes passed to the control of the succeeding government rather than being returned to the church.⁷¹

In the eyes of HKBP Japanese actions were a perversion of the message in the Bible because they implanted anti-Christian teachings in the population with the final goal of wiping out Christianity. For those who had been with the RMG, these Japanese actions meant that, “the Church would lose its

⁶⁹ Nyhus 1987:153.

⁷⁰ Aritonang 1994:310. Only in 1948 did the RMG officially declare that the property of the RMG in Sumatra belonged to HKBP. For HKBP this declaration was important as a symbol of the change in relations with the RMG, i.e. partnership in obedience. Nyhus 1987:183, cf. Aritonang 1994:312 and A. Lumbantobing 1961.

⁷¹ Nyhus 1987:131. For a further description regarding the effect of the Japanese occupation on HKBP see Nyhus 1987:127–145 and 467–480.

influence over the youth. It would no longer be possible for the Church to teach Christian young people in a Christian way through instruction in the school.⁷² For the members of HKBP in general, as happened too in all churches at that time, this period also brought a serious temptation to their faith. They were forced to worship and express homage to the Japanese Emperor Tenno Heika by doing *sheikerei* (bowing or bending from the waist toward the sun, since the emperor was believed to be descended from Amaterasu, the Sun Goddess). Some of the HKBP leaders, like Justin Sihombing, tried to refuse this ritual because they felt that by doing this they made the emperor equal to God. But most HKBP leaders, for example at the Synods of 1942 and 1944, publicly declared the church's loyalty to the Japanese government, referring to Romans 13:1–7.⁷³

The two-year conflict with BNZ and the terrible conditions brought about by the Japanese occupation were apparently too heavy for Kassianus Sirait and so greatly disturbed his physical condition that he asked permission to resign during another Extraordinary Synod in 1942. In the meantime, with the arrival of the Japanese, many felt that a more quiet personality was needed, and they found it in Justin Sihombing who succeeded as leader of HKBP during this very difficult period.⁷⁴ Like many other churches, the bitter and harsh experience caused by the Japanese, however, brought a blessing in disguise; it brought HKBP to a real self-reliance, according to Henry Venn and John Nevius' three-self formula: self-supporting, self-propagating and self-governing. Although many Batak Christian teachers—doing a double task, in the school as well as in the local congregation—resigned because the church could not pay their salary and the Japanese authorities were not interested in advancing education and the life of the church, HKBP was able to maintain its existence and ministry.

*HKBP as a major Christian factor in ecumenical and political
developments of Indonesia: 1945–1980*

The difficulties faced by Indonesia soon after the proclamation of independence or during the so-called era of physical revolution 1945–1949 (cf. chapter six) also applied to HKBP. When the Dutch eventually gained control of the East Coast of Sumatra and much of Java, HKBP members were divided between

⁷² As told by Hans de Kleine, who was also interned by the Japanese authorities, in *Jahres Bericht der RMG* 1951/1952:20, quoted in Aritionang 1994:312.

⁷³ Nyhus 1987:136.

⁷⁴ Nyhus 1987:153. In the election of July 1940 Justin Sihombing was actually nominated by many Batak/HKBP pastors. But he withdrew as an expression of his respect for Sirait, his senior. Sihombing later became the longest-serving Batak Ephorus of HKBP (1942–1962).

the Republican and the Dutch-controlled areas. Tensions between Republican Tapanuli and Dutch-dominated East Sumatra and Java temporarily threatened the unity of HKBP. In Republican-controlled Tapanuli many government and legislative officials were members of HKBP, including the Resident of Tapanuli Dr. Ferdinand Lumbantobing, while on the East Coast Dutch authorities hoped for cooperation from Christian groups, including HKBP. The differences in political opinion began to influence relations between the two areas. Already in December 1947 Republican voices had accused the Dutch of using Indonesian ministers and priests to promote the Dutch point of view. By late 1948, after a civil war had erupted in Tapanuli, Federalist supporters among the Toba Batak on the East Coast, who had been advocating the creation of a Batak State in Tapanuli, out of fear that the clashes had gone beyond Indonesian control also called for Dutch intervention. In this atmosphere the Tapanuli republican government forbade HKBP to permit delegates from the East Coast and Java District to attend the General or Great Synod to be held at the end of November 1948, contending that anti-Republican sentiment might be expressed.⁷⁵

Notwithstanding the tense and uncertain situation, HKBP continued to develop and to play its role in the political sphere. Throughout the early process of institutional formation in 1945 and onwards, important ties existed between HKBP and government and party leaders, especially *Partai Kristen Indonesia* (Indonesian Christian Party, *Parki*, later *Parkindo*). Citing Van Langenberg's summary and conclusion, religion and religious organisations served as an important integrative force. "Christianity and the HKBP provided ideological and institutional cohesion between government and party, between mass and elite."⁷⁶ But, continued Nyhus, the conclusion should not be drawn that the church was a monolithic unit acting in this capacity. Within the church difference of opinion existed concerning what role the church should have in political activity and about its ties to both government and political parties, and what part officials, clergy and laity should play.⁷⁷ These questions and differences of opinion also continued in HKBP during the following years, up to the present.

HKBP also played a very important role in the development of the ecumenical movement (cf. chapter seventeen). As early as the last quarter of the nineteenth century, the Batak Mission had shown its participation in the 'ecumenical' Depok Seminary (that existed 1878–1926) by sending quite a large number of Batak students (see chapter sixteen). When some churches and missions initiated a union or ecumenical higher-level seminary, the *Hoogere*

⁷⁵ Nyhus 1987:145–146, 483–484.

⁷⁶ M. van Langenberg, "National Revolution," 414–416; cited in Nyhus 1987:486.

⁷⁷ Nyhus 1987:487.

Theologische School (HTS), at Batavia in early 1930s, HKBP also demonstrated its genuine participation by commissioning some students (some of whom later became *ephorus*) and by contributing funds. The first four HKBP students at the HTS, together with other HKBP students on Java who were members of the Student Christian Movement, also participated in ecumenical activities that brought them into contact with other students from Asia and with world church leaders.⁷⁸

Regarding the initial participation of HKBP in some international ecumenical organisations, Nyhus⁷⁹ has given a sufficient summary: during World War II national and international Christian organisations in Europe and North America maintained their interest in the HKBP. They recognised the church's independence and, following the war, invited HKBP to take part in international conferences, among others the conference of the International Missionary Council in Whitby 1947 (represented by Rev. T.S. Sihombing), and to become members of international organisations. In 1948 HKBP, represented by Rev. K. Sitompul, became a charter member of the WCC, at its inaugural assembly in Amsterdam. In 1949 HKBP sent delegates to the first meeting of the East Asian Christian Conference held in Bangkok, and in 1957 HKBP was the Indonesian host when the conference of EACC was held in Parapat. HKBP also became a member of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) in 1952.⁸⁰

Membership of LWF was not promptly achieved, because one of the requirements was that HKBP had to accept the Augsburg Confession of the Lutheran church. The HKBP leaders were aware that they were not purely Lutheran since they had inherited from the RMG the so-called *Uniert* tradition, that is a union or combination of Lutheran and Reformed (Calvinist) traditions, and they wanted to define their own theological identity. To solve this problem, HKBP formulated its own confession in 1951 that on the one hand adopted the Augsburg Confession and on the other hand reflected its own theological struggle and standpoint. The LWF assembly in 1952 accepted this *Confessie HKBP 1951* as not contrary to the Lutheran doctrine and confession. This *Confessie* is the first confession formulated by the Indonesian Protestant churches.

At the national level HKBP has been active since the preparatory meetings for the founding of *Dewan Gereja-gereja di Indonesia* (DGI, the Indonesian Council of Churches). Already in 1949 HKBP had stated its agreement to

⁷⁸ Nyhus 1987:177.

⁷⁹ Nyhus 1987:179–181.

⁸⁰ By becoming a member of the LWF, from 1954 onwards HKBP could receive a generous amount of grants, among others—with the support also of the RMG and some other overseas partners—to establish a large university in Medan and Pematangsiantar, called Nommensen University. Pedersen 1970:167–170.

becoming a member of DGI. On the question of whether the members of the DGI should move toward organisational unity, some spokesmen of HKBP at the general conferences of DGI in 1953–1964 supported this as an ultimate goal, but emphasised spiritual over organisational unity. As the largest Protestant church in Indonesia, HKBP's opinion had a substantial influence, and from time to time HKBP commissioned its personnel to hold certain tasks and office; the most prominent was S.A.E. Nababan, DGI/PGI's general secretary 1967–1984 (see further below and also chapter seventeen).

In terms of quantity, the decade of the 1950s was a period of impressive growth and expansion for HKBP, although in the midst of this period there was a separatist movement or revolt, *Pemerintahan Revolusioner Republik Indonesia* (PRRI, Revolutionary Government of the Republic of Indonesia) that involved many of HKBP's members and ministers.⁸¹ From 512,000 in 1951 its membership increased to 745,000 in 1960. More and more local congregations and parishes were opened outside Tapanuli or Batakland due to the migration of the Toba-Bataks to East Coast of Sumatra as well as to Java.⁸² But already from the late 1950s some new restlessness also increased within HKBP, as could be seen among other places in the case of the *Gereja Kristen Protestan Simalungun* (GKPS, Simalungun Christian Protestant Church) and the establishment of some other newly separated churches.

The spirit of independence and self-reliance among the Simalungun Christians that culminated in the establishment of GKPS in 1963 had already been evident since 1928.⁸³ In that year the Simalungun Christians celebrated 25 years' anniversary of the Pematang Raya congregation as the official starting point of evangelism in this area. During the celebration they also discussed the future of their church and Christianity in Simalungun and arrived at the conclusion that the main factor making progress rather slow was the domination of the Toba-Bataks in the mission personnel and in the language that was being used. To enhance progress they asked the Batak Mission to provide them with Christian literature (including the Holy Scriptures and *Agende* or Order of Worship) and schoolbooks in the Simalungun language, to prepare more Simalungun Christians to become teacher, evangelists and even pastors, and to give opportunity to the Simalungun people to take part in the church office and structure. Furthermore, they asked the missionaries and the Toba-Batak church-workers to treat and appreciate the Simalungun people as equal with the Toba-Bataks, because they have their own identity: culturally, socially, mentally and spiritually. Under the leadership of Jaudin Saragih

⁸¹ Regarding PRRI see also Aritonang 2004:303–307 and R.Z. Leirissa 1991.

⁸² Regarding the migration in the 1950s see further Clark E. Cunningham 1958.

⁸³ For a further description and analysis of this subject see Hutauruk 1980:208–222. A recent study on GKPS can be found in Juandaha R.P. Dasuha et al. 2003.

(a government officer) and Rev. Jaulung Wismar Saragih (1888–1968, the first Simalungun pastor)⁸⁴ they also expressed their sincere aspiration by establishing some supporting organisations such as *Komite Na Ra Marpodah* (Advisory Committee, especially for literature and evangelism), *Kongsi Laita* (“Let’s go” Society for Evangelism) and—during the Japanese occupation—*Parguruan Saksi ni Kristus* (Communion of Christ’s Witnesses), and issuing the *Sinalsal* (Ray) monthly.⁸⁵ All this was attempted under a motto: Simalungun should be won by and in the language of the Simalungun people.

The Batak Mission and the HKBP did not give a sincere and rapid response to this Simalungun aspiration. Only in 1935 did Simalungun become a district in HKBP and only some years later did a Simalungun pastor, J. Wismar Saragih, administer it. In 1953, in the celebration of 50 years of the proclamation of the gospel in Simalungun, while the Simalungun Christians asked for an independent church, HKBP declared a special autonomy for this district, with a special name: HKBP Simalungun, and appointed J. Wismar Saragih as a Vice-Ephorus for this autonomous district. In the eyes of the Simalungun Christians this postponement of independence was just copying the paternalistic character of the Batak Mission against the former aspiration of the Toba-Batak Christians. Therefore they strove more intensively until the establishment of GKPS was realised in 1963. Although the ‘maturation’ of GKPS was celebrated in a big ceremony, many Simalungun Christians felt that the Toba-Bataks in HKBP wanted to continue their spiritual and ecclesial imperialism toward them. That is why, from then until the present, there has been an increasing consciousness among some Simalungun people that they are not a branch of the Bataks, notwithstanding the traditional belief or mythology that the Simalungun *margas* (clans) are part or branches of the *margas* of the Toba-Batak community.

We can find a similar case in Angkola-Mandailing region. Since the 1950s the feeling has increased among the Angkola-Mandailing Christians that they were too much dominated by the Toba-Bataks, while they were also aware and proud of their own language (or dialect) and adat (custom) and of their region as the starting point of the successful RMG work. When they asked in the early 1960s for an independent church, HKBP only gave a form of autonomy, including a special name: HKBP Angkola. After some further years of striving, in 1975 this church secured full independence with a new name: *Gereja Kristen Protestan Angkola* (Angkola Christian Protestant Church) and—like

⁸⁴ A recent study of J.W. Saragih from the so-called post-colonial perspective can be found in Martin L. Sinaga 2004.

⁸⁵ Van den End 2002:197.

GKPS—also extended its ministry to the whole province of North Sumatra and even to many other provinces in Indonesia.⁸⁶

Another striking restlessness showed up from the late 1950s, starting in Java especially in Jakarta and then spreading to all HKBP circles. There were some intermingled causative factors, among others the freedom of the congregations and parishes to manage themselves against the top-down policy of the synod-level leaders, the role of lay persons, the intervention of certain rich men in the policy of the church, and primordial sentiments (like nepotism, *margaism* or clan solidarity, and regionalism). In 1959 the Java-Kalimantan district (centred in Jakarta) wanted to set up its own policy regarding finance and personnel (including the qualification and placement of the pastors). The synod-leaders (the *ephorus* and the general secretary) in the HKBP headquarter in Tarutung did not approve the district's policy and strove to apply their own policy. The conflict sharpened during the Great Synod of 1962 when—under the influence of a rich businessman T.D. Pardede—this synod reflected an atmosphere and produced some decisions that many of the participants felt to be contrary to the strategy and spirit of HKBP as a church.

Soon after the synod a quite large number of HKBP members and ministers—including many prominent laypersons—initiated a series of committees such as *Panitia Panindangi Reformasi* (Committee to Witness the Reformation), *Dewan Keutuhan HKBP* (Council for Perfection of HKBP), and *Dewan Koordinasi Patotahan HKBP* (the Coordinating Council for Reform) to put the HKBP in order. Some of their members organised a *pelgrimstocht* (a sort of long march) led by Professor Apul Panggabean MA, from Medan to Tarutung (almost 300 km), expressing their appeal and aspiration for the total recovery and renewal of HKBP. Instead of listening and fulfilling the appeal, the top leaders of HKBP dismissed a number of prominent leaders suspected to be the leaders of the movement, among others Rev. Dr. Andar Lumbantobing (President of the Nommensen University), Drs. H.M.T. Oppusunggu (Vice-President of the same university) and Rev. Dr. Sutan M. Hutagalung (Chairman of the Pastors' Conference and a professor at the same university). When the participants and leaders of this renewal movement saw no more possibilities to renew HKBP from within, in August 1964 at Pematangsiantar they initiated a new church, *Gereja Kristen Protestan Indonesia* (GKPI, Indonesian Christian Protestant Church). HKBP tried to cancel the establishment of this new church by seeking the authority of the governor of North Sumatra, Ulung Sitepu, but was unsuccessful.⁸⁷

⁸⁶ See further J.U. Siregar 1999.

⁸⁷ For supplementary description of the emergence of GKPI see; Pedersen 1970:173–178; Lempp 1976:273–276; Raja Lubis 1982; and B.A. Simandjuntak 2001:489–500. In 2005 GKPI had around 340,000 members gathered in around 1000 local congregations and served by

Besides GKPI, there is another church that split from HKBP during the same time, the *HKBP Luther* (later changed to *Gereja Kristen Luther Indonesia/GKLI*, Indonesian Christian Lutheran Church). This church, led by Rev. J. Sinaga and his family, has a strong relationship with the Norwegian Lutheran Church as shown by the establishment of a theological seminary at Sihabong-habong, in North Tapanuli (now Humbang Hasundutan) where its headquarters is also located. Some years later (in the early 1980s), after another internal conflict in HKBP, especially in Medan, there came another split, forming the *Gereja Punguan Partangiangan*, later changed to *Gereja Protestan Persekutuan* (Protestant Church of Fellowship). Then in 1992—after some years of struggle and attempts—the Pakpak-Dairi tribe in HKBP founded its own church, *Gereja Kristen Protestan Pakpak-Dairi (GKPPD)*. Therefore, since the 1920s there have been at least nine churches split or derived from HKBP: HChB/GKB, HKI, GMB, GKPS, GKPI, GKLI, GKPA, GPP and GKPPD. These churches (except HChB/GKB that is already defunct) became members of DGI/PGI together with HKBP, and most also became members of international ecumenical bodies (WCC, CCA, LWF and UEM). However, an increasingly closer relationship and cooperation between HKBP and its ‘children’ is also seen in *PGI Wilayah* (the regional communion of churches) in North Sumatra, as well as in many other provinces. This phenomenon is included in what was termed and described by Paul Pedersen in his book as the expression of *Batak Blood and Protestant Soul* (1970).

The establishment of new churches solved not all internal tension and conflicts. A quite sharp conflict in HKBP broke out again in the 1970s, also involving the hands of political power-holders, either members of HKBP or not. The epicentre was once again the Nommensen University, and in particular the Theological Faculty. Since 1973 a number of lecturers and students were dismissed and in 1977 this faculty split into two entities. The one was still part of the university while the other, called *Sekolah Tinggi Theologia “Penggembalaan”* (‘Pastoral’ Theological Seminary), had to borrow some classrooms or buildings from other churches (like HKI and GKPI) at Pematangsiantar. The problem was solved when in 1979 the Theological Faculty separated from the university and acquired its new name and legal entity: *Sekolah Tinggi Theologia (STT) HKBP* (HKBP Theological Seminary) and the dismissed lecturers and students were called back to the campus.

An unending struggle, experienced by HKBP and its ‘children’ together with many other churches in North Sumatra (including GBKP below), is

approximately 225 pastors. Besides being a member of DGI/PGI since 1976, GKPI is also member of WCC, CCA, LWF and the United Evangelical Mission (UEM, continuation and extension of RMG).

the encounter and tension between gospel and adat (custom).⁸⁸ Generally speaking the Batak churches held the position inherited from the RMG, that is to divide the adat or the whole traditional culture into three categories: positive, neutral and negative. The positive elements (such as language, script and literature, social and family system and relationship,⁸⁹ certain marriage values, and certain philosophical values) as well as the neutral elements (such as housing and architecture, the agricultural system, textile and weaving, the almanac and calendar system, some musical instruments, various kinds of knowledge and technical/practical skills, and much equipments for daily life) are accepted—even endorsed and developed—in the church, whereas the negative elements (such as worshipping the ancestors, witchcraft and divination) must be rejected.⁹⁰ In the respective church orders this acceptance or rejection is also stated.

Evidently this categorisation is not always apparent and cannot help the Christian Bataks to answer many questions. In its very essence adat or culture is a all-embracing entity that cannot be specified using criteria from outside. From 27 July to 1 August 1968, at Nommensen University Pematangsiantar, HKBP held a *Seminar Adat* under a theme *Panindangion Hakristenon di Adat* (Witnessing Christianity in Adat). Eight years later (6–9 August and 16–20 November 1976), together with some other churches in North Sumatra (HKI, GKPS, GKPI, GBKP, Roman Catholic), HKBP and the Indonesian Regional Asia Programme for Advanced Studies (IRAPAS), and sponsored by LWF, held a series of *Seminar Adat Batak*. The aim of this seminar was to find a way out to the problems caused by the encounter and collision of Christianity and Batak Adat. There were a number of attractive findings and recommendations,⁹¹ but many problems are still outstanding, even after so many seminars, workshops and the like.⁹² In the meantime, since the 1980s and culminating in the 1990s, some leaders from Evangelical and Pentecostal-Charismatic circles presented their negative assessment and rejection of adat. Sometimes they showed this through a demonstrative action such as burning *ulos* (traditional textile),⁹³ carvings and many other traditional crafts, based on a judgment that all these

⁸⁸ One of the in-depth studies on this subject is Schreiner 1972.

⁸⁹ For a further description of family relationship see Kathryn J. Brinemann Bovill 1985: 127–136.

⁹⁰ For a detailed specification of these three categories see Aritonang 1994:42–66.

⁹¹ Compiled in mimeographed publication, “Seminar Adat di HKBP 27 Juli–1 Agustus 1968” and “Seminar Adat Batak diselenggarakan oleh IRAPAS,” 2 volumes.

⁹² The last big event on this issue was the seminar of 24–26 June 2001 in Jakarta, together with the launching of a *Festschrift* for the 75th anniversary of Prof. Dr. Lothar Schreiner (ed. A.A. Sitompul et al. 2001).

⁹³ Besides some Christian Bataks’ writings, there is a very important writing on *ulos*: see Sandra A. Niessen 1985. But the anti-adat groups generally ignore such an appreciation and respect for traditional products.

materials are full of satanic power. Parallel with the increasing tendency of exodus (or at least double-membership) of many members of the so-called traditional churches to the Evangelical-Pentecostal churches, this conflict has brought some losses to both sides. There have been many polemic publications issued by both sides that ultimately were widening the distance between them instead of promoting mutual understanding and respect.⁹⁴

*1980–2000: HKBP in turmoil and conflict with the government*⁹⁵

It is not exaggerating if we conclude that these two decades are the most crucial period in the nearly 150 years of the history of the Batak Churches, especially HKBP. Although in terms of quantity HKBP still flourished (in the 1990s around 3 million members) and many of its members were well-known as successful businessmen and high-ranked government or military officers, nevertheless—or just because of this fact—HKBP could not escape a series of tremendous conflicts and turmoil. This episode became very important because it was not only dealing with HKBP but also involved many other churches, not to say all Christians in the country. Moreover during this period there were also many other incidents that more or less paralleled or had connection with HKBP's case (see chapter six). As usual in religious history, theological, personal and some other motives are interwoven and intermingled. Some theological problems that come to the fore, especially regarding church relations to the government, are very fundamental and have been repeatedly faced by the churches during many centuries.

In the Great Synod 27–31 January 1987 S.A.E. Nababan was elected to be *ephorus* of HKBP for the term of 1986–1992.⁹⁶ His competitor, P.M. Sihombing, was actually his colleague and close friend during their ministry in DGI/PGI in 1970s, and was the general secretary of HKBP in 1980–1986. His supporters were dissatisfied and accused Nababan of using unfair and fraudulent tactics

⁹⁴ One of the most prolific writers from the side of adat protagonist in this recent time is the Methodist Church member Richard Sinaga, *Adat Budaya Batak dan Kekristenan* 2000, while from the Evangelical-Pentecostal side there are two productive writers, Rev. A.H. Parhusip, *Jorbut ni Adat Batak Hasipelebeguon/The Awfulness of the Heathen Adat Batak* n.d. and Posma Situmorang, *Ulos di tengah Adat Batak/Ulos in the midst of Adat Batak* 1998.

⁹⁵ It is not easy to present a clear and objective picture on this subject, since most of the data come from one or the other side involved in the conflict; each of them trying to justify themselves while blaming the other. We use here materials from both sides and from neutral observers while trying to give a balanced description and evaluation.

⁹⁶ The election synod should actually have been held in 1986, but due to the celebration of the HKBP's 125th anniversary that was also attended by President and Mrs. Tien Soeharto, the synod was postponed to January 1987; P.M. Sihombing was also the chairman of the anniversary committee.

to win the election.⁹⁷ Since Sihombing and his followers⁹⁸ could not prove the charge, they had to seek other chances. Soon after Nababan became *ephorus* he declared a programme of improvement, 'reformation' and development. According to his observation, during the last twenty years HKBP had experienced a very serious decline in many aspects and fields, in socio-economic as well as spiritual aspects.

To enhance the socio-economic life of the people and to fight for their rights Nababan encouraged HKBP, based on his social theology,⁹⁹ to support some NGOs committed to the empowerment of the poor in North Sumatra.¹⁰⁰ Parallel with this, in order to recover the spiritual life, and especially to stop an increasing tendency to practice old beliefs (worshipping ancestors etc.) after an enormous earthquake at Tarutung in April 1987, he announced a programme of re-evangelising the members of HKBP. For this aim he recommended the *Badan Pendukung Pelaksana Zending* (BPP Zending; Supporting Body for Evangelisation), established in Jakarta a few years previously, to organise a special team named *Tim Evangelisasi Nehemia* (*TEN*, Nehemia Evangelisation Team).

This *TEN* had a very strong link with some Evangelical and Charismatic groups (see chapter eighteen) and used some of their popular methods of evangelisation like revival meetings, personal evangelism and healing (sometimes it was accused to practise baptism of naked adults and healing sessions with women in closed rooms), exorcism, altar calls, giving of a blessing by the laying of hands (by persons who were not ordained pastors). The P.M. Sihombing or *Parritrit* group viewed these practices as contrary to the doctrine, confession of faith and order of worship of the HKBP, and charged that Nababan and this *TEN* brought a serious danger to the spiritual life of

⁹⁷ At least since the 1960s the process of election of the top leaders (*ephorus* and the like) in HKBP as well as in any other Batak churches was frequently full of intrigues. There were always a number of candidates trying to chase this chair. One reason was explained in A. Lumbantobing 1961, "The Christian Bataks believed that—as during the time of Nommensen—by achieving this office the office-bearer will achieve a special *sahala* (special spiritual power) that in turn would give certain benefits to the election winner or successful achiever."

⁹⁸ This P.M. Sihombing group, consisting of twenty pastors and some other ministers and lay members, was later called *Parritrit* (Retreat group) because they held a retreat at Parapat in March 1987 to consolidate them and to mobilise supporters. The minutes of the retreat were issued in two booklets entitled "Parmaraan di HKBP—Quo Vadis HKBP?" (Disaster within the HKBP), and "Nunga Lam Patar" (It has been clearer). "Building the Truth" (a document provided by Nababan's rival), p. 3; Steenbrink 1994:63.

⁹⁹ His social theology was mainly developed since his involvement in the preparation of the general assembly of WCC at Uppsala in 1968. See among others his writings: *Iman dan Kemiskinan* (Faith and Poverty 1966), *Apa Kata Uppsala?* (What did Uppsala Say? 1969), *Keselamatan Masakini* (Salvation Today 1973, translation of reports of and comments on the 1972–1973 Bangkok Assembly of the CWME).

¹⁰⁰ John MacDougall 1994:6–7.

the Christian Bataks, and especially to HKBP.¹⁰¹ Nababan asked Sihombing and his group to prove the charges, or to confess their faults if they failed, and then obey the leader of HKBP. Some of the Sihombing/*Parritrit* group confessed their faults and their status was restored, but most of them rejected this appeal. The 49th Great Synod, of 10–15 November 1988, after consulting *Parhalado Pusat* (Central Council) and *Rapot Pandita* (Pastors' Conference), dismissed them from their office.¹⁰²

This case of dismissal became a seed for the next disruption since the dismissed pastors continued to struggle and even to mobilise supporters. From time to time they gathered more support and sympathy or at least partners against Nababan's leadership. On the one hand Nababan was recognised as a powerful leader and motivator for speeding-up progress. He had many brilliant ideas to equip and empower the workers and members of HKBP, and other churches as well, to cope with the challenge of modern science and technology that came together with the process of industrialisation and globalisation, while also working to improve the image of Tapanuli that was seen as a so-called "portrait of poverty." But on the other hand he was also known as an authoritarian figure with autocratic and arrogant style,¹⁰³ and not many people could easily understand his ideas and planning. In a traditional church like HKBP the way he was leading the church was often felt to be contrary to the inherited and inherent values deeply rooted in the soul of the people. His conflict with General Secretary O.P.T. Simorangkir, became an additional factor. Besides that, his disagreement with the New Order Government of President Soeharto, that had been evident since the early 1980s during his last term as the general secretary of DGI, escalated around 1990 in connection with the activity of *PT Inti Indorayon Utama*, a giant paper-pulp factory.¹⁰⁴ For HKBP, which was accustomed to show homage and obedience to the government

¹⁰¹ "Building the Truth", p. 3.

¹⁰² There were 19 pastors dismissed (including P.M. Sihombing) besides a number of *Guru Huria* (teacher-preachers), *Bijbelvrouw* (Bible women), deaconesses, officials of Nommensen University and students of the Teacher-Preacher School; "Building the Truth", p. 4; Steenbrink 1994:63; Moxa Nadeak et al. 1995:64–68.

¹⁰³ "Building the Truth", p. 1, said: "His harsh and authoritarian leadership had resulted in many reactions and disagreement among the members and pastors of the HKBP," while pp. 3, 4 and 6 said, "Dr. S.A.E. Nababan dared to treat the General Secretary [O.P.T. Simorangkir] as not more than an ordinary employee." "He often threatened his staff members, namely the praeses, pastors of parishes and staff of headquarter", and "Dr. Nababan during his leadership term emphasised the obedience of all staff to the church constitution, but his own actions were often beyond and contrary to the HKBP constitution. All the facts obviously had described the characteristics of Nababan's leadership which were authoritarian, controversial and unconstitutional."

¹⁰⁴ Nababan and KSPPM sharply criticised this factory because it led to environmental destruction around Lake Toba, both by causing air and water pollution and by clear-felling the forest, while Soeharto and his regime backed it for certain benefits. Gerry van Klinken 1996:1–2.

and which had many members holding high positions in the government service, Nababan's criticism and opposition toward the government were viewed unduly harshly and out of proportion.¹⁰⁵ It is no wonder that as time went on he experienced more and more resistance.

In the 51st Great Synod, from 23 to 28 November 1992, at Sipoholon-Tarutung the tension escalated dramatically. "In reality the process of the synod's sessions was very heavy. Some sessions were knocked down by disturbances and storms, so that the three items for the plenary sessions that had been approved by the Police National Headquarter could not be decided by voting."¹⁰⁶ Although it is not easy to provide an accurate number how many of the synod participants were pro and contra Nababan, it is obvious that the synod could not run properly. The last day of the synod assembly ended in chaos. Nababan as the chair of the synod could no longer manage the assembly. He suspended the assembly without a definite decision and went home around 22.00 pm., while the licence for the assembly was valid until 24.00 pm. What happened after the suspension is quite unclear.¹⁰⁷ Referring to the document quoted in the footnote below, as well as some other documents from the anti-Nababan side, it was Nababan's side that asked the government, in effect the military, to take over the leadership,¹⁰⁸ while the documents from

¹⁰⁵ Nababan's criticism against some of the policies and acts of the New Order regime actually reflected DGI/PGI's standpoint. But the government, esp. President Soeharto, developed this into a personal sentiment. Nababan was once charged as a communist when he—at an international conference in Portugal—expressed his support and sympathy for the Theology of Liberation exponents in Latin America (cf. "Building the Truth," p. 19; MacDougall 1994:8). The government was also suspected of hampering his re-election as general chairperson of PGI in the eleventh general assembly at Surabaya in 1989.

¹⁰⁶ "Building the Truth," p. 8. The three items were: (1) To discuss and approve the HKBP Constitution of 1992–2002; (2) To elect the office bearers of the HKBP for the term of 1992–1998; and (3) To resolve the conflicts within the HKBP. The quotation also obviously showed how the government played its role in church business. Many other examples in this document as well as in some other documents showed the same fact. Meanwhile this document did not tell who were causing "disturbances and storms", whereas Moksa Nadeak et al. 1995:75 stated that they came from the anti-Nababan group, led by O.P.T. Simorangkir and S.M. Siahaan.

¹⁰⁷ In "Building the Truth," p. 9, it was said, "The members of the Central Council of the HKBP immediately held an extraordinary meeting in order to take some steps to resolve the confused session.... Bearing the responsibility to save the HKBP in his mind, and at the request of the Central Council, the then General Secretary, Rev. O.P.T. Simorangkir, continued to conduct the session of General Synod for the remaining time before the deadline. After consulting the Central Council members, he came to a decision that the caretakers were... (five names were mentioned). They were expected to organise an Extraordinary Synod 5 months after the 51th General Synod. Unfortunately after presenting the decision in the plenary session, some delegates... (some names from Nababan's side were mentioned) protested the General Secretary's decision. They requested the government to cancel such a decision, and furthermore they asked the government to take over the HKBP's situation." But in Moksa Nadeak et al. 1995:76–78 we find a very different picture.

¹⁰⁸ In a special section of the document "Building the Truth", entitled "The Issue on Government 'Intervention'" (pp. 11–2), it was among other things said, "The contribution or the 'intervention' (*campurtangan*)... in the HKBP obviously was not a 'cause' but a 'result' of

Nababan's side and certain observers insisted that it was the anti-Nababan side that invited the government.¹⁰⁹

Whichever is true, in fact Colonel Daniel Toding, the Military Regimental Commander, took over control and announced that the HKBP issue was now in the hands of the government, while he also said, "The government will do the best for HKBP." When the deadline of the synod's licence had passed, Colonel Daniel Toding dissolved the synod's session without any formal closing ceremonies namely prayer, worship and the Holy Communion, which were usual.¹¹⁰

The suspension or dissolution of the Great Synod brought HKBP to an unclear situation. The Nababan side said that the synod was suspended, and that Nababan was still the *ephorus* (this standpoint was later maintained by Nababan and his followers until 1998). They did not recognise the dissolution by Colonel Toding, because they saw that it was contrary to the constitution of HKBP. But his rival's side said that the dissolution was legal, since the licence for the synod assembly was only until 28 November and Nababan's term was over. Therefore "since 29 November 1992 the leadership of the HKBP had been vacant and therefore it was delivered to the government and security officers."¹¹¹

After receiving reports from Colonel Toding and from the then general secretary of HKBP, O.P.T. Simorangkir, Major General R. Pramono, the Area Commander of the Military Region of Bukit Barisan invited the members of the Central Council of the HKBP to hold a consultation on 16 December 1992 in Medan. An invitation was also sent to S.A.E. Nababan but he did not attend the event.¹¹² In the consultation, referring to certain articles in the constitution of HKBP, the members of the Central Council proposed three names as responsible persons to organise an Extraordinary Synod, namely Rev. Dr. W. Sihite, Rev. Dr. A.A. Sitompul and Rev. Dr. S.M. Siahaan. One week later, 23

Dr. Nababan's leadership that had created the procrastinating and spread tensions. If the government's involvement in the HKBP supported his interest and his followers' interest, he and his followers kept quiet about it and they would not identify it as 'intervention'. Otherwise, if government's involvement did not support their wellbeing and inflicted their interest, they immediately condemned it as 'intervention'. . . . The fact impressed that Dr. Nababan and his followers used a 'double standard' in evaluating the government's involvement. They agreed with something, which favoured them. Otherwise, they condemned something as 'intervention' if they were not in favour."

¹⁰⁹ B.A. Simandjuntak 2001:512 pointed out that it was O.P.T. Simorangkir who frequently asked for the government's intervention during his term as the General Secretary, especially in 1992, including in the cancellation of the planned General or Great Synod of June 1992.

¹¹⁰ "Building the Truth", p. 10.

¹¹¹ "Building the Truth", p. 10.

¹¹² In the document provided by Nababan's side, Nababan did not attend because in his opinion the government or the military commander had no right and authority to handle church conflicts, as this was the church's own responsibility.

December 1992, Pramono issued a written decision to appoint S.M. Siahaan, professor of the Old Testament at STT HKBP, as the acting *ephorus* with the main task “to prepare and to conduct an Extraordinary Synod in order to elect the office bearers of the HKBP (*ephorus*, general secretary, the members of Central Committee, and praeses) in the middle of February 1993, according to the 1982–1992 HKBP Constitution.”¹¹³

Less than one week after the issuing of that controversial document, during the Christmas and New Year season, a wave of demonstrations of protest and resistance flooded in from the members and ministers of the HKBP, followed by a number of institutions and organisations inside and outside Indonesia, including PGI.¹¹⁴ Nonetheless, after installing S.M. Siahaan to be the acting *ephorus* at Sipoholon Seminary on 31 December 1992, the Extraordinary Synod was held at Medan¹¹⁵ from 11 to 13 February 1993 with a sole main agenda: to elect the new officers of the HKBP for the period of 1992–1998. The elected *ephorus* and general secretary were Rev. Dr. P.W.T. Simanjuntak and Rev. Dr. S.M. Siahaan. Consequently this synod also decided that S.A.E. Nababan no longer had the right to represent HKBP either in Indonesia or in foreign countries. Against the charge from the Nababan side that it was illegal and unconstitutional, the organisers and supporters of this synod persisted that it was legal and constitutional.¹¹⁶ Since then the government on many occasions and through many officers and channels declared that it only recognised Simanjuntak and Siahaan. Therefore it was difficult to avoid concluding that the government deliberately created a rival against Nababan in order to crack down on the dissenting group that was growing within HKBP.¹¹⁷

¹¹³ “Building the Truth”, p. 11.

¹¹⁴ Reactions from PGI dated on 29 December 1992, 4 January 1993, and 2–5 March 1993 that among others regretted the intervention ‘from outside’ and the violence used.

¹¹⁵ Nababan’s side, that later was popularly called *Setia Sampai Akhir* (SSA, Be faithful until the end), although they preferred to call themselves “HKBP Aturan & Peraturan” (HKBP-AP, HKBP of Constitution), charged that the location of the synod in a hotel, i.e. Hotel Tiara, was against the constitution. But the other side claimed that it was constitutional, because it was opened and closed in a church building, i.e. HKBP Jalan Sudirman Medan, and argued that the sessions took place in a public hall, Tiara Convention Centre, not in Tiara Hotel. Actually the convention centre is part of the hotel.

¹¹⁶ Besides referring to certain articles of the HKBP constitution of 1982–1992 and the proportion of participants (464 out of 562 that had credentials; according to Moksa Nadeak et al. 1995:84 many of them were ‘fake’), the protagonists of this synod also pointed to the presence of some government officers like Director General for the Guidance of Protestant Society within the Department of Religious Affairs, the Governor of North Sumatra, and the Area Commander of Military Region Bukit Barisan, “Building the Truth”, p. 13. This kind of argument or defence was frequently found in the documents provided by the protagonists (later called Simanjuntak-Siahaan group, although they were also commonly called “HKBP SAI Tiara,” the HKBP produced by the synod in Tiara Hotel).

¹¹⁷ See conclusion in Gerry van Klinken 1996:3–4.

Whatever may be said by either side to prove their respective legality and constitutionality, as a matter of fact, before and after the extraordinary synod and in the coming years, at least until 1996, there were uncountable incidents that showed a serious disruption, division and even hostility in the corpus of HKBP. Brutal physical clashes (many times accompanied by hired thugs and hoodlums, actions, arrest and torture by the military, in several cases leading to death), intimidation, destruction of buildings and properties (including church buildings and parsonages with their furniture), filing of lawsuits from each side to the courts, and many kinds of violence were a daily picture.¹¹⁸ Certain external observers noticed that there was some violence from the Nababan side too, but this was legally prosecuted, while none on the Simanjuntak side were prosecuted for their offences.¹¹⁹ This conflict split many congregations into two factions (sometimes more) and they had to compete for use of the church buildings. The smaller faction (most of them are the AP-SSA group) in many cases had to gather in private houses or even in the open fields (*par-lape-lapean*). This conflict also brought disharmony and division in society and families: husband and wife, parents versus children, brothers and sisters and members of the same clan were caught up in the harsh conflict. Not infrequently members of a family divided into these two blocks and it took long time to recover. The conflict became more complicated when each side felt that some institutions outside HKBP were taking sides. Simanjuntak-Siahaan and associates, or the “Tiara” group, for example, complained that VEM/UEM in Wuppertal-Germany and PGI supported Nababan.¹²⁰ S.M. Siahaan even wrote a letter to cancel the membership of HKBP in VEM/UEM.¹²¹ On the other hand Nababan and associates, or the AP-SSA group, charged that the

¹¹⁸ In “Building the Truth”, p. 17, it was said, “the supporters of Nababan were not reluctant to perform brutality and despicable deeds which had claimed a number of lives as well as properties... besides doing some terrors and intimidation, killed a police officer sadistically.” Whereas in Jochen Motte (ed.) ± 1994:21–23 (document provided by VEM/UEM as supporter of Nababan), we find 132 names from Nababan’s side who were arrested and tortured by the military and police before and after the Extraordinary Synod of February 1993. The more horrible torture was described in MacDougall 1994:1–5, that among others fell on Rev. Nelson Siregar, director of the HKBP community development department while also the executive secretary of KSPPM.

¹¹⁹ Gerry van Klinken 1996:2 John MacDougall 1994:6.

¹²⁰ The “Tiara” group, for example, mentioned the transfer of DM 480.000 from VEM/UEM to HKBP (with a note, “Ephorus Nababan is the one who can spend this money”) through certain accounts of PGI. They also complained that a number of mass media in Germany were pressed by Nababan to publish a distorted story about HKBP, and that Simanjuntak and Siahaan were not accepted as the official representatives in the Central Committee meeting of PGI at Bandung on 7–13 May 1993; “Building the Truth”, pp. 15–6. On the other side, in Jochen Motte (ed.) ± 1994:5 we find VEM/UEM’s statement that it supported and still recognised Nababan as the Ephorus of HKBP and did not recognise Simanjuntak-Siahaan or the “Tiara” side.

¹²¹ Dated on 15 April 1993 and quoted in Jochen Motte (ed.) ± 1994:47–8.

government was playing a role behind this conflict with a plan to paralyse and destroy Christian potentialities in this country.¹²²

There were many attempts to resolve the conflict and to bring reconciliation and peace. In 1990, for example, there was another *Tim Damai* (Peace Team) consisting of eleven prominent lay leaders in HKBP, led by Ret. General Maraden Panggabean, Ret. Major General A.E. Manihuruk and Ret. Rear Admiral F.M. Parapat, including some serving generals. This team was formally sanctioned by the then Minister of Religious Affairs, Munawir Sjadzali, but was rejected by Nababan as an initiative that “is unknown in our church order and therefore should be considered as an intermingling of an outside power.”¹²³ A similar attempt was made by the North Sumatra provincial government that set up *Kelompok Kerja Terpadu Penyelesaian Masalah HKBP* (a United Working Group to Settle the HKBP Problem) in October 1992. Members included the regional commander and the provincial head of police. One of its actions was to issue a statement that neither Nababan nor Secretary General O.P.T. Simorangkir could be a candidate for *ephorus* in the upcoming synod. Nababan’s followers, however, ignored the directive and nominated him.¹²⁴

After the Extraordinary Synod of February 1993 another effort was attempted by Ret. Major General T.B. Silalahi, State Minister for the Utilisation of the State Apparatus, in June 1993, under the urging of President Soeharto.¹²⁵ Mr. Silalahi successfully organised a meeting between Dr. P.W.T. Simanjuntak and Dr. S.A.E. Nababan. They signed an agreement of seven points on 14th June 1993. The agreement, among other things, stated that, “Rev. Dr. S.A.E. Nababan supports the government decision in recognising Rev. Dr. P.W.T. Simanjuntak as the HKBP *Ephorus* and gives him opportunity to lead the HKBP in harmony

¹²² See among others Moksa Nadeak et al. 1995 and Einar Sitompul et al. (eds.) 1997. It is interesting to notice that at about the same time there was also a serious conflict within the faculty of Christian University Satya Wacana at Salatiga–Central Java, in which the government also interfered. A few years later a series of riots also broke out in many places that brought tremendous numbers of victims and loss among the Christians (cf. chapter six).

¹²³ Quoted in Steenbrink 1994:63. MacDougall 1994:8–9 also noted that the rejection was also based on the findings of the Nababan group, that the main aim of the “Peace Team” was to overthrow Nababan, as admitted by M. Panggabean in their ‘safari’ to Sibolga on 30 September 1990. This team, MacDougall added, also had the full cooperation of the military, and in 1992—after this team had discharged itself in 1991—Panggabean backed Maj.Gen. Pramono in his bid to oust Nababan. See also Moksa Nadeak et al. 1995:68–73.

¹²⁴ MacDougall 1994:10.

¹²⁵ The “Tiara” group noted further: The event was broadcasted by the National Television (TVRI) and published by the national newspapers. Unfortunately within less than 24 hours Dr. Nababan had broken the agreement. In a service at the HKBP Church in Jalan Pabrik Tenun Medan on 15 July (should be 15 June; ed.) Nababan was still declaring himself as the *ephorus*, “Building the Truth”, 16–17. Toward such a charge S.A.E. Nababan, in his explanation to the 14 June agreement, among other things, said that the handing over of the office of *ephorus* must be done in the coming constitutional Synod, not in the moment of signing the agreement; Jochen Motte (ed.) ± 1994:25.

and peace". But this agreement was evidently abortive. In October 1994 the "HKBP Tiara" held the so-called 52nd Great Synod at Sipoholon Seminary, the same location as the chaotic and failed 51st Great Synod of 1992, under the theme "And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts" and sub-theme "The Oneness and Unity of the HKBP supports the National Stability for the Sake of the Continuation of Nation and Country." But this synod, like the previous attempts, was also viewed by the AP-SSA side as unconstitutional and "full of the political engineering of the government" and did not bring any result for reconciliation.

Much has been published regarding this complicated conflict, from both sides as well as from the external observers and analysts. Each writer tried to explain and analyse the state of affairs including the causes and the contributing factors.¹²⁶ But one of the very striking aspects, and the mostly criticised, is the political aspect that is the involvement or intervention of the government.¹²⁷ This brought the conflict to a very fundamental question: how should the church view and build its relationship with the government and how far might the government enter church or any other religious community's affairs? Soeharto and his regime frequently stated that the government has no right to interfere with the internal affairs of a religion, neither with its doctrine nor with its organisation, and guarantees religious freedom according to the Constitution of 1945,¹²⁸ but this HKBP case showed otherwise. This question becomes a perpetual question for all churches.

Whatever explanation, opinion and argument could be given, this complicated HKBP conflict had broken the image of Christianity in Indonesia, and especially that of the Protestant clergy. For a long time they were honoured as *vicarius Christi* to bring peace and harmony, but since the conflict they have been stigmatised as lover of conflict. While we may be glad that this conflict has finally been resolved, it is not yet fully satisfying to all sides. After so many riots and crises and after the fall of the New Order regime¹²⁹ there

¹²⁶ B.A. Simandjuntak in 2001:503–29 and in his article in Einar Sitompul et al. (eds.) 1997:41–72, for example, tried to explain this HKBP conflict from a social-cultural perspective. He, among others, concluded that conflict is part of the culture and habit of the Bataks and should not necessarily be assessed negatively; therefore he suggested that the resolution should also refer to cultural values and practices. Cf. Kraemer 1958:51, "Great difficulties are caused by the strong self-assurance of the Bataks and by their quarrelsome nature."

¹²⁷ MacDougall 1994:15–16, for example, among other things concluded: A series of measures taken by military and civilian authorities were used to deny the AP-SSA members their internationally-recognised rights to freedom of religion, expression, association and assembly."

¹²⁸ Among others at the celebration of the Hindu day of fasting, *Hari Nyepi*, on 9 April 1992, as cited in Steenbrink 1994:71 from an article by Eka Darmaputera regarding the conflict in HKBP.

¹²⁹ The fall of Soeharto and New Order regime could bring different interpretation and significance among the conflicting sides. For Nababan/SSAs side this might justify their conviction

is an increasing consciousness among Christians generally, and among both conflicting sides in HKBP particularly, that they have to unite and rebuild peace. On 18–20 December 1998 at Pematangsiantar both conflicting groups held a “Reconciliation Synod.” One of the steps to express reconciliation was the sharing of the top positions in the synod: Rev. Dr. J.R. Hutauruk (from the “Tiara” side) was elected to be *ephorus* whereas W.T.P. Simarmata (from the “SSA” side) was elected to be general secretary, and the 26 chairs of *praes* (district superintendents) were divided evenly. Of course the long lasting conflict could not be resolved by only one event; the attempt at reconciliation that was continued up to the Great Synod of 2004 still left some remaining agenda for full and definite reconciliation and unity. The affected wounds apparently will take years, perhaps generations, to heal. The slogan “HKBP is the inclusive church” declared since 2002, however, is expected to bring healing and recovery, not only for HKBP but also to the whole nation.

*Mission in Karoland—A pattern of resistance and response*¹³⁰

The history of the Protestant mission to the Karo Batak people of North Sumatra, unlike the steady progress of the church among the Toba Batak, is one of staunch resistance followed by enthusiastic response, both features that call for careful analysis and explanation. Sixty years of persistent and well-informed Protestant missionary effort among the Karo people of North Sumatra, from 1890 to 1950, produced a church of only 5,000 members, which then grew to 35,000 in the next fifteen years (1950–1965), followed by 60,000 new baptisms in the four years, 1966–1970.¹³¹

Similarly, response to Islam in Karoland is marked by strong resistance until the 1960s, followed by significant growth in Karo conversions since then.¹³²

that they were so long struggling against a tyrannical power. For “Tiara”’s side this might bring an awareness that from now on they had no more ‘backing’ or protector so that it was better to reconcile, to recover the unity of HKBP.

¹³⁰ Because several recent studies of the mission to the Karo people and religious change in their society are readily available, this section avoids repeating detailed information and seeks instead to provide an overview of Karo response to the coming of Christianity. Some material in this section was published in Rae 2000.

¹³¹ Rita Smith Kipp 1990 surveys the initial fifteen years, 1889–1904, from the perspective of the mission and its staff. This basically historical study is enriched by Professor Kipp’s earlier anthropological fieldwork in Karoland. Simon Rae, 1994, surveyed the process of religious change into the late 1970s, from the perspective of Karonese reaction to the intruding world religions. Professor Kipp’s collected essays, Rita Smith Kipp 1993 offers updated field reports on some of the issues around Karo religion.

¹³² Because Muslim communities do not keep statistics of either new members or the membership of local communities one must rely instead on local government statistics, often expressed in terms of percentages of the total population, and on information from individual villages.

There were a few villages in the Karo highlands with significant Muslim communities before World War II, and other villages with one or two Muslim families. An unknown number of Karonese became Muslim in the lowland areas of the Malay sultanates, but in doing so they departed out of the Karo community to *masuk Melayu*, to enter the predominantly (Muslim) Malay society of the east coast. In the years since Indonesian independence many people in the former Malay sultanates have reclaimed their Karonese ancestry, and resumed the use of clan names. Now consciously both Karonese and Muslim they have given a new impetus to Muslim mission in Karoland.

Finally, in recent decades, there has been observed some development toward a *de facto* secularism on the one hand and a revival of the traditional religion and the assimilation of its beliefs and practices into a popular form of Hinduism (one of the government-recognised Indonesian religions) on the other.

Karo Society on the eve of the colonial era

The Karonese are a proto-Malay people inhabiting a highland plateau in North Sumatra, and also much of the adjacent East Coast lowlands, where they were well established long before the first European contacts. They form one of the six very distinct divisions of Batak society and, like the Batak world in general, the Karonese experienced extensive Indian influence in an unrecorded past. Karo social structure is characterised by a division into five primary clans, and by a focus on kinship relationships.¹³³ A significant proportion, sometimes said to have been about half the male population, was thought to have been literate in pre-colonial times, using a traditional script of south Indian derivation.

Pre-colonial Karo society was 'stateless,' characterised by village-based participatory communities, sometimes grouped in larger village confederations called *urung*. The Karo people were frugal, industrious and self-reliant. The highlands were self-sufficient in all the necessities of life but salt, iron and cotton, and the people of the Karo lowlands were involved in cropping, of pepper in particular, and in sea-borne trade to Penang and the Malay Peninsula.

Karonese traditional religion was known as *Perbegu* in earlier times, a term that may have been descriptive in the traditional society but later came to have negative connotations such as 'pagan' or 'heathenish.' It is now more politely described as *Kiniteken si pemena*, the original belief. Adherents of this traditional religion centred their attention not only on the '*begu*' or spirit

¹³³ Kinship structure and function have been extensively described by the Karonese anthropologist, Masri Singarimbun 1975 and by Rita Smith Kipp 1976. Kipp 1996 is a valuable account of ethnicity, social structure and religious practice in contemporary Karo society.

of the dead, but also on the cult of the *tendi* or spirit of the living, which on death became a *begu*. This was a pattern of belief widely reported in regions of Southeast Asia where Islam had not displaced traditional religions.¹³⁴ In the practice of their religion the Karonese gave attention also to the nature spirits of land and water, mountain, and river and of places of particular awe and mystery. The spirits of recently deceased close kin were believed to offer support and protection and received offerings, but were forgotten with the passing of time.

A major divinity was recognised by the Karonese, and spoken of by either traditional Batak or Sanskrit names (the latter, *Dibata*, being now recognised as the Batak name for God). This divinity was said to have a three-fold being—God Above, God in the Middle World and God Below, probably a local adaptation of Indian religious belief. There are few rites associated with the divine triad, which is represented in daily life by other and more immediate manifestations of the divine world.

Other supernatural beings were recognised, such as goblins, fairies and jinn, and one very significant kin group also had a particular religious significance. These are the *kalimbubu*, one's wife's father and brothers and their families, and one's mother's father and brothers and their families. This group was spoken of as *dibata niidah* or 'visible gods.' In traditional society they were seen as a source of life and blessing, a living manifestation or agency of the divine world.

Karo society was characterised by a curiosity about the beliefs and practices of others, and a willingness to adopt at least some of the concepts and terminology of the Indian traders and the Muslim communities they encountered on the coast. Their society was characterised also by competition or rivalry with both the lowland Malay population of the East Coast and the population of Aceh to the north. Both of these neighbouring societies were Muslim, the Acehnese particularly staunchly so. In the latter half of the nineteenth century the Malay sultans, originally river-port rulers who controlled Karo trade outlets and who could expand their own territories only at the expense of the lowland Karonese, found powerful sponsors and allies in the European colonial enterprises, established on the coast from about 1863.

The intentions of the warlike and ardently Muslim Acehnese were never certain and the possibility of a forced Islamisation of Karoland, as had occurred in the southern Batak territories, seems to have been a fear of the pre-colonial Karonese. There is evidence that some limited Acehnese penetration of Karoland had been attempted in pre-colonial times, and it was probably only the protracted Dutch-Acehnese war that prevented this being attempted again

¹³⁴ Jeanne Cuisinier 1951.

in the nineteenth century. On the other hand there are Karo traditions and stories that speak of friendly contact with the southern Acehese communities of Gayo and Alas, with which some Karonese can trace clan and lineage connections.

Colonial impact on Sumatra's east coast

In contrast to the situation in Tapanuli, the penetration of western European interests, values and cultures into Karoland was spearheaded not by missionaries, but by western planters and their extensive and expanding enterprises. The lowland Karonese felt early the negative impact of colonial capitalism, and made active attempts to disrupt it. The planters established direct contractual relationships with the lowland rulers, whose recognition by the colonial government gave them enhanced wealth, and status as 'rulers', that they had never known before. In return they gave permission for the extensive intrusion of western commercial interests into territory traditionally occupied by Malay and lowland Karo planters. In time the commercial enterprises closed down much of the Karo pepper cultivation by either prohibiting cultivation or withholding seed. The Dutch colonial government did not occupy the independent Karo highland territory until 1904, after the conclusion of their long Aceh War, so there were still many people in Karoland at the time of the independence struggle (1945–1949) who had experienced the whole cycle of colonialism, from an independent stateless village and *urung* democracy, through the colonial era (1904–1942) and the Japanese occupation (1942–1945) and the struggle for independence asserted in August 1945 and conceded at the end of 1949.

In the nineteenth century the East Coast of Sumatra became 'dollar-land' for western enterprises, which set about a ruthless capitalist exploitation of the land and its resources. In this process the sultans became wealthy and powerful but the local people both Malay and Batak were, in the words of the Sumatran historian H. Tengku Luckman Sinar, "made poor in the midst of the wealth of their own land."¹³⁵ The lowland Karonese resented this powerful intrusion into their traditional lands and enterprises, where the European monopolies banned or destroyed much of the traditional lowland Karonese cropping and trading. At first lowland Karo people reacted by burning sheds and otherwise disrupting the European plantation cultivation, but in 1872 armed conflict broke out over a new concession at Sunggal. Even when the armed revolt was put down the pattern of looting, burning and disruption continued.¹³⁶

¹³⁵ Tengku Luckman Sinar 1978:188.

¹³⁶ Tengku Lukman Sinar 1980:8, 10–25 described this "big war in a small village."

The ambiguous beginnings of Christian mission in Karoland

The Protestant mission to Karoland is associated historically with J.T. Cremer, a former administrator in East Sumatra and a firm advocate of opening up the outer provinces of the Indies for economic exploitation. After returning to the Netherlands Cremer entered parliament, and served for a time as Colonial Minister.¹³⁷ His suggested solution to the problem of the free Bataks and their disruptions was to evangelise them. Plantation interests expressed their support, and an invitation was extended to the Dutch Missionary Society (NZG) to begin work among the Karonese.

Initially the Mission was reluctant, feeling itself already over-extended and being suspicious of the real motive behind the planters' invitation. However, when no other agency took up the opportunity, the NZG transferred an experienced Dutch missionary educationist, with a group of Indonesian teachers to assist him, from Minahasa in 1890. The NZG, a lay association made up mainly of people from the Netherlands Reformed Church, had been strongly influenced by the revival and pietist movements in Europe. It was, however, more progressive than some of its contemporaries, and some of the missionaries in Karoland made important contributions to the recording of language, culture, the traditional religion and the oral history of the Karo clans. It was a fortunate circumstance for the Karonese that the real beginning of systematic Christian mission among them coincided with the beginning of missionary engagement with the new science of ethnology, around the first decade of the twentieth century. Not only was much of the old culture and traditional way of life recorded before it was changed forever by the opening of Karoland to the outside world, but the missionaries themselves were increasingly aware of cultural issues raised inevitably by the work they were doing¹³⁸

Initially, the Dutch missionaries worked in the upper lowlands and based their work on the establishment of village schools, financed by the plantation enterprises. The first base was at Buluh Awar, a staging post on the walking track from the coast to the highland plateau. The Karonese here were polite, helpful—and disinterested. People helped build the first church, and came in large numbers to Christmas and similar special programmes, but increasingly they rejected schooling. The Karonese were suspicious of missionaries wanting to live in lowland villages, regarding them as either outcasts from European society or as spies or agents working on behalf of the colonial enterprises.

¹³⁷ Rita Smith Kipp 1990:chap. 2 sets out the circumstances.

¹³⁸ A preliminary assessment Simon Rae 1991:125–33.

Missionaries also visited the free Karo communities in the highlands from time to time at this period and were welcomed there, unless they showed an interest in staying. In 1902 an attempt was made to establish a mission base in Kabanjahe, in the highlands, at the invitation of a local chief, who in retrospect seems to have been in need of some external backing in a struggle for power on the highland plateau. An alliance of other Karo leaders resisted and deposed this chief, and drove the missionaries off the plateau. The colonial administration took this opportunity to invade the highlands in 1904, ostensibly in defence of the deposed chief and the missionaries he was sponsoring but in fact as part of an Indies-wide campaign, at the end of the Aceh War, to occupy and pacify all the free territories remaining in the colony.

The Karonese clearly saw the 1904 invasion of the highland plateau as a military Christianisation of their homeland. In their view it was the Mission that 'brought' the Dutch colonial government to the highlands where, at this time, the lowland planters had no interest apart from the pacification of the groups involved in raiding and sabotage. Clearly also it was the Mission that benefited from the *Pax Neerlandica* that enabled Kabanjahe and other mission bases to be developed on the plateau.

The colonial era brought many changes to Karoland. A road, begun in 1906, extended from the existing lowland terminus to Kabanjahe, and then in two directions, to Kotacane, in Aceh, and to Pematangsiantar, in Simalungun. This road effectively broke down the long-standing isolation that had protected the highland Karonese. Later, with improvements in transportation, it opened an opportunity for inland Karonese to participate in the expanding economy of the East Coast of Sumatra.

These developments were to change Karoland forever. Systematic health care was introduced, inter-village conflict was reduced, and slavery was abolished by the new regime. At the same time taxes were introduced, the old participatory communal democracy was subordinated to the interests of the colonial regime and many Karo communities came under the influence of Malay or Toba Batak populations in the general re-organisation of local government and administration in what became the Province, and later the Governorship, of the East Coast of Sumatra.

Caught up in all this, the Karonese felt that the whole of their society was under threat; their religion, customs, values, culture and their freedom to organise their own lives. Because of this, Christianity was seen to be intrusive, the religion of invading foreigners. The activities of the mission in the lowlands had been tolerated, if largely ignored. After 1904 Christianity was dismissed as *agama Belanda*—the religion of the Hollanders, and its Indonesian converts as *Belanda hitam*—dark-skinned Hollanders.

The establishment of an independent Karo church, 1942 and later

The Dutch colonial era in Sumatra ended in March 1942 with the Japanese invasion. The Japanese military administration, for political reasons, favoured what they called native religions, among which they included Islam. Protestantism was regarded as being pro-Dutch but was not actively suppressed. Catholicism, at this time hardly represented at all in Karoland, was more favoured, reflecting the importance of the Catholic community in Japan. There was no persecution of Christianity and congregations were given permission to meet although preaching was forbidden. Churches and individual Christians experienced considerable restriction during the Japanese occupation. More significantly, Christians shared the great suffering of the civil population as the Allied blockade of Sumatra became more and more effective. This was the beginning of a slow process by which the small Christian population came to be seen more and more as part of the Karo community, and the Indonesian struggle for freedom, rather than as part of the European colonial enterprise.

Immediately prior to the Japanese invasion in 1942 the Protestant mission had established a Karo Synod, and the first two Karonese ministers were ordained—fifty years after the mission was established. These two men, with a small group of teacher-evangelists, held the Protestant church together through the Japanese occupation and the revolutionary struggle that followed Japan's surrender in 1945. During this time membership of the Protestant Church was maintained at about 5,000, new members just replacing natural losses over this period.

The Indonesian Revolution, launched when news broke of the Japanese surrender, was in fact a much more difficult time for the Karo church than the occupation had been. The Revolution in North Sumatra took the form of an armed popular uprising against the allied attempt to re-establish the former colonial regime. Traditional rulers were swept away, private armed factions emerged alongside the nationalist army, and there were two attempts by the returning Dutch administration to defeat the Republican forces in North Sumatra by military action. Many nationalists were convinced that Christians supported the attempt to restore Dutch rule, and some Christians were martyred in Karoland, while others died supporting the revolutionary struggle.

It was at this time that the Protestant church was able to assert its post-missionary Indonesian identity. Karo church leaders openly supported the Revolution and congregations prayed for its success. But most significantly Karo Christians shared the armed struggle and the evacuation of large elements of the civil population from the Dutch occupied territories in Karoland. In evacuation settlements the small Christian communities were seen to be an authentic part of Indonesian life, sharing the suffering and the aspirations

of a people seeking freedom to develop their own national identity. They had no choice at this time but to practise their faith in public. Their attitudes, values and way of relating to each other and to others were under constant critical observation.

The period of rapid church growth, and a growing diversity of religions in Karoland

After the Revolution Karo society enjoyed a period of confident optimism. Political movements were strong. Now people sought the education they had rejected when it seemed part of a colonial strategy for cultural domination. People travelled widely and Karo society became fully integrated into the life of the new Republic. It was during this period that conversions to Christianity began to grow, taking membership from 5,000 in 1950 to 35,000 in 1965 when, just prior to the attempted coup d'état, the church celebrated the 75th anniversary of the beginning of the Christian mission in Karoland. There is no evidence of a similar growth in Karo openness to Islam during this period.

Catholic Christianity had to make what was almost a new beginning in Karoland after 1950. During the colonial era Catholic work had been restricted under legislation that attempted to prevent the overlapping of different missions, and Catholic activity was just beginning on the borders of Karoland when the Japanese occupation forced the withdrawal of almost all the priests, most of whom, at that time, were Dutch.

In the 1960s and 1970s Protestant growth took on the nature of a mass movement, with 60,000 baptisms registered in the four-year period to 1970. Vigorous growth continued into the 1980s. The developing Catholic mission also prospered in the 1960s and 1970s, and the Karo Catholic community grew quickly although numbers are difficult to determine as Catholic parishes became territorial rather than ethnic in constitution during this period. While some openness to Islam was noted the preference for Karonese wishing (or being urged) to enter one of the government-recognised religions was at this time clearly and overwhelmingly for Christianity.

In 1950 the Government Department of Religion reported that there were about 5,000 Muslims in the Karo administration district, but most of these were not ethnic Karonese.¹³⁹ There was a slow increase in conversions to Islam in the years before the attempted coup d'état in 1965, mainly as a result of *dakwah* activity from Medan, and a significant increase in the wake of that tumultuous event and its bloody aftermath.¹⁴⁰ The total number of Muslims in

¹³⁹ Recorded by Rita Smith Kipp 1996:215–238, at p. 220.

¹⁴⁰ Rita Smith Kipp 1996:221–222, notes a mass conversion, of 1,500, in Kabanjahe in 1968.

Karoland rose from 24,150 in 1966 to 31,775 in 1970¹⁴¹ and from this period a significant and growing number of Karonese came to see Islam as a real, and attractive, religious option.

By this time also some reactions had set in against the growing Christian presence in Karoland. In the years since 1950 the Karo Batak Protestant Church (GBKP) had grown and developed to become the largest and most effective non-government organisation spanning the whole of Karo society. In sociological terms GBKP was something new for Karo society, and for GBKP itself, as neither the church nor the community had experience of operating Karo-wide voluntary institutions and found that the values of their adat rather than its precise provisions had to be explored and adapted to meet new challenges. This was not accomplished without some pain and puzzlement but under strong elected leadership GBKP, and its leaders came to hold a place of trust and respect in the wider society.

Reaction to this potential religious monopoly came in several forms. The development of the Catholic Church, and the quality of its institutions and programmes, gave disgruntled Karo Christians an alternative, as did the other Indonesian churches for Karo people who moved in great numbers to the cities of Sumatra and Java to take advantage of the new opportunities that came with independence. Outside the Karo homeland significant numbers of Karonese opted for Indonesian language, ethnically inclusive churches, such as GPIB, the western section of the old Church of the Indies.

Sectarian and fundamentalist fellowships provided yet another Christian alternative. Pentecostal Christianity had entered Karoland in 1935, represented by the *Gereja Pantekosta di Indonesia* (GPdI),¹⁴² which established its first Sumatran congregation in Kabanjahe in that year. The largest Pentecostal group in Karoland, GPdI had over 9,000 members in 1986¹⁴³ but has been joined by other Pentecostal Churches, each seeking converts between both traditional Karonese and members of other churches.

The Assembly of the Holy Spirit (*Gereja Sidang Rohul Kudus*) was established in Medan in July 1959 by separation from the Assemblies of God (*Sidang Jemaat Allah*) and saw its main mission among the Karonese. It grew from 8 members in 1959 to 6,914 members in North Sumatra by 1969.¹⁴⁴ A break-away group, the Victory of Faith Church (*Gereja Kemenangan Iman Indonesia-GKII*) was operating among Batak villages in Langkat in the 1970s.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴¹ Rita Smith Kipp 1996:221–222.

¹⁴² Originally *De Pinksterkerk in Nederlands-Indië*, registered as a legal body (rechtspersoon) in 1937, it was established by the Bethel Temple in Seattle, USA; Walter Lempp 1976: 290–293.

¹⁴³ Rita Smith Kipp 1996:204: 'Christianity, Ethnicity, and Class.'

¹⁴⁴ Writer's observations and interviews in Langkat 1976; Lempp 1976:295–299. There is an interesting discussion of religious and social features of this church in Kipp 1996:204–214.

¹⁴⁵ Writer's observations, Tanah Seribu, a Langkat village, 1976.

A small indigenous Karonese Pentecostal church, The Christian Pentecostal Peace Church (*Gereja Masehi Pentakosta Damai*, established as *Pinkstervrede Kabanjahe*), was established in the late 1930s by Johannes Purba, who had been an NCO on the warship *De Zeven Provinciën* and studied at the Bible School in Malang, Java, 1935–1936, after being released from naval prison. Isolated from other Pentecostal congregations this church has not grown greatly itself, but former members have been influential in other Pentecostal fellowships. At the time of the 1968–1972 church survey there were three village congregations in Karoland, with a total membership of 800.¹⁴⁶

Always a challenge to both the established churches and the adat systems of the Batak communities Pentecostalism emphasised a strict line of division between faith and worldly life and offered simple, practical responses to people's problems. They imposed, also, on their adherents, a radical break with custom and tradition, not only in matters associated with the old religion but also on cultural issues such as the use of the traditional bridal adornments in which Karo people took particular pride. Their success ensured that GBPK and the Catholic Church would not be the sole representatives of Christianity in Karoland. In this respect they were joined by the Methodist Church, which in the late 1970s moved beyond what had been a mutually comfortable cooperation with GBPK in the Langkat region to begin direct evangelism in the Karo homeland.

In the 1960s and 1970s Protestant growth took on the nature of a mass movement, GBPK, substantially being the largest of the Christian churches. Vigorous growth continued into the 1980s. The developing Catholic mission also prospered in the 1960s and 1970s, and the Karo Catholic community grew quickly although numbers are difficult to determine as Catholic parishes became territorial rather than ethnic in constitution during this period. By 1986 the Catholic Church in Karoland had 32,577 registered members, and was the second largest Karo church, offering a wide range of service and educational ministries in the region.¹⁴⁷

While some openness to Islam was noted in the 1950s, the preference of Karonese wishing (or being urged) to enter one of the Government recognised religions, was at this time clearly and overwhelmingly still for Christianity.

Growing openness to Islam from the 1960s provided another faith alternative that linked adherents to the largest religious community in Indonesia and to a major world religion. Another form of reaction was the attempt in the 1960s and 1970s to revive the traditional Karo religion, either in its own name or assimilated to a Government-recognised religion. An example of

¹⁴⁶ Lempp 1976:306.

¹⁴⁷ Kipp 1996:211–212.

this is a movement called *Perodak-odak* that attempted to revive the primal religion in the face of quite wide-spread disillusionment at the seeming failure of the democratic political process to realise the aspirations of the Indonesian Revolution coupled with a sense of alienation from the new religions adopted by increasing numbers of Karonese. While it alarmed the church, the *Perodak-odak* movement quietly faded away and by the 1970s the church itself appeared to be taking up the role dissenting groups had played during the Dutch and Japanese periods. GBKP was now operating an enterprising and very effective community development programme having broken decisively with the pietist spirituality of the missionary era that encouraged inner spiritual growth and passive acceptance of adverse conditions. Faith and spirituality were no longer to be promoted, or lived out, in isolation from the struggles of daily life in the world.

A movement calling itself 'Hindu' was observed in the Karo highlands in the late 1970s, and has grown quietly since then. It appears to be a deliberate attempt to assimilate the Karo traditional religion to Hinduism, to form a Karo equivalent of the government-recognised Hindu-Bali religion. Rituals observed in this 'Hindu-Karo' cult at that time were clearly those of the traditional Karo religion, and followers questioned about what they were doing, and what they hoped would be the outcome, responded in terms of traditional Karo belief and practice.¹⁴⁸

Finally, in the 1980s, it was becoming clear that many Karonese were adopting a cheerfully secular style of life that in effect ignored religious claims and issues. This group, which is now a much greater challenge to the various religious communities than the small pockets of traditional or revived-traditional belief, is made up of two elements. One of these might be described as 'secularised *perbegu*,' who have simply given up the traditional religion and its practices without seeking any religious alternative. The other element is made up of lapsed or secularised Christians and Muslims, often people disappointed when their expectations of the new faith were not realised.

Reports from the historic highland village of Batukarang in the 1980s indicated that people visiting from the towns and cities, who in the past would have urged relatives and friends to become Christian, were no longer even attending church, and in some cases chided local people for continuing to take the new religion so seriously. As a former minister of the Protestant congregation there said, at that time, "Now people visiting their home village pay their respects at the family graves but do not even come to church."

¹⁴⁸ Rae 1994:194–195, 202 from observations in the late 1970s. Compare more recent observations by Rita Smith Kipp 1996:11. Also Ginting 2003.

The outcome, therefore, of a hundred years of religious change in Karoland, 1890–1990, has not been the total Christianisation so confidently expected when the mission began. Rather, a dynamic and tolerant religious pluralism has emerged, held together, ironically, by the traditional bonds of Karo custom and kinship which are, generally speaking, more significant to the modern Karonese than are questions of difference in religious faith.

It will be clear from what has been said that initial Karo responses to both Islam and Christianity were conditioned by political perceptions. Islam was seen as the religion of both the coastal Malay states (already intruding upon Karo territory, Karo communities and Karo enterprises on the East Coast) and of their powerful Acehese neighbours, whose intentions toward the free Batak territories were never entirely clear. Karo people were also very well aware of the forced Islamisation of parts of the southern Batak territories during the Padri wars and, because of this, Islam until modern time was seen as an uncertain, even dangerous, influence to the north, east and south of the Batak territories.

The circumstance in which the Christian mission to the Karo people was initiated in 1890, and the fact that it was supported financially by European plantation enterprises, meant that it was compromised from the outset in Karo eyes. The fact that it was missionary penetration of the free Karo territories that seemed to provide opportunity for the Dutch military occupation of the highlands in 1904 further confirmed Karo perceptions that Christianity also was the tribal religion of an intrusive and threatening foreign community.

Of course conversions did take place. According to oral traditions some Karo people became Muslim on the coast, for a variety of personal reasons, high among them the quest for *ilmu*, the science that could unlock the secret of success in life. No doubt religious conviction was an important factor, once ethnic suspicions had been overcome, for many features of Islam, from its mysticism to its egalitarianism, have a strong inherent appeal to the Karonese. Also, alongside the stories from the south of the Padri wars the Karo kept alive stories of the Sufi teachers of Islam who visited Karoland in pre-colonial times, sometimes losing their own lives rather than defending themselves. Graves associated with several of these teachers of a different kind of Islam are still maintained.

Conversions to Christian faith, such as there were, were also influenced by many individual factors, and often arose from prolonged close contact with individual missionaries, or from a quest for the secret to the ‘success’ of the Europeans. It must be clearly noted that the beginning of large-scale conversion of Karo people to Christianity came before the 1965 attempted coup d’état, which is often credited with frightening large numbers of Indonesians into one or other of the government-recognised religions, to avoid being denounced as communists. In fact it appears that experiences during the Revolution, when

people saw Christians sharing their hardships and struggle without any foreign backing, together with the clear and uncompromising support of the Karo church for the nationalist cause, and an increasingly open endorsement of Karo traditional culture (in particular music and dance) had begun to erode the image of Christianity as a 'European religion' by the mid-1950s.

The quality of early Karo church leaders, who came to play an important role in community leadership during the occupation and the revolution, quickly established the fact that Christianity now had a Karo face, and that the church was an organisation genuinely interested in the well being of the whole Karo community. Similarly, by the 1950s, Christians who had been trained in the GBKP youth programme began to take roles in local community leadership and government administration. The Karo Batak Protestant Church was in fact the first Karo-wide institution established in a society whose largest political unit had, up to this time, been the *urung*, or local confederation of villages. The presbyterial-synodal form of governance in GBKP encouraged lay participation and offered a practical training in democratic decision making on a larger scale than had been experienced before.

Over-stretched, the small church gave a wide-open opportunity for lay leadership and participation, which attracted and encouraged enterprising people to its programmes. The title of 'elder', and later also of 'deacon,' came to confer social status on those elected to these offices of lay leadership. Also, as educational opportunities were more eagerly taken up in the 1950s, Christianity became associated more and more with modern, progressive ideas, and in time with western science and technology, giving rise to the promotional slogan, *majun agama asang kiniteken sipemena*—religion (meaning, in effect, a world religion) is more progressive than the traditional belief.

Perhaps most significant of all, the Karo church from the outset endorsed and supported the Karo adat, or customary law, backing it up where appropriate with church regulations and sanctions. This was particularly important with respect to marriage, divorce and inheritance, the proper administration of which lies at the heart of the Karo social system. Even traditional elopement was given a Christian framework that safeguarded the values of both religion and adat.

In time also the Protestant church shook off missionary restrictions on the use of traditional music and dance, which in the traditional community had religious as well as recreational and cultural functions. This recognition of traditional music and dance, and the quiet demise of the brass bands introduced as an alternative by the missionaries, further enabled people to recognise a Christian community with a Karo identity. There can be no doubt that these clear endorsements of the 'Karo way,' and its appropriateness, even as the community moved into a new and more progressive world, finally removed for many the last shadows of doubt as to the suitability of Christianity as a

religious option for Karo people. It is significant that the Karo traditional orchestra, banned in missionary days, was used for the first time in a church programme during the 75th anniversary celebrations in 1965. For many this event represented the opening of a long closed door, and was thus a major factor in the even more dramatic growth of GBKP in the period 1965–1970.

All that being said, it must also be recognised that the attempted coup in 1965 and the subsequent danger of being denounced as a communist (the Communist Party having had a very strong following in parts of Karoland in the early 1960s, when it was a legal entity, even among keen church members) encouraged many to embrace, at least outwardly, one of the government-recognised religions. It was probably the adat question, to which the Muslim community responded more rigidly, that determined the evident preference, at this time, for Christianity rather than Islam on the part of those choosing a new religion.

During the Revolution many Karonese people had their first chance to experience Islam in a positive context. Many of the evacuees from Karoland found temporary refuge and hospitality in the border territories of Aceh. Military service brought many others into close association with Muslim compatriots, and Islam came to be seen not simply as the religion of Malay and Acehnese neighbours, but as the religion of the leaders of the Revolution in Java, and indeed of the majority of Indonesia's population. Karo people also came in time to distinguish between the role of the Malay ruling élites during the colonial era and the situation of the ordinary Malay people who were as much victims of the alliance between foreign capital and the local élites as the lowland Karonese themselves had been.

This, however, still did not lead to any significant movement toward Islam among the Karonese. Separatist movements in staunchly Muslim Aceh meant that the threat of a 'holy war' against the 'pagan' Karonese was still not entirely out of the question, and Karonese were aware of the repression of Christians in Aceh and elsewhere in Indonesia, where regional attempts were made to impose Islamic law. The sticking point, however, was clearly a perceived Muslim disregard for Karo adat. Conversion to Islam meant that the believer came under Muslim law in three areas of life vital to the Karonese: marriage, divorce and inheritance. The 1958 Congress on Karo Cultural History still warned of this, seeing it as a threat to Karo society's freedom to organise its own life in the way it saw to be most appropriate.

After Independence, both Islam and Christianity came to be seen as world religions, linking their Indonesian members to worldwide faith communities. If the Karo preference for Christianity was conditioned more by the adat question than by any other single factor, Islam itself began to prosper among the Karonese, when it came to be presented more sympathetically by Karo people—either evangelists or family members. Then also a better understanding

of the cultural needs of the Karo Muslim communities was developed among Muslim strategists.

The international role, and growing prestige, of world Islam in the 1970s and 1980s, as a force able to resist both western capitalist exploitation and communist domination of the third world, gave the politically astute Karonese a better understanding of this great world religion. Competition between Islam and Christianity for the still uncommitted, or secularised, Karonese is a distinct feature of the religious pluralism of modern Karoland.

Attempts to revive the traditional religion reflect, among other things, the frustration and disillusionment that followed the collapse of the political parties on which the Karonese had put so much hope after Independence, and a general dissatisfaction with the outcome of a generation of struggle. Often the new way no longer held the attraction or promise it had once embodied. Where the rituals of a new religion had not taken root a spiritual vacuum developed and in some quarters it was felt that the old way might still offer a new or better hope. In other quarters dissatisfied Karo church members turned to more evangelical or sectarian forms of Christianity. Some, particularly in the cities where choice was available, transferred to more evangelical churches, or became aligned to sectarian and fundamentalist para-church organisations while remaining in GBKP. After following the latter course for several decades the Bandung congregation in West Java, which had played an important role during the rapid evangelisation of the decade following 1965 and had subsequently been deeply influenced by a revivalist (*kebangunan rohani*) spirituality, split with one part leaving to form the *Gereja Injili Karo Indonesia* (GIKI, Indonesian Karo Evangelical Church) and another group forming a new Indonesia-wide denomination, the *Gereja Kristen Kudus Indonesia* (*Christian Holiness Church of Indonesia*), led by a second-career pastor Pdt. Dr Kerani Ketaren SE until his death in 2006.

In the end *Perodak-odak* failed to make a lasting impact because Christianity had developed to a stage where it, and not a protest movement, offered, in the mind of a clear majority, the best hope for taking hold of the new situation and creating a better future. Of very great significance is the fact that, under Karo leadership, the church moved far from the pietist theology of an earlier time, and emphasised a faith that encouraged enterprise, self-help and responsibility. It encouraged people to become agents, and not victims, of social, economic and political change, to move from fatalism to enterprise. The Diakonia department of GBKP, developed and led by an enterprising businessman and lay theologian, also played an increasingly important support role for church members and communities, and the Development Department in the 1990s was establishing enterprises later taken up by the government, such as mini-hydro generation that had the capacity to supply 2–3 highland villages and water reticulation projects to provide for both irrigation and household

supply in highland villages. In these enterprises GBKP built on the traditional Karo ethic of mutual help, and models introduced by the Dutch mission, while taking advantage of overseas training programmes and assistance with funding and expert personnel from ecumenical partners.

What future the Karonese form of Hinduism might have is hard to judge. It is unlikely that the government will recognise it as an official religion. On the other hand it is the only religion in Karoland that is completely uncompromising by association with either colonialism or the failed experiment in party politics—there were official Catholic, Protestant and Islamic political parties until the social reorganisation that followed the failed coup in 1965.

Secularism is now a strong option in modern Karoland. Many have simply given up the old religion without embracing another, except for government registration purposes. Others have tried new religions and left them, for a wide variety of reasons including disappointment, a sense of their irrelevance, frustration with either rituals or administrations that are difficult to comprehend or—increasingly—a sense that one can enjoy the benefits of modern life, such as progressive education, scientific farming, modern health care, and the like, without following a religion.

The Karonese have always taken an acute interest in the outside world and many have come to see through the facade of western Christian civilisation, and indeed to feel cheated by the reality of ‘Christian’ life as it is seen in the crowds of tourists who visit Karoland or in the appalling films and other manifestations of ‘Christian culture’ that come their way. This secularism, cheerfully unconcerned about religions of any kind, presents a clear challenge to all the religious communities in modern Karoland.

The present state of Karo religion is dynamic, fluid and mercifully tolerant. It is a good example of a fairly relaxed religious pluralism, where convictions are firmly held, and supported with vigour, but where everyone recognises that the unity of families and communities is more important than the inappropriate or untimely advocacy of particular convictions and view-points.

Profiles of some other Protestant Churches: the Methodist Church

Besides HKBP—together with its nine derived churches—and GBKP, there are many other Protestant churches in Sumatra and its surrounding islands. In this section we will consider some of them, especially those mainline churches centred in Sumatra. The Sumatran churches with their centres located outside Sumatra, (such as GPIB, GMIST, GKI and the Evangelical, Pentecostal and Adventist churches) have already been, or will be, discussed in the other chapters.

The Methodist mission worked not only in Sumatra (including Bangka) but also in Java and Kalimantan (Borneo). Its work mainly bore fruit in Sumatra,

while its mission fields in Java and Kalimantan were temporarily terminated in 1928, and some current Methodist congregations in Java were the expansion of those in Sumatra. Nevertheless, we will also glance at its work outside Sumatra, since it comes from the same Methodist mission.¹⁴⁹

The first man who intended to spread Methodism to Indonesia, especially to Java, was Thomas Coke at the time Indonesia was under the control of the British government. In 1813 a group of Methodist missionaries left London for India and Indonesia. Thomas Coke was not destined to reach Java, for on 13 May 1814 he was found dead in his cabin, on the way to Asia, and was buried at sea in the Indian Ocean. His vision and spirit were implemented by his companions in India but failed to reach fruition in Indonesia.

It was American Methodists who later brought Methodism to Indonesia. The Methodist mission from America, working in Singapore and Malaysia since 1885, wanted to expand Methodism to Indonesia. In 1888 W.F. Oldham (later bishop) visited Java to investigate the possibilities for opening new work there. Due to the lack of money and workers there was no Methodist activity in Java until 1905 although in 1892 Dr. Benjamin West, a Methodist missionary of Penang, who had previously visited Kalimantan in 1890, visited Sumatra and was well received by both Chinese and Batak.

From the beginning the work of Methodism in Indonesia was scattered in islands, cities and among many ethnic groups. Java, Kalimantan, Sumatra and Bangka (a small island near southern Sumatra) were four island fields of Methodist activities in Indonesia. Jakarta, Medan, Palembang and Pontianak were the main cities in Indonesia where the Methodist work was centered. The Chinese, Batak and Sundanese were some of the ethnic groups evangelised by the Methodist mission.

Rev. John Russell Denyes (1869–1936) was an American Methodist missionary appointed as a teacher in an Anglo-Chinese School in Singapore, from 1898. There were students from Java in the school who asked Denyes to start a Methodist school in Java. From that time on Denyes was interested to open the work of Methodism in Java and before going to America on furlough in 1903 he became greatly burdened for the salvation of the Muslims in Java. He was greatly impressed by the fact that at that time there were twenty-eight thousand Muslims who had converted to Christianity in Java. He was told that if the money could be found he could be sent to begin the work. While in America he was brought into contact with the young people of the Pittsburgh Conference. They agreed to raise \$ 4,000 a year with the purpose of sending out missionaries to the foreign field. When they heard from Denyes of the needs in Java, they decided to place their money there.

¹⁴⁹ The following description is mainly contributed by Richard M. Daulay, a Methodist pastor who currently also serves as the General Secretary of PGI.

On 20 February 1905, at the closing session of the Malaysia Annual Conference in Singapore, Bishop W.F. Oldham read the appointments of his pastors and workers, and J.R. Denyes was assigned to open a new work of Methodism in Java. On 12 March, accompanied by Rev. B.F. West, he departed from the harbour of Singapore heading for Batavia (Jakarta), Java. Both of them made a preliminary survey and asked for permission from the Dutch government in Jakarta. After spending three weeks in Java, they decided to start work among the Chinese in Jakarta. There were a number of reasons for this. Firstly, the Chinese there promised to be the way of least resistance. Many of them were married to Javanese or Sundanese women; these women had left their Muslim religion and yet the Chinese customs had not taken deep hold on them. Secondly, Jakarta was the nearest point of contact with the work Methodism already had in Malaysia and it was easily accessible. Thirdly, it was the seat of the government that had to be consulted at every turn. Fourthly, later, there would be stations opened in Sumatra, Bangka, and these could be cared for most conveniently from Jakarta. Fifthly, by beginning with the Chinese it was possible to begin at once, as Denyes already knew the Malay language the Chinese spoke. On 5 November 1905 Denyes established one congregation in Bogor. On 1 July 1906 Denyes started the first Methodist school in Bogor. In a short time the work was expanded to Batavia (now Jakarta) and into adjacent areas.

In May 1905 Solomon Pakianathan (a Tamil laypreacher) arrived in Medan, sent by G.F. Pykett from Penang to supervise a private school owned by Hong Teen, young Baba Chinese, who had been a student in the Methodist Anglo-Chinese School in Penang. About a year earlier G.F. Pykett had investigated Medan to examine the possibility of opening the work there. With the appointment of Pakianathan the door was open for the Methodist Mission to start its work within the school, and Pakianathan was the pioneer. He opened religious services in English and promptly organised a Sunday school class for young English speaking Chinese. He even dedicated half of his salary to support a Chinese preacher in 1906.¹⁵⁰ This was the embryo of the congregation in Medan that later developed to become a number of multi-ethnic congregations.

On 2 February 1906 C.M. Worthington was appointed by Bishop Oldham to open Methodist work in Pontianak, West Kalimantan, especially among the Chinese people. There were 6,000 Chinese out of a population of 20,000. U Chim Seng, a medical doctor, was a potential lay worker in Pontianak. He evangelised people who came to see him in his clinic for medical treatment. His work was very fruitful. In 1909 there were 80 full members and 192 preparatory members.

¹⁵⁰ Pedersen 1970:119; Van den End 2002:208.

From these three doors (Batavia, Medan, Pontianak) it was obvious that at the beginning the Methodist mission was attracted to work among the Chinese people who had established themselves in many Indonesian cities throughout the archipelago. From the very beginning the work was very promising. That was why, in 1907, the Methodist work in Indonesia was organised as a district of the Malaysia Annual Conference, and Denyes was appointed its District Superintendent. In 1908, Solomon Pakianathan was transferred from Medan to Palembang, South Sumatra, to start another Methodist work in that area. On 1 May 1908 a Methodist school was started. In 1909 the Methodist mission began working in Surabaya and in 1911 Mark Freeman, a Methodist missionary from America, began work in Bangka.

In 1919 all the scattered Methodist work in Indonesia was organised as a Mission Conference, named the Netherlands Indies Mission Conference. At that time, there were around 2,000 members, 30 congregations and 14 pastors (nine missionaries and five local workers). In the same year, a hospital was inaugurated in Cisarua surrounded by Sundanese villages.

In 1921 the work among the Batak people in the interior of Asahan, Sumatra, was commenced by appointing Lamsana Lumbantobing in response to a Macedonian call from Tuan Nagori Manurung, a raja (village chief) who had written a letter to Bishop Oldham in Singapore eleven years earlier (1909). This chief asked Bishop Oldham to send a missionary to his village. At that time there was a Batak pastor (an ex-pastor of the Batak Church initiated by the RMG), Rev. Lamsana Lumbantobing, who visited Singapore (1908) and joined the Methodist Church there. He was appointed by Bishop Oldham to teach at the Jean Hamilton Training School (now Trinity Theological College) in Singapore, for the Malay department. In answering the letter of the raja, in 1913 Bishop Oldham sent Lamsana to investigate the situation in Asahan. Even though the result of the investigation was good, the Methodist Mission could not fulfil the request of Tuan Nagori because there were not yet enough workers.

Besides evangelising the Toba Batak in the Pardembanan jungle, Lamsana also conducted Sunday services for the Christian Bataks who migrated from Tapanuli to East Sumatra to work as clerks and plantation workers. Most of them were Christians because of the work of the RMG/Batak Mission. In 1920 the Methodist mission actually pledged not to work among the Bataks for whom the RMG was doing a large and successful work. This promise became more and more difficult to keep as the Toba Bataks began to migrate down from Tapanuli along the coast and requested admission into the Methodist churches. After some years of tension and misunderstanding, in 1931 the Methodist mission and RMG made an agreement to resolve the conflict and to build cooperation. This cooperation was also motivated by a competition with Muslims who had preceded the work of missions among the pagan Bataks

in Asahan and the whole coastal area.¹⁵¹ In 1925 the work in North Sumatra became a Mission Conference named North Sumatra Mission Conference, separated from the Netherlands Indies Mission Conference.

In 1928 the Methodist Mission withdrew from Java and West Kalimantan and concentrated its work in Sumatra. A number of local congregations or posts with their physical facilities, including a hospital in Cisarua, were released to other missions or to the government, or were closed. The mission and church workers were moved to North Sumatra. The main reason for this decision was the lack of funds due to the economical depression in America in the 1920s. Both conferences (the Netherlands Indies Mission Conference and the North Sumatra Mission Conference) were then merged to become the Sumatra Mission Conference.

In the 1930s the condition of the Methodist activities in Sumatra was very uncertain. There were a number of missionaries who went home for leave and did not return. Contributions from American churches greatly decreased, and the exchange on the American dollar was very unfavourable. Fortunately, in that difficult time, two missionaries were added to continue the work in Sumatra, Ragnar Alm and Egon Ostrom (both were from Sweden) who arrived in Sumatra in 1930. Ostrom worked among the Chinese people of North Sumatra and Alm between the Toba Batak.

In 1941, during World War II, all the American missionaries were evacuated. Fortunately both Ostrom and Alm were from a neutral country and were permitted to stay even though it was very dangerous for them. All white people were suspected of being enemies during that uncertain political situation and it is sad to record that Ostrom was killed in December 1945 in Tebing Tinggi, by a young extremist who suspected him of being an enemy spy. Alm had to flee for safety. During the war all the responsibilities of the Methodist mission in Sumatra were shouldered by the national ministers, like Luther and David Hutabarat (Batak), Yap Un Han (Chinese). Many of the church workers withdrew, because there were no longer sufficient salaries for pastors, causing a shortage of workers.

After the war and the 'revolution era' of 1945–1949 the congregations and schools were reactivated. Alm returned after three years on leave and new missionaries were added in 1950s, transferred from China after it became closed to foreign missionary work. At that time (1950s) there were great migrations of the Batak people from Tapanuli to East Sumatra. They were forced to leave by the poverty in their land and were attracted by plantation land abandoned by the Dutch. Many new congregations were organised but there were no workers available. In 1953 Alm opened a training school for Batak Pastors in

¹⁵¹ Pedersen 1970:119–124.

Kisaran, to train four supply pastors to be ordained. In 1956 Alm also opened a Pastor Training School for Bataks at the same place and the graduates (20 persons) of this school became the leaders of the Batak congregations. The mission activity among the Chinese also lacked workers so, in 1954, the Chinese District started a Bible School for Chinese in Medan.

Pedersen noted that during this time there was (once again) considerable disharmony in the relations between the Methodist Church and the HKBP.¹⁵² The Bataks from Tapanuli maintained that all Christian Bataks were originally from the HKBP and that the HKBP was the only Batak church in Sumatra. There had been an unwritten agreement that members of HKBP could become members of the Methodist Batak congregations and the reverse could also occur. The migration of the Toba Bataks to the Methodist territory along the coast had also increased the tension between the two churches. This tension, however, could be settled down by commissioning Rev. Alm to teach at Nommensen University.

In 1964 the *Gereja Methodist Indonesia* (GMI, the Methodist Church of Indonesia) became an autonomous Church. The political confrontation between Indonesia and Malaysia was the main reason for this action as it was very difficult at that delicate time for the Methodist Church in Indonesia to be led by an American Bishop whose headquarters was in Singapore, considered as enemy by the Indonesian government. Rev. Wismar Panggabean was elected as the first leader (Chairperson) of the church. The statistics at that time were: 22,000 members, 21 pastors, 5 of whom were missionaries.

But a few months before the recognition of autonomy a group of pastors and members who were not content to ask for an Enabling Act from the General Conference, and were burning with the nationalistic fever of Indonesia's confrontation with Malaysia and Western imperialism, stepped aside and formed a new church named *Gereja Methodist Merdeka Indonesia* (GMMI, the Indonesian Free Methodist Church). They considered that leadership had been in the hands of the westerners for too long and reflected a sort of spiritual imperialism. A split could not be avoided.

In 1964 the GMI expanded its work to Java again after being absent for 25 years. The initiators of this work were the Methodist people who migrated from Sumatra to Java. At this time the expansion of the GMI in Java and Bali appeared promising. In 1969, the first General Conference was held in Medan. The Conference decided that the GMI should have a bishop instead of a Chairman and Rev. Johannes Gultom was elected to lead the church as its first bishop. In 1973 he was re-elected for a second four-year term and during his leadership the organisation of the church was consolidated. The

¹⁵² Pedersen 1970:126–128.

Book of Discipline was issued for the first time in 1973. During this period an ecumenical ministry developed between GMI and GBKP in the lowlands, particularly in rural development programmes, with some shared overseas staff.¹⁵³ In 1977 Rev. Hermanus Sitorus was elected to be the bishop. There were 33,000 members, 50 pastors and 101 supply pastors at the time.

In 1981 Sitorus was re-elected for a second term. During his period the GMI promoted its mission and evangelism, especially among the Karo Batak in North Sumatra. Mass baptisms were conducted several times. Congregations were also asked to be involved in mission activities. After this eight-year period the membership numbered around 60,000. Penetration into the highland homeland of the Karo people gave rise to the same tension as had earlier occurred with HKBP in Asahan. To GBKP it appeared that proselytism had taken the place of the earlier ecumenical cooperation.

The General Conference elected Johannes Gultom as the bishop for a third time in 1985 but unfortunately, after two years, he died. The special session of the General Conference held in January 1988 elected Rev. Hamonangan Panggabean as bishop and re-elected in 1989. During his term the relationship between the Methodist Church in Indonesia and the Methodist Church in Korea was extended and many church buildings were financed by the Korean Methodist Church.

At the General Conference in Bogor in 1993, Hermanus Sitorus was elected as Bishop for the third time. Before he finished his term he died in 1995. Another special General Conference was held in April 1995 and Rev. Humala Doloksaribu was elected as bishop. In the General Conference of October 1997 he was re-elected for the period of 1997–2001, and then succeeded by Rusman Tambunan for the period 2001–2005.

There are now around 80,000 members, 180 pastors, 115 supply pastors, 300 congregations, and 155 mission posts. There are two Annual Conferences and ten Districts, within the GMI. Around 70% of the members are Batak, 20% are Chinese, and the rest are from various ethnic groups. Since 2003 this church has had two bishops, one for the North Sumatra Conference and one for the Java and South Sumatra Conference.

The Reformed Churches

There are two Reformed churches centred in Sumatra, both of them initiated by *Gereja-gereja Kristen Jawa* (GKJ; see chapter fourteen), and some other related churches in Java, in cooperation with *Zending der Gereformeerde Kerken*

¹⁵³ Rae 1994:157.

in *Nederland* (ZGKN) or with certain already existing *Gereformeerd* congregations. These two churches became separate entities mainly due to geographical separation, one being in the northern and the other in the southern Sumatra. We will first concentrate on North Sumatra, the *GKI Sumut*.¹⁵⁴

From the second half of the nineteenth century there were thousands of Javanese brought by the western (Dutch, British and American) planters to the east coast area of North Sumatra, mostly to be coolies. The Batak Mission/HKBP as well as the Karo Mission/GBKP and the Methodist Mission/GMI did not pay any attention to those mostly *abangan* or nominal Muslims, although there were a few Christians among them. In order to give pastoral care to these Christians, and to evangelise the non-Christians, from around the 1930s ZGKN (especially endorsed by Prof. J.H. Bavinck who was formerly a missionary in Java) in cooperation with GKJ set up their missionary and pastoral work. Evangelism was mainly practised through personal approach because it was assumed to be an effective method for the Javanese.

It was not difficult to build communication and friendship with the Javanese, but not many of them were attracted to the gospel; most of them kept to their Javanese mysticism and syncretism. As a result most of the congregations or evangelism posts consisted of very few members. There were only several large congregations, like in Medan, Pematangsiantar and Sibolga. This strategy was in line with one of the basic principles of the *Gereformeerd* or Reformed churches that is the autonomy and self-reliance of each local congregation, so that each congregation mainly focused on its affairs, although they gathered in a *classis* (presbytery).

Realising that progress among the Javanese was slow, from 1950s this so-called *Gereja Gereformeerd* expanded its evangelism among the Bataks who migrated in increasing numbers to the plantation areas. Later this church even expanded to non-plantation areas like in Parlilitan and Bahalbatu (North Tapanuli) and Kolang (Central Tapanuli). In light of this development, in 1969 this church became an autonomous Synod, while keeping relations with the ZGKN in the Netherlands and GKJ in Java, and later it changed its name to become the *Gereja Kristen Indonesia Sumatra Utara* (GKI Sumut, Indonesian Christian Church in North Sumatra).

But this expansion and development also brought problems, among them competition or even rivalry between the Javanese and the Batak groups, as for example seen in the internal conflict in the Medan congregation in 1969. Here the Javanese wanted to maintain their characteristics, such as using the Javanese language and other cultural elements, while the Bataks also desired

¹⁵⁴ This sub-section is mainly excerpted from Lempp 1976:310–314 with some updating.

similar facilities and wanted a place in the leadership structure. Fortunately this conflict has already been resolved and this church continues to develop, although rather slowly and moving rather carefully to recruit pastors.¹⁵⁵ Currently there are about 17,000 members in 25 local congregations and 50 posts, ministered to by some 30 pastors.¹⁵⁶

The *Gereja Kristen Sumatra Bagian Selatan* (GKSBS, the Christian Church of southern Sumatra) had a specific genesis because it came into being as a result of a huge social change, the inter-island migration in Indonesia, which brought several millions of people from the overcrowded island of Java to the underdeveloped island of Sumatra. During the nineteenth century the population of Java had increased so rapidly that at the turn of the century the over-population was an increasingly visible threat.

Just at that time Dutch colonial policy became more focused on the interests of the Indonesian people. In accordance with this so-called *ethische politiek* (ethical policy) the government set up a programme for internal migration. The name of that programme, 'Colonisation of the outer-islands,' pointed out that a reduction of the population-pressure in Java was not the only objective. The programme should also develop Sumatra and subsequently the other large islands of the archipelago.

Southern Sumatra, where since 1905 the migrants from Java were settled, was not an unoccupied area. Several ethnic groups populated it with different cultures varying from the very primitive to the highly developed. The co-existence of the autochthonous Sumatran people and Javanese immigrants during the first decades did not raise much tension, because the latter were settled in homogenous Javanese villages. As the density of population increased the tensions grew, especially about land-ownership. The programmes for colonisation were slowed down by cuts in government expenditure, but were greatly increased just in the middle of the economic crisis during the 1930s.

After 1949 the Indonesian government wanted to intensify internal migration under the well-chosen name of *Transmigrasi*. Due to bad economic development, many ambitious programmes for migration could not be carried out and until 1965 the migration programme could not be brought back on a large scale. As recently as the last few years the Indonesian government and

¹⁵⁵ As a Reformed church this *Gereformeerde*/GKI Sumut church would prefer to send their aspirants to STT (later Faculty of Theology of the Christian University) Duta Wacana at Yogyakarta rather than to Fakultas Theologia Universitas Nommensen (then STT HKBP) Pematangsiantar, although some of the aspirants were Bataks. For the last ten years this church supported an ecumenical theological school, STT Abdi Sabda in Medan, and sent its aspirants to study there as well as appointing ministers to become lecturers or members of the board of trustees.

¹⁵⁶ Interview with Rev. Thomas Supardjo, the chairperson of the Synod of GKI Sumut, in January 2005.

society began to realise the ecological consequences of migration, which has resulted in a vast deforestation.

Amidst the migrants in southern Sumatra a new Protestant church was born. About 95% of the members of that church came from Central and East Java, the others had their roots in West Java and Bali. Many of them were members of the Javanese churches in Central and East Java. Some came from the Christian Church in the northern part of Central Java, a church originating from the Salatiga mission and the German Neukirchener mission. Other members formerly in Java belonged to the Javanese Mennonite Church centred round Mount Muria in the northern part of Central Java. Members of the Balinese and Sundanese Churches also joined the GKSBS after their migration. Only the Mennonite Church in Central Java later withdrew its former members in Sumatra from the GKSBS and set up their own Mennonite communities. In fact the GKSBS is a five-fold united church. The differences in faith and order between the five churches in Java and Bali were not so great therefore members of those five churches did not meet difficulties in establishing together one new church in Sumatra.

The Christians among the Javanese colonists who settled in southern Sumatra during the 1930s felt spiritually lonely. Sometimes they reported their situation to their family or their pastor in Java. It was Rev. J. Darmohatmojo at Purworejo in Central Java who took their problems to his heart. Due to his initiatives, the Synod of the *Gereja-gereja Kristen Jawa* (GKJ, the Church of Central Java) decided in 1938 to accept the Lampung district in southern Sumatra as its mission field and to set up pastoral work among the Javanese migrants. That church was able to send a missionary, Rev. J.S. Harjowasito, to Lampung just before the Japanese army occupied Sumatra. The Rev. Harjowasito was able give guidance to the small groups of Christians during the difficult Japanese occupation.

From another side, too, attention was given to the fate of the colonists in Sumatra. The Dutch parish of the *Gereformeerde Kerk van Palembang* also gave support by appointing two evangelists for pastoral work among the Javanese. After World War II this congregation in Palembang again dedicated itself to the mission among the Javanese, and appointed a special missionary minister for that work.

The transmigration church could not expand until 1949. As a result of the new opportunities in June 1952 delegates of four (of the five) parishes assembled for the first session of the *Klasis Sumatra Selatan* (the presbytery of southern Sumatra). That meeting was the first step in the process of building a church organisation.

After 1952 the Javanese congregations in southern Sumatra developed. At first they increased gradually, by natural growth, with the arrival of new Christian migrants and because people from outside joined the church.

After 1965 this church, too, met accelerated growth due to political events in Indonesia. Many Javanese who had only been nominal Muslims wanted to become Christians. That increase lasted only some years. During the 1970s and 1980s the migration grew tremendously. As a result of this extension, new groups of Christians sprang up even in the provinces of Jambi and Bengkulu.

In the reception of the Christian migrants, the Javanese missionaries played an important role. They may be called the 'church fathers' of the GKSBS and the Rev. J.S. Harjowasito was the pioneer. After his departure to North Sumatra he was succeeded by the Rev. J. Siswodwidjo who during more than thirty years was of great importance for the church in Lampung. In 1966 and 1970 Rev. R.S. Poedjosoewito joined him for South Lampung and Rev. Abner Siswosoewito for North Lampung. They worked in good cooperation with the ministers of the local congregations. In 1962 Hardjowasito came back to the south and became a local pastor in the town of Palembang.

Often missionary activities of members of the congregations were reported. Sometimes a group of Christians arose from the dedication of a teacher who was the only Christian in his village. The parish of Sumber Rejeki sprang up because a single woman started a Sunday school in her house. After 1970 the missionary activities were increasingly dependent on the method of the New Testament, the spontaneous witness of common believers. Evangelisation as a directed activity was not allowed from that time. The distribution of Christian reading material was also forbidden. However, in a Christian health-centre and in some Christian schools, the gospel was passed to many people.

The motives of people who wanted to become Christian between 1965 and 1968 often were very curious. Some were looking for an escape from the suspicion of being thought of as communists. Others became Christians because they disapproved of Muslims being involved in the massacres of communists. Mass conversions were not reported in southern Sumatra, but often some families opted together for Christianity. After 1968 people came over to Christianity individually or by families. Many of them had visited Christian schools in Java and had postponed their conversion until they had left their family and friends. Others were, in a quite new and strange environment, attracted by the fellowship they saw in a small group of Christians. Finally there were some people who for a long time had been in search of spiritual deepening and rest for their soul. Later the Javanese society became less tolerant and every conversion had to rest upon conscious choice.

After the genesis of groups of Christians, as a result of the settlement of Christian migrants and the communication of the gospel, action was set for a regular construction of the church. The missionary ministers supported the groups in becoming established and independent congregations. As part of their missionary role they tried to develop pastoral and diaconal care of the

parishes. These church building activities were seriously hampered by a lack of professional workers. With different means the migration church tried to recruit ministers from Java. Finally, in Metro—Central Lampung a once only course was set up for rural pastors. The in-service training of assistant ministers got a good response.

The supra-congregational organisation of the church, in regional assemblies, was extended in 1959 when *Klasis Sumatra Selatan* (as part of the Synod of GKJ since 1953) was divided into a *Klasis Lampung* and *Klasis Palembang*. In 1970 the *Klasis Lampung* had to be split up again into four new presbyteries. The earlier activities of the missionary ministers in lay training had to be increased because of the influx of new members from 1965 to 1968. At their special request, the *Klasis Lampung* and *Palembang* received in 1968 a Dutch minister for that work, the Rev. E. Hoogerwerf, who worked until December 1973. The Rev. R.S. Poedjosoewito, the missionary minister in South Lampung, was appointed as his colleague in this activity. In cooperation with the doctor of a Christian health-centre they set up courses for family planning and with an agronomist, a member of the church, they were active in community development.

In southern Sumatra the government formally acknowledged the church. That meant that the ordained ministers had the authority to register marriages and Christians joined and still join in all kinds of social activities. When they are invited by their neighbours to participate in a *slametan*, a ritual meal, they attend the ceremony without taking part in the Muslim prayers. Circumcision, which was rejected by Christians before World War II, is gradually being practised. Circumcision is often said not to be a matter of religion but of adat. Christian marriage and family life more and more stand out from that in Muslim circles and the emancipation of women has made more progress among Christians than among Muslims. But Christians are divided about *wayang*, the traditional Javanese puppet-show. Some reject it for its contents that oppose the gospel. Others just want to use it in the communication of the gospel and retell the stories with evangelical content.

From the beginning the transmigration church wanted to serve society. The first task the church took up was in the field of education. After 1950, the public provision for education was far behind that needed. In that situation some Christian congregations set up their own schools. During a long period the quality of Christian (including Catholic) school education was superior to that of the public schools. Since then the government has increased both the quantity and quality of its programmes and because of that the original need for Christian schools is no longer a priority, and their superior position has been lost. But the missionary motive for Christian education still endures. In secondary school many youngsters accept the Christian faith and many young autochthonous people acquire knowledge of the gospel. With lack of

government support the financial position of Christian schools is growing more difficult.

In the 1950s the church was confronted by a great lack of medical care. The small Christian clinic, which was opened in Metro in 1950, developed to be a well-equipped hospital. This centre for medical care was self-supporting from the very beginning, only seeking foreign aid for large projects.

In the social well being of its members, the church noticed weakness. The public agricultural information service was insufficient. That was the reason why the church in 1958 appointed the Javanese agronomist, Mr. Gunarto. In cooperation with local committees and some professional assistants, Gunarto has contributed much to community development in the villages. In providing people with information, seeds and plants he never limited his attention to Christians only. On the other hand, he continuously stimulated people to strengthen the financial position of their congregations. His department also worked together with a church-founded organisation for transmigration in Java and helped hundreds of poor Javanese farmers to settle in southern Sumatra.

A special contribution to service in society by the transmigration church was called the 'general diaconate.' This supra-congregational work was, from 1970 onwards, focused primarily on political prisoners. Especially in Lampung this service was important and unique. People who were forgotten by everyone got affectionate attention and practical help. Often political prisoners were impressed by this dedication and wanted to become Christians. After some years this diaconate also campaigned for the right of farmers who were evicted from the land they had cultivated for a long time. Sometimes the reason was a state supported programme for reforestation. In other areas the authorities had granted the land to a private company. In the 1980s the church could offer to the affected farmers new land in Jambi or Bengkulu. They were settled in the neighbourhood of a parish that jointly supported the newcomers. Later on the church also gave legal aid. For this work the GKSBS now has an independent foundation that is able to operate more freely.

In 1987 the GKJ agreed to full independence of the transmigration church. At that time it had 62 congregations and 36 candidate congregations, served by 44 ministers and 23 evangelists with some 41,500 regular attenders.¹⁵⁷ The financial support from the *Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland* (GKN) was, however, still very important for the GKSBS. The appointment of its own Javanese missionaries and the ministers for lay training had been impossible without this aid. The social-economic work too, for the greater part, was financed by the GKN and without aid from the Netherlands almost all Christian

¹⁵⁷ Data taken from REC's website: www.recweb.org, accessed on 21 July 2005.

schools would have disappeared in southern Sumatra. The personnel support from the Dutch partner church, however, was very limited. Only twice was a Dutch minister made available for the church's use. The Rev. K.L.F. le Grand had, as a minister of the Dutch Reformed Church in Palembang during the 1950s, already done much for the Javanese parishes. In November 1959 he transferred to the missionary service and worked for the transmigration church until January 1962. The second Dutch minister was the Rev. E. Hoogerwerf, already mentioned. In comparison with other churches in Indonesia this was a small foreign personnel arrangement. In many respects the GKSBS searched for its own way.

The termination of the financial support from the Netherlands and the increase of its own efforts to bear the costs of the life of the church was a difficult process, the end of which is not yet in sight. The weak economic position of the migrants and the high rate of inflation over many years would partly account for this. Leaders of the GKSBS also pointed to an under-developed sense of responsibility among the members of the church. In the meantime almost all local and regional costs are borne by the parishes. The activities at the synod level are still strongly subsidised by the GKN.

In the belief of the GKSBS members, Christ and his work stand in the centre, which does not mean they have a 'Jesus-religion.' Although there is a clear awareness of sinfulness, through the salvation in Christ, life in the congregations is cheerful. The Kingdom of the Lord is the inspiring context the believers live in. In all aspects of life they try to live out the gospel, although the issues of society and politics are seldom taken into account.

The GKSBS has a presbyterial synodal structure, which was consolidated in the new church order that was accepted by the Synod in 1996. New elements in this order are central financial arrangements and the competency of the synod to play a role in the mutation of ministers. The fact that the church (until 2001) did not have any women ministers is caused more by practical reasons than by objections in principle.¹⁵⁸

In its relation to the other religions the GKSBS is obviously tolerant. Many church members know Islam from the inside and all speak respectfully about it. Yet they have found their conversion to the Christian faith to be an enrichment of their relationship to Allah. For the GKSBS dialogue does not replace Christian witness but is the form of it. When a Christian becomes Muslim (again) he is said to be an apostate.

People who were asked if there is a special 'theology of transmigration' within the GKSBS preferred the notion of a 'theology of renewal.' They strongly felt that they were involved in the struggle for renewal of their total life in a new

¹⁵⁸ In 2002 GKSBS for the first time ordained a woman minister.

land. The contextuality of the GKSBS is widely determined by the everlasting stream of new migrants. As a result of this migration the Javanese group now forms a majority in the four provinces of southern Sumatra. Moreover the church lives in an area of rapid economic development, which is often allied to a harsh exploitation of man and other kinds of injustice. The Rev. Yussar Yanto is one of the theologians in the GKSBS who since 1973 has gathered stones to build a contextual theology.

A concrete application of contextuality was given by the GKSBS in the repeatedly expressed intention to be a church not for one racial group only but for a region. It gave concrete form to this statement by choosing its name and its official language. Its service in society is also a shape of contextuality.

*The Nias Churches*¹⁵⁹

The story of the churches in the island of Nias and the surrounding islands, west of North Sumatra, is no less interesting and complicated than of those in the big island of Sumatra. Although the current population of Nias and the surroundings, the *Ono Niha*, is less than a million and the cultural variety (adat, language, traditional belief, etc.) is not very remarkable,¹⁶⁰ but at the moment there are at least six different church organisations centred in this island besides some other churches coming from outside.

Nias (3,980 km²), the biggest among many islands on the west side of Sumatra, recently became very well known all over the world due to a series of earthquakes and tsunami on 26 December 2004 and 28 March 2005. Although Nias and the surrounding islands are located in the Indian Ocean, almost none of the inhabitants work as sailors. They commonly live as traditional farmers and this makes them quite isolated, introverted, and less modern compared to the people in Sumatra. Before the arrival of the westerners, the only contact with the outside world was due to the slave trade. The Dutch colonial government settled only from 1840 and did not complete the annexation until 1902. When the colonial administration came the slave trade was stopped, but the traditional social and governmental system was maintained. In the colonial government system and later in the missionary work *Salawa* or *siulu* (village chief) and *tuhenöri* (district chief) as well as *fondrakö* (a gathering to set up *huku-föna*, adat law) continued to function.

¹⁵⁹ This section is mainly based on Van den End 2002:211–217, Lempp 1976:8–36, and Uwe Hummel & Tuhony Telaumbanua 2007.

¹⁶⁰ Indeed there are some cultural differences between the northern Niasan and the southern (such as in adat, dialect, clothes, house architecture, etc.) and these differences were also pointed out as reasons to establish a new church in the southern area in the 1990s, but generally speaking the *Ono Niha* are more or less homogeneous.

Sociologically and anthropologically the *Ono Niha* (Niasans) has a certain affinity to the Bataks, but the differences are much more than the similarities. The Niasans, like the Bataks, believed that the first Ono Niha descended from heaven in a village named Gomo. Therefore their *huku-föna* was also believed to have a divine quality and authority. This belief that created a feeling of superiority, was later to become a very strong factor that hampered the progress of evangelism. Although they believed that they were descendants of one ancestor who were later divided into some tribal groups, inter-tribal and inter-*öri* (village) wars frequently occurred, even after the arrival of the colonial power and the Christian missions.

Besides the Niasans, Minangkabau Muslim and Chinese traders had already settled before the westerners came, especially in coastal areas, followed by some other ethnic groups. In the Dutch colonial administration Nias and the surrounding islands were until 1853 part of Padang residency, but since then part of Tapanuli residency and after independence they became one *kabupaten* (regency) until 2001, when it was divided into two regencies.¹⁶¹

*Preliminary missionary attempts in Nias (1832–1865)*¹⁶²

From 1669, the beginning of commercial cooperation between VOC and some Niasan chiefdoms around Gunungsitoli, the Niassans (*Ono Niha*) had occasional contacts with European Christians. However, the VOC had no interest in mission. Nor did the English, who conquered Nias from the Dutch company in 1756, engage in any missionary activities.

The priest Jean-Pierre Vallon and a Niasan couple (Francisco and Sophie) from Penang (*Pulau Pinang*) were the first missionaries to Nias. They were in the service of the Paris Foreign Missionary Society (*Société des Missions Étrangères*), which had, since 1662, worked on Penang amongst the *Ono Niha* who lived there either as slaves or as manumitted former slaves. In 1824, thirty *Ono Niha* had been baptised on Penang. Vallon, Francisco, Sophie and another priest, Jean-Laurent Bérard, left Penang for Nias in December 1831 and arrived in March 1832. After visiting a few villages, they settled in the village of Lasara, near Gunungsitoli.

It has been supposed that Vallon learned the local Niasan vernacular and “baptised a few children.”¹⁶³ Vallon died in June 1832, two to three months after his arrival. His colleague Bérard, who had stayed behind ill on Sumatra,

¹⁶¹ Precisely during the earthquake and tsunami season there was an attempt to establish another new regency, *Kabupaten Nias Barat*; cf. the reason that motivated the Christians there to establish ONKP in 1950.

¹⁶² This part is a summary of Uwe Hummel 2007—chap. 4:2–5.

¹⁶³ U.M. Telaumbanua 1993:95.

came to Nias some time after Vallon's death. He, too, died before he could begin any missionary work. After this, there were no more attempts by Roman Catholic missionaries to work on Nias and the Batu Islands until 1939. Unfortunately, there are no records about what happened to catechist Francisco and his wife Sophie. If they survived and remained on Nias, they, along with the hypothetically baptised children, could be considered to be the 'stem-cell' of the church on Nias.

In 1834 two Protestant missionaries from Boston, Massachusetts, USA, Samuel Munson and Henry Lyman, came to Nias. The Congregationalist Mission Society (ABCFM) sent them out. After investigating the eastern coast, travelling northward from the south, they returned to Sibolga because they could not get permission from the Dutch authorities to work on Nias. Subsequently, they entered the Batakland (see above).

It was not until almost thirty years later that another Protestant missionary, the German Ludwig Ernst Denninger (1815–1876) from the RMG had contacts with an *Ono Niha* community, albeit initially in Padang rather than on Nias. In this town on the western coast of Sumatra numerous *Ono Niha* were living in special settlements.¹⁶⁴ Many of them had been brought over from Nias as slaves and were working as servants and unskilled labourers. Most were adherents of the primal religion of Nias, though some had come under the influence of Islam, especially those who had attended government schools.

Denninger is called the 'Father of the Nias Mission.' From 1848 to 1859, he had served among the Dayak in Kalimantan, but had then had to flee because of a revolt against all Europeans. After an interim period on Java, Denninger and his wife Sophie arrived in Padang on 21 November 1861. Because of Sophie's poor health, Denninger settled temporarily in Padang. The longer he stayed there the more certain he became that a mission post there would be of strategic importance, both as a bridgehead for Sumatra in general and, specifically, for taking Christianity to Nias. A Nias Mission, however, would have to be centred on Nias itself, rather than being treated as a satellite of the Sumatra mission.

Beginning Period in Nias (1865–1890)

Denninger arrived on 27 September 1865 in Gunungsitoli, the capital and main harbour on the east coast of Nias. During the early period he and his colleagues who followed had to face a series of difficult beginnings. These

¹⁶⁴ According to W. Gulö 1983:6, there were about 3,000 *Ono Niha* in Padang at that time; other sources mention 5,000–6,000. The *Ono Niha* constituted the largest non-Malay community in Padang in the nineteenth century.

'difficult beginnings' were marked by immense hardships and painful setbacks in the attempt to plant Christianity on Niasan soil. Basic instruments of communication, such as the language, first had to be acquired, and common trust had to develop before any significant interaction could take place.

During these difficult beginnings, although the German missionaries had made no overall impact on Niasan culture, they, however, had managed to gain a foothold in Niasan communities that had already been subjugated by the Dutch. When they treated their listeners as guests, offering them small gifts, these would react with praise of the host; if the preacher used traditional means of communication and adjusted himself to the cultural setting, he was usually treated with great respect. But any disparaging attitude towards indigenous customs would result in missionary failure, especially outside the boundaries of the Government Protected Area (GPA, the so-called *Rapatgebied*).

The primary motive prompting chiefs to turn to Christianity was to gain an ally against rivals and against Islam, rather than necessarily being related to any faith conviction. After initial collaboration, chiefs such as Tödölala of Ombölata and Oroisa of Dahana distanced themselves when they realised that they could not manipulate the missionaries to their own ends. Later, when Christianity had become an unavoidable factor in their society, they gave in and asked for baptism. Outside the GPA, especially in southern Nias, the missionaries could not stand their ground. They had proved irrelevant to the objectives of the sovereign chiefs and, in addition, threatened the chiefs' authority by undermining the traditional customs.

A certain degree of meaningful interaction between the missionaries and the *Ono Niha* became possible only as the former became fluent in the vernacular and the latter submitted themselves as catechumens. Symbolically, the act of baptism and the subsequent banquet of pork signified a treaty of allegiance. After a while indigenous teacher-preachers, as well as Christian chiefs and elders, began to play a significant role in communicating the teachings and the policies of the mission to their fellow countrymen.

In planting Niasan Christianity, the missionaries and their indigenous protégés felt no need to make use of the ground provided by the *Ono Niha's* spiritual context. While Denninger showed some respect for the 'natural' religious inclinations of the *Ono Niha*, his younger colleagues followed a more or less consistent practice of rooting out all elements of Niasan culture related to the primal religion. The question of the *Ono Niha's* keeping or destroying their ancestral images (*adu zatua*, statue made of wood or stone as an image of the ancestor) acquired the importance of determining the *status confessionis*, i.e. of acting as a watershed between Christians and non-Christians. Submission to the missionaries' demand to surrender the *adu zatua* for destruction opened the door to baptism, whereas secretly keeping them was a reason for excommunication, if they were later found out. In an a priori manner, all *adu*

were considered to be idols and thus an abomination to God. In their stead, a particular type of westernised Christianity was superimposed by the missionaries on those *Ono Niha* willing to become Christians. At this stage, the latter could hardly have fathomed the actual meaning and significance of the alien doctrines and strange ceremonies.

Facing such difficulties, in terms of quantity, during the first twenty-five years (1865–1890) the missionary effort in Nias could gather only a small harvest. On the Easter feast of 1874 the first baptism was administered in Nias for 25 Niasans. In 1890 that number had increased to 706. Notwithstanding the small quantity, in this pioneering period the RMG, that in Nias was also called Nias Mission, already set up some basic structures to make possible expansion in the coming period. Firstly, the Niasan Christians already learnt to participate in propagating the gospel. One of the Nias leaders who played an important role in the evangelisation was a village chief, Ama Mandranga. There were also a number of teachers and elders appointed by the missionaries. In 1882 a teacher-training institute was established and the missionaries always attempted to enhance the authority of the autochthonous ministers in the eyes of the Niasans. Secondly, there was an attempt to build a self-supporting church by putting certain responsibility on the shoulders of the Niasan Christian community. Thirdly, the Bible and some other books were translated into northern Nias language, by missionary H. Sundermann together with some indigenous helpers.¹⁶⁵

During the second twenty-five years (1890–1915) the evangelism effort flourished more and the basic structures were enhanced. The expansion of missionary activities in this period was to some extent characterised by a two-fold shift in emphasis in the missionary strategy. On the one hand, there was a change of focus from individual to communal conversion; on the other hand, the missionaries began to differentiate more sharply between the various aspects of the local culture and gained an appreciation of some of these aspects.

The most prominent characteristic of this second period, however, is the expansion of the mission beyond the GPA. The year 1890 marks the beginning of a continuous process of successful penetration of missionary activities into areas beyond the direct control of, though under some degree of protection by, the colonial authorities. After 1908, when the Dutch subjugated the whole of Nias, RMG missionaries established themselves permanently in southern Nias. The support for the mission among the local population, as well as its strategic network of mission stations and its increasing emphasis on community

¹⁶⁵ Sundermann's name is perpetuated in the name of a theological college established by BNKP in 1999.

development, strengthened its position vis-à-vis the colonial government. The Dutch 'Ethical Policy,' implemented from 1901, enhanced cooperation between the mission and the state further.

Parallel to this geographical expansion there was a rapid numerical increase in membership. In 1915 the number of the Christians increased to around 20,000, while the teachers and elders were almost 500. The increase in the number of stations and branch congregations necessitated a further consolidation of the ecclesiastical structures, and an urgent need in the course of missionary expansion was the availability of more well trained Niasan assistants. During the 1880s, Sundermann had trained nine teacher-preachers (guru) in his so-called seminary in Dahana. A few others had graduated from the seminary in Depok in Batavia. After Sundermann had moved to Lölöwu'a in 1895, Thomas started similar vocational training in Humene. After Thomas' sudden death at the end of 1900, the 'seminary' moved to Ombölata in 1901, where Thomas' son-in-law, Conrad Ufer, continued the task along with the gifted Niasan guru Andrea. In the course of time, the seminary grew and the standard of teaching improved.

Fries, the first truly academic theologian in the service of the RMG on Nias, was elected to the office of chairman of the Conference of Missionaries in 1913 and moved from his mission station in Sifaoro'asi to the seminary in Ombölata. In 1914, he initiated the first two-year course for up-grading guru to become Niasan ministers (*Pandita Niha*). The graduates of this course were to play an important role in the following period of the Great Awakening.

In the meantime the RMG/Nias Mission created a new office i.e. *sinenge* (apostle or evangelist) to serve the congregations that had no school. They were authorised to serve congregations except for administration of the sacraments, confirmation and consecration of marriage. In 1906 the first Nias pastor was ordained. The fortunate one, who was talented and experienced but had very little additional training, was guru Sitefanö from Humene. He had been a long-time assistant of the late missionary Thomas. Sitefanö was ordained on 25 March 1906 by the chairman of the Conference of Missionaries, *Präses* Kramer, while the past-chairman, Sundermann, delivered the sermon. Altogether, twelve missionaries attended the ceremony.

The missionaries' were active in many fields in order to promote evangelisation through the increase of the economic potentiality of the Christian congregations and promotion of the welfare of the people: they opened schools, built roads, established a saving bank, opened coffee plantations. As a result of the health-related ministry the number of Christians increased by the natural growth as well as by the conversion of non-Christians, while the total population of Nias decreased due to epidemic diseases.

Last but not least, there was cooperation between the colonial government and the mission in the effort to establish a Christianised *adat*. In February

1914 a delegation of government officials met with the leadership of the Nias-Conference in Ombölata, in order to discuss a code of law for Christian *Ono Niha*. The suggestions of the missionaries were partially taken into account, so that the resident of Tapanuli could implement a special codex of adat-law for the Christians of the Nias district, with the exception of the sub-district of South Nias, in 1915. Though the government effectively strengthened the status of Christians by implementing this special adat-law, it did not solve the problem of a 'dual system' of values; the spirit of the traditional adat continued to determine many aspects of everyday life.

To conclude, the years 1890 to 1915 were vital for the expansion of Christianity amongst the *Ono Niha*. Whereas at the end of the previous period there had been merely three viable but struggling stations, all inside the GPA, in 1915 there were fourteen rapidly growing stations, encompassing 120 filial congregations, located throughout the island of Nias. Inspired by Warneck's vision of the Christianisation of nations and Wegner's application of the three-self formula, it had been possible to carry out the strategic idea of the triple axis, creating a network of missionary stations all over Nias. Missionaries had followed the rules of the adat in order to gain entrance to strongholds of the primal religion or to win the sympathy of some chiefs.

The expansion of Christianity on Nias went hand in hand with the expansion of colonial rule and with a new kind of collaboration between the two in Christian education, in medical services, and in the development of a Christianised adat. Missionaries openly supported forced labour (*rodi*) and called on the colonial authorities for the use of force in order to 'pacify' areas not yet under colonial rule. Despite this dubious synergy between mission and state, the hearts of the *Ono Niha* gradually but surely turned towards Christianity. In the year 1914, when the major powers of the world were sliding into a bloody war, Paramount Chief Barani Dakhi surrendered his *adu* and ancestral skulls to the missionary.

The more appreciative missionary view of the corporate identity of the *Ono Niha* brought about a greater differentiation between the 'valuable' and the 'useless' elements of Niasan culture. The vernacular was studied thoroughly and freed from its 'heathen' odour. Efforts were undertaken to ennoble the adat. But traditional Niasan religiosity was fought more mercilessly than ever. Cleaning a house of all its *adu*, or felling a sacred *fösi*-tree, was celebrated as a victory of God over Satan.

There was no acknowledgement of the primal religion as a possible vital root for a Niasan theology. In accordance with the paradigm of the Enlightenment, it was thought that the primal religion could be eradicated and replaced by Christianity without destroying the rest of the cultural identity. This proved to be wrong and actually resulted in 'cultural vandalism,' which subsequently caused a deep spiritual vacuum in the communal psyche of the *Ono Niha*. In

the midst of this devastation, however, a new national identity, based on the new law of God (*huku Lowalangi*), was already beginning to take shape in some parts of the Niasan population.

The Great Awakening in Nias, 1915–1930

In the mean time the missionaries were not so content to see the spiritual condition of the congregations manifested in the misuse of liquor and drunkenness, marriage disorder, reluctance to give offerings, and most importantly the worshipping of the spirit of the ancestors through *adu zatua*. As a matter of fact the majority of the people still rejected the gospel, until a tremendous and unique revival, the Great Awakening, or mass movement of penance occurred.¹⁶⁶ We will follow Hummel's description, analysis and conclusion on this movement that spread over the whole island in several waves from 1915 until 1930.¹⁶⁷

This Great Awakening, or 'the great penance' (*fangesa dödö sebua*), was not only a revival inside Christianity, but also a campaign of a rapidly growing Christian minority, evangelising a vast majority of adherents of the primal religion. The symptoms were similar to awakenings elsewhere in the world. Unique phenomena can be explained largely by socio-political circumstances and cultural factors. One fundamental experience is existential community fear. It was a matter of the collective rather than the individual conscience, and therefore strongly affected the change of communal identity.

The actual movement of the *fangesa dödö sebua* started at the end of 1915 and continued in different 'waves' until 1930. Fries connects the outbreak to the celebrations of the fiftieth anniversary of the mission in Gunungsitoli in September 1915. The missionaries and indigenous co-workers had used this massive celebration for intensive penitential preaching. In Helefanikha, a filial congregation of Humene, Otto Rudersdorf regretted a lack of awareness of sin among the members of his congregations, especially in preparation for the Lord's Supper. Therefore, he held special services during seven weeks before Christmas in 1915, both in the church on Sunday afternoons, as well as in the filial congregations on weekdays. These meetings were frequented by a growing number of Niasan Christians. On one of these occasions, a Niasan assistant-teacher by the name of Filemo experienced an unusual awareness of sin and subsequently a strong conviction that his sins were forgiven by the crucified Christ. This changed his life convincingly, affecting others.

¹⁶⁶ A study on this first revival movement in Th. Müller 1931; and Felix Meier-Hedde 2003.

¹⁶⁷ Hummel and Telaumbanua 2007:154–170.

In March and April of the same year there were numerous conversions in Humene. Through the preaching of born-again *sinenge* and some elders, the awakening rapidly spread to other villages in the vicinity. At the seminary in Ombölata, the atmosphere was sceptical. This changed after Niasan seminar-ians visited Humene and were, themselves, touched by the awakening. They henceforth joined in as its agents.

From Humene the awakening spread southwards to Sogae Adu and westwards to Sifaoro'asi and as far as the Hinako Islands. In the absence of the missionary, the awakening in Sogae Adu took on an eschatological character. The doomsday atmosphere caused some to destroy their property or to commit suicide. Some women stood up as charismatic leaders, one as a prophetess and another as the incarnation of the Holy Spirit.

Eventually, the enthusiasts of Sogae Adu carried the awakening westwards to the mission station Sifaoro'asi, wanting to convert the German missionary Skubinna there. In Holi, one of the filial congregations of Sifaoro'asi, the awakening took on tumultuous and violent dimensions. Skubinna managed to suppress the movement, putting a number of its leaders in hospital and sending the 'pseudo-Christ' to missionary Fries in Ombölata. On the following Sunday the enthusiasts had to appear in front of the congregation in the church of Sifaoro'asi, confessing their heresy and their spiritual arrogance. Henceforth, the *Ono Niha* of Sifaoro'asi shut themselves off from the awakening.

Missionary Ludwig Borutta took a similarly repressive attitude towards the enthusiasts in Lölöwua. A guru from the mission school, who followed a prophetess from Humene, evangelising together with a large group of young women in this area, was threatened by the missionary with expulsion from his teaching post and subsequent forced labour (*rodi*). This not only intimidated the guru, but also hampered the spread of the awakening in this area.

By 1917 the initial élan of the movement had calmed down somewhat, but it did not stop. It moved beyond Humene and Ombölata to Gunungsitoli where first signs were registered in 1918 and where it reached its peak a few months later, in several prayer groups (*sekola wangandrö*). *Pandita* Josefo, who served in Gunungsitoli at the time, at first received a big fright (*ahölihöli dödü*), but then judged these outbursts of enthusiasm to be the work of the Holy Spirit. Around this time (1917–1918) the Great Awakening also reached Hilimaziaya in the north. Even in the south, in Niha Raya, there were numerous conversions.

In 1922 the Great Awakening flared up again in full power, this time starting in Gunungsitoli. It strengthened Christianity in Hilimaziaya and reached out as far north as Lahewa. Also Sifaoro'asi and Lölöwua succumbed to the strength of the awakening. Many, who were suspicious in 1916, were now touched by it. This time the constructive influence of the *Pandita* was felt, besides the continuing strong witness of the *Sinenge* and some women. In

1923 Niasan evangelists reached Börö Nadu Sifalagö Gomo, an ancient centre of the primal religion in southern Nias. In 1927 missionary Nol baptised the 145 'firstfruits' and in 1929 the remaining 119 inhabitants of this place of descent of the ancestor Hija.

Unfortunately, 1922 was a troublesome year for the people of southern Nias, including the missionaries. An epidemic claimed many lives. But it was not this hardship that hampered the spread of the awakening in some areas, and caused a number of villages to return to the primal religion or fall into religious indifference. A serious obstacle to the spread of Christianity was also the uncompromising attitude of certain missionaries, who rejected the customary law (*hada* or *adat*). This was unacceptable to the proud rulers.

After 1925 the strength of the Great Awakening decreased continuously, and even faded away. By 1930, however, Christianity had become the strongest religion amongst the *Ono Niha* and the primal religion almost disappeared from public life. The number of Christians more than quadrupled during this period.¹⁶⁸ A point of mature saturation was reached.

Besides the mainstream, however, the 1930s also brought some remarkable outbursts of religious enthusiasm, especially in Sogae Adu. These were incidental and limited in character. According to the Synod of the BNKP, these minor awakenings were different in nature to the Great Awakening, since they included a resurgence of pre-Christian magic (*ilmu sibir*) and resulted in schisms.¹⁶⁹ Phenomena like trance, glossolalia (*li bö'ö*) and healing, practiced by 'Masters of Awakening' (*tukang fangesa dödö*), were prominent in the minor awakenings, including the so-called 'jumping awakenings' (*fangesa dödö solaya*) in the 1950s.

Much has been written about the causes of the awakening. Although it has been stated time and time again that this awakening was the work of the Holy Spirit, it also needs to be said that a number of cultural, political and economic factors determined the condition in which this awakening broke out and developed. Three more general factors (psychological strain, change of social order and communal ties) and four more ecclesiastical ones (the jubilee mass rally in 1915, the religious vacuum, identification with Christianity and contextualisation of the message) have to be distinguished. Also concerning the lasting value of the Great Awakening, or the so-called 'fruits of the Awakening', we can see in at least eight points the significance of the Great Awakening for the transformation of Niasan culture and society at large: the

¹⁶⁸ 1914: 17,795 baptised Christians, 9,000 catechumens, 120 congregations; 1922: ca. 52,000 baptised Christians (alternative counting: 49,877), 30,000 catechumens; 1926: 65,000 baptised Christians, 23,000 catechumens; 1929/30: ca. 84,000 baptised Christians, ca. 13,300 catechumens, 164 congregations. These statistics do not include the Batu Islands.

¹⁶⁹ For example: the Community Movement or *Faawösa* (see below).

decline of the primal religion, eschatological awareness, Christianity as a new identity, Christian law versus customary law, improvements of the rights of women and children, the dawn of literacy, music and ecclesiastical self-sufficiency. However, their main focus is on the spiritual life of the *Ono Niha* and the growth of Christianity, and not on society and culture.

To conclude: The Great Awakening was the time of victorious, conquering Christianity and the crucial moment (*kairos*) in the modern history of Nias. Overall, the lasting effects of the Great Awakening have been ambiguous. On the one hand it brought about a metamorphosis of Niasan society. The *Ono Niha* had found a new communal identity in becoming Christians. The vacuum left by the destruction of the primal religion was filled with a new spiritual reality, called Christianity. In the realms of family-life and worship there were important developments, like the acceptance of monogamy, greater freedom for women and children, and cultural developments like the songs of the awakening. But because it was limited and anxiously prevented from expressing itself politically, this new identity was not holistic and not fit to improve the material wellbeing and general cultural development of the *Ono Niha*.

Regarding the aftermath of the Great Awakening, Van den End¹⁷⁰ summarised it as follows: After around ten years the revival movement calmed down and many old things reappeared; the church members became passive, willingness to offer faded away, church discipline needed to be strictly applied, *huku-föna* became empowered above the so-called Christian law (formulated by the Nias Mission), especially concerning the large amount of the customary wedding-gift. In the coming decades some of the members even withdrew or were attracted by the Catholic mission. This might have been caused by the lack of missionaries and well-trained Niasan ministers that deprived most of the new converts of any intensive teaching in the Christian faith. When the flood of emotion ceased, apparently, there was no body of Christian knowledge and experience to become a standard or guide for the subsequent journey of life. The *fangesa sebu'a*, however, had produced a permanent fruit. As told by a Niasan to a missionary, "The gospel that previously only touched our skin now entered into our heart. Suppose you left us in 1914 (the first year of the World War I), Christianity might disappear from Nias. Now the gospel will definitely live in our island."¹⁷¹

¹⁷⁰ Van den End 2002:214.

¹⁷¹ Quoted in Van den End 2002:214.

Struggle towards independence in Nias; new revivals and schism (1930–1965)

On 31 December 1929 the financial support by the Dutch government for the work of the RMG on Sumatra and Nias, granted during the years of heavy inflation in Germany after World War I, was terminated. The colonial government implemented a policy of austerity in subsidising mission schools. On top of this, the World Economic Crisis, as well as the strict foreign exchange restrictions enforced by the Nazis since 1933, caused the worst malaise ever in the history of the RMG (see above).

The financial malaise and the extinction of the fire of the Great Awakening moved the missionaries to take concrete steps towards ecclesiastical independence or self-reliance. In 1936 they finished drafting a church order. The 'autonomy' of the Niasan church was formally decided by the first synod of the *Banua Niha Keriso Protestan* (BNKP, the Nias Christian Protestant Church) in November 1936 and the draft of the church order was accepted. Gunungsitoli was also decided on as headquarters. But European missionaries still occupied the top positions in the leadership. The synod also accepted the desire of the board of RMG in Barmen, Germany, to appoint all European missionaries as full participants in the assembly. But on the other hand the missionaries refused the aspiration of the Niasan Christians that every church-district could send a social leader (a tribal chief) as a full member of the synod assembly.

In May 1940, the Dutch detained the German missionaries and the leadership was handed over to Niasan office bearers. But soon Dutch missionaries, working under the auspices of the *Batak Nias Zending* (BNZ), were transferred to Nias and, in practice, claimed the lead in certain areas of church work.

The Japanese occupation of Nias and the Batu Islands (1942–1945) was a serious test for the very existence of the BNKP. The Imperial Army of Nippon invaded Nias on 17 April 1942 from Sibolga, and the occupation lasted until 15 August 1945. Around Easter 1942 all Dutch men on Nias were interned and three weeks later all women and children were put into a number of camps on Sumatra. The office of *ephorus* was taken over by a Nias pastor, Atöföna Harefa.

At first, the *Ono Niha* received the Japanese as liberators, but this enthusiasm soon changed because of the suffering under the fascist regime, which reached right down to village level. Many Niasan young men were compelled to enter the Japanese army, the people were forced to dig trenches and supply food. Women were raped. There was horrible torture and hunger. Though religion was not prohibited, many churches were desecrated by using them as storehouses. The three-and-a-half years of Japanese occupation was 'hell' for most inhabitants of Nias. Only a few traders of Chinese origin used the opportunity for lucrative business with Singapore. It is remarkable that Niasan Christianity did not wither away under such extreme hardship.

Only during the struggle for National Independence (1945–1949), after the Japanese had left, did the BNKP start functioning as an independent church. By 1950, the BNKP had become an established, independent entity, though far from being self-reliant. Only in 1951 did German missionary-physicians, Thomsen and his wife, come again to serve in Nias, followed by two theologians, Schneider and Dörmann, and two deaconesses, Blindow and Jung in 1952. Their functions were different from those of missionaries before the war. In the post-colonial situation they no longer had a leadership position, but would serve as ‘advisors’ (*penasehat*) to the BNKP.

The year 1950 marked the beginning of a ‘New Era’ (1950–1965) for the church on Nias and to the period of 1950–1965 belonged the ‘coming-of-age’ experiences of a maturing church. Several new perspectives concerning ecumenical cooperation opened up, while at the same time a major schism occurred in the Western area (ONKP), the Roman Catholic counter mission, and enthusiastic movements challenged the BNKP. A very fortunate happening for the Christians on Nias and the Batu Islands was the merger of the BKP with the BNKP in 1960 (see below). This was followed by a number of important synods revising the church order and preparing for the 100th anniversary of the BNKP in 1965.

The reconstruction of the history of the Niasan church in this period ends with the ‘jubilee’ on 26–27 September 1965. This feast, the biggest ever so far celebrated on Nias, was immediately followed by the greatest national disaster in the history of the Republic of Indonesia: the so-called communist coup attempt on 30 September 1965. Here begins a new period in Indonesian history, and with it also of the churches, including the BNKP.

After a brief review of the development of the Nias churches up to 1965, we need to take into account special phenomena regarding the new revival and the schism. After the revival of 1916 onwards the revival movement calmed down, but a longing for repeating the tremendous experience never disappeared. In the 1930s and 1940s, a series of similar movements rose up again, especially during the period of great suffering during World War II. But now the focus of the movements, instead of forgiveness of sin, was Spirit blessings (*charismata*), including miracles. The *glossolalia* (speaking in tongues) came up and during the worship certain persons started to tremble or shout in ecstasy. Instead of strengthening the community of the church these movements tore it apart creating schism. While the first wave of the movement made the BNKP a *Volkskirche* (folk church), the following movements broke up the church’s unity in this island.

In 1933 the *Fa’awösa* (fellowship) movement started to split from the Nias Mission church (later BNKP), because the adherents found that they had to obey the voice directed received from the Holy Spirit more than the church regulations. After releasing themselves from the mother church, the various

emerging disparities could not be balanced by the different opinions they held. Consequently in the Fa'awosa group the Christian elements were more and more mixed with many other elements, including those from Islam and tribal religion and this phenomenon in turn broke this group into further schism. One of the separated groups was called *Angowuloa Fa'awösa khö Yesu* (AFY).¹⁷²

In 1946 another group split off in the district (*öri*) of Idanoi (south-east of Gunungsitoli) to become a new church, *Angowuloa Masehi Idanoi Nias* (AMIN; later *Idanoi* changed to *Indonesia*). The initial cause of this schism was the transfer of the pandita of Ombölata, Singamböwö Zebua, to a much more remote congregation in Lahusa-Masio. This was meant as a kind of punishment, since he was accused of collaboration with the Japanese occupiers in the *padi bakti* (rice planting) programme. Zebua refused, not agreeing with the viewpoint of the Synod Board of the BNKP. He believed that the Holy Spirit wanted him to stay in Ombölata, where he was subsequently dismissed. With the support of the paramount chief of the *öri* Idanoi, *Tuhenöri* Adolf Gea, Singamböwö founded his own church with about eleven congregations on 12 May 1946 in Helefanikha, a village in Idanoi. At first, the AMIN was a copy of the BNKP; less than 5% of BNKP membership moved to AMIN and they were largely restricted to Idanoi. Later the AMIN developed a more nationalist and Lutheran identity and made peace with the BNKP.

In 1950 another group in West Nias also split from BNKP and called itself *Orahua Niha Keriso Protestan* (ONKP, Association of Niasan Protestant Christians), centred at Sirombu.¹⁷³ In April–May 1950, *Ephorus* Atöföna Harefa undertook an urgent visitation to western Nias, in order to avoid a disruption inside the BNKP in Tugala-Sirombu and the Hinako Islands. Unfortunately, he fell seriously ill during the journey, so that he could not do very much to regain the sympathy of the rebellious leaders. The reason why the leaders in the western region wanted to handle their own church affairs was that they felt neglected by the Synod Board and that this caused their region to be left behind. Since pre-Christian times the clan of the Marundruri had ruled this relatively affluent area.

On 22 May 1952 the ONKP split away from the BNKP and convened its own first Synod during the following two days. A visit of German missionaries in September of the same year could not change anything. On 26 February

¹⁷² In the late 1990s this church, with around 32,000 members, was accepted as a member of PGI.

¹⁷³ The location of the tsunami in Nias on 26 December 2004 is Sirombu, Mandrehe and the surroundings. The people and the ONKP ministers felt that the international and domestic aid designated for them was not fully handed to them, some amount being withheld in Gunungsitoli.

1953, the Indonesian government officially acknowledged the ONKP. Its first President was *Pandita* Dalihuku Marundruri and the first general secretary was Dalimanö Hia. Besides the president, there were only three pastors for some fifty congregations in the ONKP. This schism resembled the AMIN split-off, since in both cases a resurgence of traditional structures (*öri*) took place.

In South Nias the regional sentiment, formerly also accommodated by the Catholic mission, had been active there since 1939 (see below), and was followed by ONKP. However in 1996 another split occurred in this area; a quite large number of the BNKP congregations in South Nias established their own church, *Banua Keriso Protestan Nias* (BKPN). The first *ephorus*, Saröfanötöna Harita, inaugurated by the tribal chief, Ama Siti Wau, at Bawömataluö, a very beautiful and culturally-rich village on a high plateau.¹⁷⁴ The establishment of BKPN seems justified by the establishment of new regency in 2001, *Kabupaten Nias Selatan*, centred at Teluk Dalam. But—unlike AMIN, ONKP and AFY—BKPN's application to become a member of PGI was not approved until 2005.

Even Gunungsitoli as headquarters of BNKP was shaken by a schism during the year of turmoil in the mid-1990s. Some of the congregations and ministers, led by Martinus Lase, were discontented with the policy of the synod leaders and started a new church called *BNKP Independen*. This church was not yet approved by the Department of Religious Affairs or by PGI. This series of conflicts and schisms—similar to what happened in the history of HKBP, and precisely at a time when many churches in Indonesia were fostering the ecumenical movement—led to a fundamental question: can any other good things be done by the churches besides splitting? This question becomes more relevant for the churches in Nias considering many other issues that call for the contribution of the churches to develop Nias. Indeed, there were and are a lot of things already done by the churches from the time of mission, as already mentioned. But the people of Nias as well as a number of international communities that already tried to play their part wait for more significant evidence.

Competition with Roman Catholicism in Nias

We also need to give space to the competition and conflict between BNKP and the Roman Catholic Church. After the unsuccessful missionary attempts

¹⁷⁴ One of the very famous traditional arts of Nias is stone jumping, to jump over a 2.3m high pile of stones. The location is Bawömataluö and the picture of this action was reproduced on the Indonesian Rp. 1,000 banknote some years ago.

in the first half of the nineteenth century, the Roman Catholic Church did not send any missionaries to Nias until 1939. The initiative for a new start was taken by four *Ono Niha* from Lölöwua, who were not satisfied with the church discipline of the BNKP. Since 1936 they wrote letters to Roman Catholic leaders in Sumatra, inviting them to come to Nias. On 13 December 1937 the Sibolga based priest Chrysologus Timmermans paid a visit to Nias, contacting European and Chinese Roman Catholic families in Gunungsitoli. He also called on Lölöwua, staying for one hour, reportedly making quite an impression on the local population. The colonial authorities frowned on this visit to the interior for fear of 'dual mission.' However, for two reasons, Roman Catholic missionary activities were not prohibited: (1) There was no Islamic majority, which could cause a stir-up in the face of another Christian mission; (2) An influential *Ono Niha* collected signatures for obtaining the permission for the Roman Catholic Church to operate.

Subsequently a Dutch Capuchin, Burchardus van der Weijden, arrived on Nias in 1939. In 1940 Van der Weijden secured support from another Dutch Capuchin, Ildefonsus van Straalen. In the training-courses they offered to *Ono Niha* the instruction material was polarising, emphasising differences with Protestantism (the Protestants did likewise). The Catholics presented themselves as the one, true and undivided church, cleverly exploiting the fact that a number of divisions had occurred in the body of the BNKP.

The Japanese detained the Dutch Capuchins during World War II. At that time, about 300 *Ono Niha* had been baptised in the Catholic mission and another 1,500 to 2,000 were preparing for baptism as catechumen. During the following eight years, there was no Roman Catholic priest on Nias and the Batu Islands. But the catechists and lectors, supported by some chiefs and wealthy Chinese, formed a simple organisation and kept on spreading the Roman Catholic creed, influencing many of their compatriots. Even at this early stage, Roman Catholicism was a challenge to the BNKP. Three Dutch Capuchins returned in 1950/1951 and their ranks were strengthened in 1952/1953 by six German Capuchins from Tienshui (Kansu, China), who had fled from the communists. Among them was Bishop Gratian Grimm.

Since 1955, there had been increasing Roman Catholic activities on the Batu Islands. By now, the BNKP and the European Protestant missionaries saw the Roman Catholic mission on Nias and the Batu Islands as a major offensive or all-out attack. But whether this was indeed a 'counter-mission' has been much disputed. Father Silvester Braun argued that the Roman Catholic mission did not harm the work in the 'Lord's vineyard' on Nias, since it led the BNKP to 'self-contemplation.' Most of the Christians who entered the Roman Catholic Church were said to have come from the Community Movement (*fa'awösa*), but the reality was much less fraternal. There was tough competition between the two branches of Christianity. Since both the RMG and the

Roman Catholic mission relied heavily on German personnel this was quite confusing for many *Ono Niha*.

In the eyes of *Ono Niha*, Roman Catholicism seemed to be an easier religion (*agama saoha*) than Protestantism. The church contributions (*ame'ela*) were much lower and there was no prohibition on images (*adu*). The much richer use of symbolism was impressive.

A major bone of contention was the issue of 'rebaptism' or 'conditional baptism.' Protestants were furious when they heard that the Roman Catholic Church re-baptised former members of the BNKP and the BKP. The BNKP countered by calling the baptism of the Roman Catholic Church invalid, against the advice of the missionaries. Both sides in fact practised 'rebaptism,' described as baptism 'under the condition,' without a strong theological basis. The Roman Catholic Church—in principle acknowledging the baptism of non-Roman Catholic Christians—argued that Protestant pastors use too little water, hardly moistening the forehead. This could not be regarded as 'rite' in a Roman Catholic sense.

While the question of the use of more or less water can never be an acceptable argument for Protestants to justify rebaptism, the actual use of very little water by many Protestant pastors until today is indeed an unnecessary nuisance. There is enough water on Nias and holy baptism loses some of its symbolic power if the congregation can hardly see the water. It seems likely that this praxis is a result of unintended enculturation. Baptism as administered by many Protestant pastors resembles the traditional blessing of a dying father, for which also only a few drops are spattered on the receiver.

Despite the disturbances brought about by Roman Catholic mission, its remarkable evangelising efforts may not be underestimated. Especially in the field of conserving the traditional culture of the *Ono Niha* and integrating it into liturgy, architecture and art, the Roman Catholic Church has been more progressive than her Protestant counterparts, even before the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965). Lately, suspicions between the two Christian denominations have become less and good cooperation is increasing.

In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries the Protestant missionaries L.E. Denninger and H. Sundermann studied the language of Nias. It was a German Capuchin Friar, Johannes Hämmerle (b. 1941; since 1971 in Nias) who continued this work with publications in Indonesian and German. Different from his predecessors, Hämmerle's informants were all Christians; many of them were even catechists or teachers. They sometimes brought texts to him that was typewritten by themselves. But these were ancient texts in the sacral style of the archipelago: in the tradition of 'speaking in pairs' that is also characteristic for the language of the Psalms and the Edda. As in the Edda, a work of the pre-Christian North-European culture, but written down in Christian times, also in the texts that were collected by Hämmerle we can

find some accommodation to modern times. In the texts of Ama Rozaman (b. 1918 and trained at the Protestant school for teachers) one can discern a harmony between traditional Nias cultural values and the modern Indonesian doctrine of *Pancasila*. Hämmerle concludes about this syncretism:

This author (Ama Rozaman) does not want to reconstruct the true meaning of pre-Christian Nias religion but he wants to give ancient roots and foundation to the modern Christian and Indonesian political existence. Some cosmetic alterations of the old tradition are inevitable in this operation.¹⁷⁵

Hämmerle also established in 1993 the Pusaka Nias Foundation, a museum and library for the conservation of Nias traditional lore and literature.

*Mission and church in Batu Islands*¹⁷⁶

Fortunately the story of Christianity in Nias and the surrounding islands did not only consist of schism and conflict but also of unification, as we find regarding the story of the church in the Batu islands. This archipelago (totaling 662 km²) is located between Nias and Mentawai and the biggest island is Tello. Formerly, during the colonial era, it was part of West Sumatra province, therefore many of the inhabitants were Minangkabau Muslims besides some Buddhist Chinese, but it later became part of Nias regency. The autochthonous people of this archipelago are part of the Nias cluster, and they also speak the Nias language, and practised the Niasan adat and ethnic religion.

In 1889 the *Luthers Genootschap*¹⁷⁷ or Dutch Lutheran Mission (DLM) started to work in the Batu islands in cooperation with the RMG. Gottlieb J. Kersten, formerly designated to Tanjung Sakti, Bengkulu, accompanied by a Batak teacher Johannes Lumbantobing, arrived at Pulau Tello on 25 February 1889. Due to serious illness Kersten and his family served in Batu archipelago only for fifteen months and were succeeded by some later missionaries, among others C.W. Frickenschmidt and August Landwehr. After more than fifty years of missionary work with many troubles and obstacles, but also supported by a number of indigenous leaders (e.g. Fidja Wanaetu, Siwa Famali, Lai Hulando and the regent of Batu islands, Raja Alam Laut, a Minangkabau of Buginese descent) and ministers (among others Guru Mandia and elder Bua'ö Jamatawi), the church in the Batu Islands grew in number of congregations, schools, health centres and some other working units and facilities.

¹⁷⁵ Hämmerle 1999:48.

¹⁷⁶ This part is mainly based on Uwe Hummel 2002 and Hummel & Telaumbanua 2007:132–153 and 172–179.

¹⁷⁷ The complete name is *Het Nederlandsch Luthersch Genootschap voor In- en Uitwendige Zending*, founded at Amsterdam on 5 April 1852. Hummel 2002:13.

In some ways incongruous to the developments on Nias, there was also the gradual formation of an independent Batu church. The process started after the arrival of a new generation of missionaries in 1919, but did not lead to an autonomous church such as on Nias. The transfer of the only remaining missionary from Pulau Tello to Gunungsitoli in July 1940 cut down missionary work to a minimum and the Japanese occupation in August 1942 stopped it completely. An independent *Batoesche Synode* or Batu church was only proclaimed in 1945. On 11 August 1945, one day after the Japanese troops left the Batu archipelago, an autonomous church was inaugurated and named *Banua Keriso Protestan* (BKP the Batu Christian Protestant Church). The chairperson (*voorzitter*) was an autochthonous pastor, Kana Wa'ambö, a graduate from Ombölata Seminary in Nias. In 1948 the ties with the DLM were finally cut.

After the termination of the work of the DLM on the Batu Islands, the responsibility had, supposedly, been handed over to the RMG, in October 1948. Since the capacities of the RMG were limited, and work on Nias had only recommenced in the 1950s, the devastating situation of the BKP drew the attention of some international ecumenical organisations.

On 2–10 August 1957, the Church World Mission (CWM) met at Staten Island, New York and a decision was reached that CWM would request a deputation, consisting of representatives from the HKBP, the LWF and the RMG, to pay an official visit to the BKP. The LWF was willing to help the BKP where it was really necessary. With the HKBP and the BNKP there was no official relationship, although delegates of the BKP had attended Synod meetings of the BNKP twice since World War II, and four *sinenge* of the BKP had been trained at the seminary in Ombölata. A problem was that the BKP was not legally recognised, so that there was a real danger that church properties might be confiscated by the state. Both HKBP and BNKP were willing to help their small neighbour.

Due to the political situation in Sumatra during the PRRI rebellion, it was impossible for the commission proposed by the CWM to visit the BKP before July 1959. The delegation that finally made the visit consisted of A.A. Sitompul (HKBP), Dana Telaumbanua (BNKP) and Gerhard O. Reitz (LWF). Upon arrival on Pulau Tello they were heartily welcomed by *Pandita* Kana Wa'ambö and other leaders of the BKP. Some BKP leaders desired to affiliate with any one of the larger churches already recognised by the government (i.e. BNKP or HKBP), but other elements did not want to be incorporated into a much bigger organisation. They feared that they might not be able to maintain a certain degree of self-determination.

The option to affiliate with the HKBP was kept open for some time. The advantage of joining this Batak church was that the BKP would automatically become a member of the LWF, which was in accordance with its confessional

(Lutheran) status. Alternately, joining the BNKP had clear cultural advantages. The Batu Islands had much greater similarities in language and customary law to Nias than to the Bataklands. Furthermore, the Batu Islands had become part of the regency (*kabupaten*) of Nias since Indonesian independence. These cultural and political considerations eventually tipped the scales in favour of the BNKP.

The prospect of unification between BKP and BNKP was favourably discussed during the twenty-fourth Synod of the BNKP on 14–18 May 1959 in Teluk Dalam. Subsequently the annual Synod of the BKP, held in August 1959 on Pulau Tello, decided to unite. At the following meeting between the Synod Board of the BNKP and a delegation of the BKP in Gunungsitoli, it was agreed that the church on the Batu Islands should become a special church circuit (*ressort istimewa*) of the BNKP. The merger of the BKP with the BNKP was decided by the twenty-fifth Synod of the BNKP, on 3 June 1960 in Ombölat. The Batu Islands thus became the thirteenth church circuit of the BNKP.

It is remarkable that in the merger of the BKP with the BNKP the choice for unification was made on cultural rather than denominational grounds. While the Batunese congregations show distinctly Lutheran traits, especially in liturgical matters, the sense of communion is determined by ethno-cultural relations. Similar language and customary law, and especially family links between Nias and the Batu Islands, by far outweigh ecclesiastical tradition.

*The Mentawai Church*¹⁷⁸

Mentawai archipelago (totalling 3,135 km²), located off the west coast of West Sumatra or Minangkabau, consists of a number of large and small islands. Four of the largest are Siberut, Sipora, Sikakap (North Pagai) and South Pagai. Although divided into several tribes that are ethnically of Malay-Polynesian background, the people have sufficient similarity of language, adat, and ethnic religion to be recognised as an ethnic group, called Mentawai. Their primal religion was *Sabulungan* and centred on a belief in evil spirits. In the government administration since the colonial era, up to the year 2000, this archipelago was part of the Padang-Pariaman regency, in West Sumatra province. Therefore in previous times we may find many Muslim traders and government officers. Since 2001 this archipelago has been a separate regency and the regent (*bupati*) is a pastor of *Gereja Kristen Protestan Mentawai* (GKPM, Mentawai Christian Protestant Church), Rev. Edison Saleleubaja.

¹⁷⁸ This sub-section is mainly based on ENI 1918-II: 706–711, s.v. “Mentawai-Eilanden”, and Herman Sihombing 1979:94–124.

Western traders or colonists had already visited this archipelago since the seventeenth century, but only in 1825 did the Dutch-Indies government register it as part of the West Sumatra province. In 1893, the first colonial officer was nominated. The RMG began its work in this archipelago in 1901 with the arrival of the missionary August Lett, who formerly worked in Batakland and Nias. He settled at Nemnemleleu, Sikakap that up to the present remains the headquarters of the Mentawai church. The trigger for missionary work there was quite unique. Slightly before 1900 the director of the RMG in Barmen received a letter together with a spear from the Dutch harbour-master of Padang, saying, "With this spear the Mentawainese had killed a crew member of a trading ship. All inhabitants of the islands are still heathen and savage. How long will it take until they hear the gospel?"

Lett worked with full energy and dedication, honoured and loved by most of the people of Mentawai, and many times was asked by the colonial officers to mediate. He also succeeded in building cooperation with the tribal chiefs such as Djago Mandi Samaloisa, who was later baptised, and appointed as *demang* (district head) by the colonial government. Unfortunately Lett was killed on 20 August 1909 while mediating in an impending war between Dutch troops and certain Mentawainese.¹⁷⁹ His work was continued by the missionaries who followed as well as by a number of Batak ministers (pastors and teachers) sent by the Batak Mission.

During World War II this embryonic church of Mentawai, like the other churches, suffered very much, especially in leadership and pastoral ministry. After the internment of the German missionaries in 1940, followed by the Dutch ministers sent by BNZ and some Batak evangelist-pastors in 1942, only since 1945 this church was led by Mentawai pastors, among others Ph. Saleleubaja and Agustinus Samaloisa.

On 23 August 1951 this church was officially established and named *Paamian Kristen Protestan Mentawai* (PKPM, after 1968 as GKPM), with a *bestuur* (executive committee) led by Rev. Ph. Saleleubaja. This date was decided upon as the birthday of the church. Three months later PKPM signed an agreement of cooperation with HKBP. This agreement was followed up, among other things by the establishment of HKBP Mission Representative in 1954, to help PKPM. Since then the RMG also renewed its presence and help by sending a number of missionaries, physicians, nurses and engineers, to construct a hospital, polyclinics, schools and some other facilities to enhance the quality

¹⁷⁹ According to Sihombing 1979:96–97, there was a miscommunication that triggered the anger of the people on an island of Talu' Pulai. Lett addressed them by saying *tatogakku le kam*, meaning: "you are my children," a phrase properly used only by the biological parents. Besides that, Lett's appeal also contained some threatening words, that the people and their village would be demolished if they conducted a war against the Dutch colonial government.

of life of the people. Among the meaningful works of the RMG and HKBP in Mentawai, that were later maintained by the PKPM/GKPM, were the establishing of a number of elementary, secondary, girls' and teacher training schools, as well as ecclesiastical trainings to provide evangelists and *bijbel-vrouw*.

One of the challenges faced by PKPM was the primal religion *Sabulungan* and the aggressive activities of Islamic propagation (*dakwah*). The Muslim activities intensified in 1945–1950 when Eliesser, one of the native pastors, together with his extended family, embraced Islam. They enthusiastically approached the Sabulungan as well as the Christian communities and succeeded in getting around 500 converts in Siberut, followed by some hundreds in the other islands. The regional government of West Sumatra, understandably, supported this effort. But some of the new converts later returned to Sabulungan or to Christianity, because they found it difficult to learn Arab, and because pork is a customary meal for the Mentawaiense.

To minimise the conflict between Christian and Muslim communities, and according to the policy of the government to end the so-called 'heathenism,' in 1953–1954 several *Rapat Tiga Agama* (Religious Tripartite Meetings) of Christian, Muslim and Sabulungan adherents were held. The Sabulungan community was appealed to (some of them felt they were being forced to) leave their ancestral religion and to freely choose either Christianity or Islam. By this policy, in 1955 there was formally no longer a Sabulungan community and the number of Christians as well as Muslims significantly increased.

The second challenge came from the Roman Catholic mission that intensified its activities since 1954. The missionaries made southern Siberut, particularly the town of Muara Siberut, their centre. In this town, and later extended to some other places, they built churches, schools and polyclinics and according to Herman Sihombing¹⁸⁰ the locations are close to those provided by RMG/PKPM, offering a better quality accompanied by various gifts. It is little wonder then that after about ten years they gained around 2,250 followers from among a population of around 25,000, many of them coming from the Protestant or PKPM community.

Concerning the presence of the Roman Catholic mission, Tonino Caisutti relates that the Catholic Church had already paid attention to Mentawai since the 1910s as can be seen in the *Liber Status Animarum*, at the cathedral of Padang. In 1917 Capuchin Friar Donatus visited Mentawai and in 1937 another priest was here for some time. In November 1953 missionary Aurelio Cannizzaro started a mission to Mentawai and visited some big islands. In 1954 Cannizzaro settled at Pokai, northern Siberut, where there was no Christian yet. Later he moved to southern Siberut, where there were also not yet many

¹⁸⁰ Herman Sihombing 1979:121.

Christians. “The Protestant centres like Nemnemleleu, Pagai islands and Sipora were by *a priori* put aside by the Catholic mission that came to Mentawai just to proclaim the gospel to people who were not counted in the four big religions. It was the southern islands Mentawainese that took the initiative to call Xaverian priests... The missionaries did not have the courage to refuse the repeated and urgent call.”¹⁸¹

At Christmas 1954 the first Catholic church building was already finished. Afterwards came some other pastors and nuns, accompanied by native Mentawai, among them Hermanus Saleleubaja. The membership statistics of 1980 were as follows: northern Siberut 4,347; and southern Siberut 6,988; total 11,335. The Catholic mission—like anywhere—was also doing cultural evangelism that is also called indigenisation, after a sufficient research on many good elements in the Mentawai culture.

Another challenge was presented since 1955 by the Bahai religion, a syncretistic religion originating from Iran with Baha’ullah as its prophet. Bahai tried to combine Islam, Christianity, Judaism, Zoroastrianism and some other religions. This religion, formally registered and recognised by the Indonesian government as one of the branches of Islam, focused on the Sabulungan. The leader in Mentawai was Muhadji Rachmatullah, accompanied by Astani in Padang; both of them were government-appointed physicians. In Siberut the Bahai succeeded in getting around 2,500 followers. Since this religion was led by a rich dynasty, the workers were remunerated properly and they had ample funds to spend in Mentawai. On the one hand the Bahai did many good things for the Sabulungan community in the remote and backward areas, more effectively than could be done by the Christian churches. On the other hand its syncretistic character became a serious challenge for the churches that also strove to win the Sabulungan.

In 1968 the PKPM changed its name to *Gereja Kristen Protestan Mentawai* (GKPM), which was inaugurated as an autonomous and self-reliant church. Oppressed from the Muslim side and having rivalry with the Catholic mission and church, GKPM grew steadfastly and embraced around 75% of the population with around 25,000 members. Like the many other churches, GKPM also experienced an internal conflict and at a certain time was divided by two leaders: M. Tatubeket and A.P. Saleleubaja. Since 2002 the *ephorus* of GKPM has been Rev. P. Simanjuntak, a Batak (with a Mentawai mother) born in Mentawai as the son of a HKBP evangelist pastor.

Mentawai archipelago actually has very rich natural resources. The forest has a lot of precious woods such as aloe wood (*Aquilaria malaccensis*) that

¹⁸¹ Tonino Caisutti, “Kedudukan dan Peranan Umat Katolik dalam Pembangunan Masyarakat di Siberut” (The Position and Role of the Catholics in the Community Development at Siberut), Paper on a Symposium on Socio-Economic-Cultural Development, 23–25 March 1981.

produces expensive crystallised plant-sap. But many people—after getting much money—did not know how to use the money effectively. Later on certain government personnel and private companies conspired to take control on this area, leaving the indigenous people in poverty. There were a number of efforts attempted by some Christian organisations, like PGI and *Universitas Kristen Indonesia* (Indonesian Christian University) in Jakarta and some churches in North Sumatra as well as in other regions, to help the Mentawai people by providing training programmes in various fields and scholarship grants. The autonomous status of this new regency under the leadership of a pastor is expected to bring this region and GKPM to a better condition.

The Catholic diaspora of Sumatra

Sumatra is home to about 20% of the Indonesian population, but to only 15% of Indonesian Catholics. Like the island of Java, Sumatra is therefore under-represented in the Catholic community. Moreover, the Catholics in the island are geographically and ethnically very divided, as is clear from the statistics covering the six dioceses, for the year 2000:¹⁸²

Diocese	Number of Catholics	% of total population	Ethnicity
Medan	469,498	3%	Batak, besides Chinese and some other settlers
Sibolga	187,801	9%	Nias and Bataks, besides Chinese
Padang	66,370	0.9%	Chinese, migrants from other regions of Indonesia
Palembang	74,233	0.7%	Chinese, migrants from other regions of Indonesia
Tanjungkarang	82,695	1.0%	Javanese
Pangkalpinang	28,034	1.6%	Mostly Chinese, also migrants from other regions of Indonesia
Total	908,631	1.96% out of 46,184,313	Four ethnic groups: Batak, Chinese, Javanese, Niasans

These diverse groups have their own history, cultural and ecclesiastical identity. In the areas with the highest number of Catholics, the Protestant mission had harvested first. In the most populous province of Medan (North Sumatra)

¹⁸² We follow the official figures from the Vatican in the website www.Catholic-hierarchy.org. See also Suryadinata 2003:115 for the census of 2000. The figures in Rosariyanto 2000:168 are slightly different, but there are no substantial changes there.

the census of 2000 counted 3.6 million Christians on a population of 11.6 million. This makes 20.1%. Of these more than 3.1 million were Protestant. Overall Catholics are only 10–15% of the Christians in this region (against one third for the whole of Indonesia). Below we can only give some highlights of a diverse history.

*Tsen On Njie (Zeng Aner) and his Chinese Catholic congregation in
Bangka, 1830–1871*

In the mid-nineteenth century the island of Bangka counted about 30,000 inhabitants. 9,000 of them were Chinese coolies working on temporary contracts in the tin mines. These figures rose to 43,700 Chinese (of a total population of 115,000, the rest being Muslim Malays) in 1900. Not all Chinese worked in the mines. Some were traders, a few married Malay women after they finished the period of working in the mines and became farmers, often planting pepper. The 1849 statistics mentions 28 Muslims among the *peranakan* or Chinese born in the Indies from these mixed marriages. A quite exceptional figure among these Chinese of Bangka was a medical doctor, Tsen On Njie (also written as Ngie; in the newer spelling Zeng Aner).¹⁸³ He was born in mainland China, baptised in Penang, 1827, and settled in Sungaiselan, Bangka, in 1830. With statues, prayer books, rosaries and other religious items he installed a kind of a Catholic chapel in his house and gathered people to join for praying the rosary and similar devotions. He remained in contact with French priests of the *Missions Étrangères de Paris*. The priest J.M. Benzie wrote early 1846 from Singapore to the parish in Batavia that he had baptised some ten Catholics from Bangka:

Their leader was here during the last few days and is now back in Bangka, after receiving the sacrament of Confirmation, which I am entitled to celebrate. He beseeched me to come to Bangka and baptise his whole family and about fifteen other persons, who were instructed by him in the Christian faith, and to bless a small chapel, which he had built. He is pretty rich and very pious. I have placed one of his sons, whom I baptised here, at our ecclesiastical college in Penang. He is very promising.¹⁸⁴

In 1848, after the troublesome period of Grooff's dismissal, a Catholic European who worked in Bangka sent a message about this chapel to the parish house of Batavia and in July–August 1849 the young priest Adamus Claessens (born

¹⁸³ Heidhues 1992:164.

¹⁸⁴ Letter published by Kleijntjens 1932:6–7. Benzie has a reference to the problems of Bishop Jacobus Grooff and therefore we may suppose that this letter is from the period shortly after Grooff left Batavia on 3 February 1846.

1818, in the colony since 13 February 1848) visited Bangka. He was warmly welcomed by a small flock of Catholics, and baptised eleven people. One of his Chinese guides in the island, who suggested to other candidates that they should throw away all heathen images and inscriptions, was beaten and pushed into a ditch by Chinese who wanted to defend their cultural and religious tradition. The incident was reported to the Resident F. van Olden and entered the general report of the colony (*Koloniaal Verslag*) of that year. This false start in Bangka was another setback for the leaders of the Catholic mission who had a vivid memory of the problems in the mid-1840s when Bishop J. Grooff and three priests were sent back to Europe and finally no priest was left in the whole colony, due to a conflict with the colonial government. Therefore a second visit of Claessens only took place in 1851. From 1853–1867 there was a resident priest in Sungaiselan, Jan Langenhoff who had learned some Chinese in Penang before starting work in Bangka. It was the first Catholic mission post for non-European Catholics in the new missionary initiative of the nineteenth century. Tsen On Njie gladly received the priest, was later formally appointed a member of the parish council, and with new fervour continued to seek new converts.

The flock remained small. Statistics for 1867 mention 379 baptised, of which 268 were men. This also indicated the status of the congregation: the majority were men who stayed only for a few years and then returned to China. It was a company of poor people with low status, both in their country of origin and in the Indies. Langenhoff returned in 1867 to Europe. In 1871, shortly before his successor arrived (the Jesuit J. de Vries), Tsen On Njie had died. No new charismatic and spirited leader for the Chinese flock of Bangka emerged and the station became, until 1876, the centre for pastoral visits in the region between West Kalimantan and East Sumatra. There had been some dreams around 1860 of Bangka becoming the centre of the Catholic mission in Western Indonesia, as Larantuka was for Eastern Indonesia, but this was never fulfilled. The number of baptised Chinese remained small and always unstable because of people going back to China.

In 1911 the station was included in the Capuchin mission of Sumatra. In 1924 it was entrusted to a new religious order, the Sacred Hearts Fathers (SSCC) who came accompanied by extensive personnel, making it the most clerical mission in the 1930s. In 1939 there were 484 European and 853 Chinese Catholics in the Prefecture of Pangkalpinang (among them about 200 ex-miners who stayed in a home for the aged). These 1,337 Catholics were served by 21 priests (i.e. one priest for 64 faithful), 17 lay brothers and 23 sisters. The Catholic schools had to compete with the THHK schools of the Confucian Chinese movement that had much support among the Chinese community. Among the priests was the first Chinese diocesan priest for the whole of Indonesia. Jan Boen Thiam Kiat (born in 1908, in the 1960s renamed Mario John Bunyanto). He

had attended the mission school where he converted. He was baptised at the age of 14 and received private Latin classes between 1927 and 1929. Thereafter he went for the study of theology to Penang and later to Hongkong. He was ordained a priest in 1935 in Pangkalpinang. He was a modest and liberal priest, known for his generosity to the poor. He served the diocese until his death 31 May 1982.¹⁸⁵

*From a Chinese mission to an Indonesian Catholic diaspora in Bangka,
Belitung, Riau Islands*

In the 1950s and later the Catholic mission in Bangka and related islands became more and more Indonesian. Migrants from Java and Batakland became teachers at the schools; many Catholics from Flores sought a better future in the relatively prosperous province with its mining projects, and from the 1970s on in Batam, the booming industrial territory just south of Singapore. The first indigenous bishop was the Sumbanese SVD priest Hilarius Moa Nurak (1987). In 1987 the Dutch Sacred Hearts Fathers worked with ten members in the diocese that had 17,000 baptised. Most of the SSCC priests were already over 60 years old. At that time the SSCC had only one Indonesian member. Since 1987 the process of *Indonesianisasi* or transfer of responsibility to Indonesian personnel took place. But it was mostly people from other regions who filled the gaps. In 2000, out of 30 diocesan priests that had at some time been active in the diocese of Pangkalpinang only three had been born in the region. The SSCC had by that time 31 members, most of them born in the island of Flores and still in education for the priesthood. The process of *Indonesianisasi* had a tragic start in October 1966 when a first group of four Indonesian Budia Mulia brothers drowned at sea on their way from Java to Bangka, ready to begin with their first assignments.

The *Indonesianisasi* was not always a joyful undertaking. The Apostolic Vicar of Pangkalpinang since 1951, Gabriel van der Westen (bishop from 1961 until his retirement in 1979), had in his diocese two orders of sisters: one Dutch group, arriving from Amsterdam in 1925, and one Indonesian group established in 1937 as KKS, *Kongregasi Suster-suster Dina Keluarga Suci* or Humble Sisters of the Holy Family. Van der Westen, a quite stubborn, silent man, lacking diplomacy and tact, nicknamed William the Silent, provided ample facilities to the Indonesian sisters (they could work in the best schools, received money for houses and education) and neglected the Dutch group, some 21 in 1970. The Dutch group became quite frustrated and one after the other returned to Europe until the last had left in 1980.¹⁸⁶

¹⁸⁵ Steenbrink 2003:47–59; Molenkamp 1994:53–61.

¹⁸⁶ Rademaker 1999:74–80.

A quite peculiar group of Catholics here are the refugees from Vietnam (many of Chinese descent) who arrived in boats from the 1970s. These people needed first of all assistance with food, health care, communication with families, and housing. Two of the nine priests of the MEP, *Missions Étrangères de Paris*, who had to leave Vietnam in 1975 and sought new work in Indonesia, are working in the island of Bangka or in the Anambas and Natuna Islands, where most of the 50,000 refugees were relocated.

There were two European missionaries in this region with special gifts. Lay brother and carpenter Jan Heuts developed as a healer, mostly for Chinese people, and changed his name in Yanuar Husada, because he was born on 17 January 1938 in the Netherlands, but also because the word *husada* means medicine in Sanskrit and Old-Javanese. The priest Rolf Reichenbach (1930–2003) was quite famous among Chinese Catholic charismatic circles, because of his combination of fervent preaching with an enthusiastic practice of healing.

Chinese Catholics in Sumatra

With the exception of some large and quite spectacular Christian communities in Sumatra (especially in Batakland and Nias), it is a fragmented picture that we have to draw about Christianity in this island of great variations. This must be said even more about the Catholic minorities who also were late arrivals in these Christian majority regions.

From the early twentieth century on there were somewhat more prominent Catholic Chinese expressions in various parts of the island. These were not always highly appreciated by the clergy. The true missionaries who arrived here in 1911, the Capuchin Friars, hoped first of all for a breakthrough in Batak mission, the great prize. That was impossible until the later 1930s and even then they only received the crumbs that fell from the table. In the 1910s Dutch language schools were opened. The missionaries hoped to work among indigenous people, but it turned out that they had some Europeans and even more Chinese in their schools until the mid-1930s.

Padang was until the late 1930s the most important city of Sumatra. It was the centre for the army and the bureaucracy, quite different from Medan, the town of the planters. In 1834–1835 there was for some time a French priest in Padang, J. Candahl who received no permit to stay longer.¹⁸⁷ From 1837 on there was a continuing succession of resident priests who later also served the army in Aceh. They paid much attention to the established Chinese community of the town. Different from the Bangka and Deli-Medan Chinese, most of

¹⁸⁷ Steenbrink 2003:20–21; 241–242.

them were *Peranakan*, offspring of Chinese men and Indonesian women, for several generations living in this town. Because of the impossibility of making converts among the native population of Minangkabau, the Catholics built in Padang a great compound with a church, many schools and dormitories, convents for sisters and brothers. It was sometimes nicknamed the 'Vatican of the Indies.' In Padang alone there were, in the mid-1930s, 40 Dutch sisters, most of them working in the schools, serving some 2,400 pupils. Besides, there were 18 lay brothers in several schools and three priests for a community of 1,629 European and 1,799 mostly Chinese Catholics in Padang.¹⁸⁸ There was some growth in the number of converts, but certainly nothing spectacular. The Chinese gave priority to good education. Only in the 1960s was there a somewhat stronger increase in the converts for Christianity among them.

Besides education as the major instrument of contact with candidates for Catholicism, in two major towns hospitals were founded. *Karitas* in Palembang and *Elisabeth* in Medan are still among the large institutions of these towns, established in the 1920s but enlarged again and again since then. Smaller clinics, houses for lepers, and orphanages were established in many other places, many in the 1970s when funds for development aid started. In Medan and Palembang modest Catholic Universities were opened somewhat later: in 1987 in Medan the *Universitas Santo Thomas Sumatra Utara*, and in 1992 the technical college *Sekolah Tinggi Teknik Katolik Musi* in Palembang. Padang, that was the most prominent town of Sumatra until the 1920s, did not develop as a Catholic centre after the seat of the bishop was moved to Medan in 1939. Although these medical and educational facilities were not first of all for the Chinese, it developed in the cities of Palembang and Medan more or less in that direction.

The Chinese of the plantation area of Deli and of the town of Medan were recent arrivals. In the plantations evangelisation was impossible. The great harbour town of Bagan Siapi-api had in the later 1930s a Catholic Chinese community of some 550. They were served by one of the Dutch missionaries who had studied Chinese in Ipoh (Malacca) and later in China itself.

*Planned versus spontaneous Catholic beginnings in the highlands of Sumatra:
1860–1940*

A small-scale race between Islam and Christianity, as well as between Catholics and Protestants, took place in the Pasemah highlands between Bengkulu and Palembang. In the early 1880s the resident of Bengkulu, Du Cloux, confirmed

¹⁸⁸ *Koloniaal Missie Tijdschrift* 1935:171–174 in an article by Andreas (Jucundus) Hoogerhoud. Further data from *Jaarboek* 1940.

to several Jesuit priests that this region was nearly totally Muslim, but that still some nomad tribes had resisted the attraction of a world religion. Thereupon Bishop Claessens asked permission for missionary action. However, at that time a Protestant missionary, A. Festersen had settled in the town of Bengkulu and applied for a permit to work in these same regions. This was rejected with the argument that the last pagans recently had converted to Islam. Festersen made a journey to the inland area of Pasemah and concluded that at least some 37,000 pagans were to be converted, both in the region close to Bengkulu and in the Pasemah highlands. Festersen himself was infected with tuberculosis and died on 31 January 1886 in Bengkulu. Thereupon Bishop Claessens again asked for a permit to start a Catholic missionary action. The experienced Jesuit priest, J. van Meurs, made a first visit to the region in early 1887. On 11 April 1887 Governor General Otto van Rees decided that no permit for proper missionary work could be given, but only for socio-linguistic explorations. In September 1887, on his way to his new destination of Tanjung Sakti in the foothills of the Pasemah Highlands, Van Meurs met, in Bengkulu, the new Protestant missionary J.C. Kersten, also on his way to Tanjung Sakti! The case ended with a gentlemen's agreement between the missionaries. Kersten returned in April 1888 to the town of Bengkulu and later to the Batu islands (see above the section on Batu islands). He sold his belongings to the Catholic missionary.

The selection of Tanjung Sakti as a missionary post was a failure. There were some nomads roaming around in the region, but they were not inclined to stay for a longer time in one place. But after so many deliberations, up to the highest level, the prestige of the mission required that the effort be continued. As usual a school was opened, but the sedentary population were all Muslims and the nomad Kubu tribe was very difficult to be reached. A few hundred people converted, but the missionaries were realistic enough to know that it was for the sake of food and clothes.¹⁸⁹ A quite curious debate about this Kubu tribe took place among government officials and anthropologists after *Controleur* C.J. van Dongen had published an article in a learned journal about the Kubu, stating that they were the exception: a people without any religion, ritual or myth. In fact the article was only written after a five-day visit, without a proper knowledge of the language and the missionaries, convinced of the *Urmonotheismus* theory of Wilhelm Schmidt, took up a good opportunity to fight these ideas.¹⁹⁰

Around 1900 there were 340 baptised in the station of Tanjung Sakti. The number rose several times but shrunk also. In the period 1912–1914 the

¹⁸⁹ Vriens no date:411–422.

¹⁹⁰ References in Steenbrink 2007:352.

nationalist movement of *Sarekat Islam* gained quite strong membership in this region of coffee planters who had good relations with the financial and political world outside. The Malay Muslim chiefs protested against the mission, because Catholics wanted to be exempt from the authority of village chiefs and their levies. There was, on 26 August 1913, a first case of desecration of the host, including the theft of a precious *ciborium*. In mid-1914 hundreds of Catholics told the priest that they had converted to Islam. The government of Batavia sent a scholar to make an inquiry. The result was that the 450 remaining Catholics would have a village of their own, under a Catholic chief.

Catholic mission made heavy investment in this isolated region. A secondary school was established, as well as a small hospital. This attracted some more people. The better educated, however, left the region after they finished school and the place remained an odd pocket of a few Catholics in a prosperous region of Muslim mountain dwellers. The parish of Tanjung Sakti counted in 2001 not more than 437 Catholics, about the same number as a century earlier.

Between 1889 and 1891 the Italian adventurer and explorer Elias Modigliani travelled through Batakland. As a guide he took the traditional healer and ritualist Datu Somalaing. The latter felt discarded by the success of the Protestant mission and eagerly learned from the Catholic Modigliani. He constructed a new syncretic religion, later called Parmalim, where Jesus and the Virgin Mary were very important, but also Raja Rum, here not to be understood as the Ruler of Istanbul as in Malay-Muslim discourse, but as the Pope of Rome. Somalaing developed Parmalim into a full religion with hymns, rituals, including “a cult of Mary with trade in articles of devotion, processions and prayers.”¹⁹¹ Also a number of Islamic elements crept into this ‘reinvented tradition’ that gave much honour to the heroic Batak priest-king Si Singamangaradja XII. In 1896 Somalaing was arrested and sent into exile in Kalimantan because of the anti-colonial elements in his cult. When in 1935 a first Capuchin Friar, Sybrandus van Rossum, settled in Balige, he was approached by an old man, Ompu ni Hobul Tambunan, village head of nearby Lumbun Pea. Tambunan still cherished the memory of the instruction of Datu Somalaing that they should not accept Protestantism but wait for a messenger from the Raja Rum. The priest visited the village of Lumbun Pea and all thirty families decided to accept Catholicism. This was the only case where on a larger scale Parmalim adherents accepted Catholicism. On the whole they were a community of traditional people who rejected colonialism, modernisation and most of all the symbols of renewal, including the school, modern clothes and the paying of taxes.¹⁹²

¹⁹¹ Helbig 1935:99.

¹⁹² Aster 1959:102–122.

There was another bottom-up start of Catholicism in Batakland. Carolus Wenneker was in 1878–1884 the parish priest of Medan. He served mainly Europeans and some Tamil converts from the plantation of the family De Guigné (who sought their coolies in the French colony of Pondicherry in India). Wenneker had much interest in Batak culture and language and studied some Toba Batak. While serving the parish of Batavia (1894–1916) Wenneker sought contact with Batak people. One Protestant from Lumban Soit, Elias Pandiangan, was a close contact for him. His two sons attended the Catholic school and had embraced Catholicism. In 1912, returning to Batakland, they paid a first visit to the Apostolic Prefect of Padang. From that time on, Pandiangan and others started to ask the Catholics to enter Batakland as well. Mission leader Liberatus Cluts in Padang was very suspicious and took it only as request for money. When the German Protestant mission was in financial trouble after World War I, more requests were sent to the new Apostolic Prefect in Padang, Leonardus Brans. Some of these requests of the mid-1920s were signed by 40 or even 50 heads of families. They were probably more or less orchestrated by the missionaries to annihilate the effect of the ban on double mission. Only in 1930 was permission given by the colonial government for a permanent post in Sibolga, at the western fringe of the Batak area. In 1933 this was extended to the whole residency of Tapanuli, while in 1939 permission was given to start Catholic missionary work in Nias. This was the end of the ban on double mission that no longer was valid in independent Indonesia.

For the Catholics the actual work among the Batak did not start in the highlands, where the Protestant mission had been so successful since the 1860s. It began in the city of Medan with Batak students at the prestigious HIS, the Dutch-language school for native people. For this small flock of Batak converts a separate Batak parish was founded in the late 1920s, apart from the existing parishes for Europeans, for Chinese and for Tamils. In fact, Catholicism in Medan had the character of *apartheid*, due to the ethnic and linguistic differences of the four communities. In 1929 a priest could settle permanently in Pematangsiantar, the eastern entrance to Batakland proper, and only from the mid 1930s on did Catholics open posts in the Batak highlands, taking the reverse road of the Protestants who had worked very long in the highlands before moving towards the lowlands and the coast.

The expansion of Catholicism was not a clerical affair, like the work for Europeans and Chinese. In 1939 there were 201 sisters and 32 lay brothers in the Apostolic Vicariate of Padang. One of the sisters was Chinese; all the others were Dutch who worked in Dutch-language schools or in hospitals and smaller clinics. Lay catechists and teachers extended the Catholic Batak mission. Besides taking profit from conflicts among the Bataks, the Catholics also could make progress through their lenient attitude towards traditional culture and religion. Capuchin Friar Benjamin Dijkstra arrived in 1939 in

Samosir. He is still remembered as the one who consented to dancing for the dead. He suggested that this dancing at funerals was not to appease the spirit of the deceased who could hurt the living. Instead, dancing could be performed in order to glorify the body as a temple of the Holy Spirit and to thank God for the departed. In 1939 the Capuchin Friars already counted nine major stations in the Batak highlands, with 172 outer stations, half of them with basic elementary schools. In 2001 there were 677,373 Catholics in the dioceses of Medan and Sibolga (including Nias). This is only about 10–15% of the membership of the great Lutheran HKBP and other Protestant churches in the region: as in so many regions of Indonesia, the Catholics came late, under protest of the Protestants, remained the smaller church, but managed to consolidate and grow, becoming one of the various churches of a fragmented Christianity. Only on the island of Samosir (in the centre of the great Lake Toba), Catholics could finally become a majority. But also in this region there were a variety of Protestant churches that gave the area a varied character.

From the 1930s on, the Catholic presence in Batakland was structured through a rather small number of parishes that served about 10–25 outer stations. Only in the main parish was a priest permanently settled. The outer stations were served by teachers with a priest travelling around and visiting outer stations once every two, three weeks or even only once a month. This system continued until the last decades of the twentieth century. In the overview of the developments in Batakland during the second half of the twentieth century, the 7,000 teachers (more than half working in non-Catholic schools) are mentioned in detail and with prominence besides the 141 priests serving the 43 parishes of the archdiocese of Medan.¹⁹³ During the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965) and later, Indonesian Catholic bishops have repeatedly asked the Vatican for permission to ordain married and experienced men to the priesthood, because of the shortage of priests for not so densely populated regions. This was not only relevant for Papua, Flores and Kalimantan, but also for Batakland. The bishops argued that in these regions Catholicism looked like Protestantism, because on most Sundays no Eucharist could be celebrated, but only a service with hymns, sermon, and prayers. Sacraments are only sparsely administered in these regions. The effort of the bishops was not successful.¹⁹⁴

Not much can be said about ecumenical relations in this region. In the first half of the twentieth century it was still the pre-Vatican theological exclusion (seeing only Catholics as true Christians) and strong competition that made positive relations non-existent. In the second half of the century not much has

¹⁹³ Rosariyanto 2000:180–183.

¹⁹⁴ Steenbrink 1984.

improved. Relations were more or less frozen, with the common celebration of Christmas as a good exception. The several schisms within Protestant churches have strengthened the image of the Catholic Church as a rather solid, stable and reliable religious community. This has on a small scale led to a modest increase of members and, again, the accusation of sheep stealing.

Within the Catholic community there was never the strong debate on secularisation and preparation for a modern society that we have seen in the HKBP, with Soritua Nababan as the great stimulator. Instead, it is striking to see in the Catholic discourse a constant attention for Batakness. Already in 1939 an altar was constructed in *gorga*-Batak architectural style by an artist from Porsea, as part of the Indonesian contribution to an international missionary exhibition in Rome (it is now in the church of Balige. See chapter twenty). Catholics have continued to use the Batak architectural style for religious buildings and to use Batak symbols in liturgy. Also in liturgical clothes the *ulos* of Batak traditional ritual is used with reverence as a kind of *pallium*, worn by the priest over the chasuble on festive occasions. The sacred mantra of *horas* is also used as some kind of *Amen* or *Alleluia* to evoke the spirit of a joyful, truly Batak revered atmosphere.

One of the strong exponents of this Catholic Batakness is Bishop Dr. Anicetus Bongsu Antonius Sinaga. Born on 25 September 1941 in the Silbolga region as son of a Batak ritual specialist or *datu*, the 17 years old high school student Bongsu Sinaga became a Catholic and received the name Antonius. He continued his studies for priesthood as a member of the Capuchin Order (where he uses the name of Anicetus) and wrote a dissertation in Louvain on the idea of the High God in Toba-Batak traditional thinking.¹⁹⁵ On 6 January 1981 he was ordained as Bishop of Sibolga and in 2004 Sinaga moved to the seat of Medan, as coadjutor, apparently to become the Archbishop of this most important Catholic diocese of Sumatra.

A Catholic Javanese mission in South Sumatra

In the first decade of the twentieth century, the colonial government had started a programme of migration of landless Javanese to the under-populated southern region of Sumatra, Lampung. As was the case with the Protestant Javanese, so there was also a small number of Catholics among the migrants. In the case of the Protestants there was some direct connection between the church in Central Java and the migrants in South Sumatra. In the Catholic mission, it was not the Jesuits of Central Java, but the SCJ order (Sacred Heart

¹⁹⁵ A. Sinaga 1981.

of Jesus), serving in Palembang and the vast region of South Sumatra, (including Bengkulu and Lampung), who took responsibility for the migrants. Is it by pure chance of history that the first initiatives on both sides were taken in the early 1930s, the period of the deepest economic recession of the period? In 1932 the Central Javanese congregation of Purworejo selected an evangelist (*guru injil*) who would start work among the Sumatran Protestants. He actually arrived only in June 1936. At that moment already some Javanese Protestants had turned towards the Catholics who had started work among the migrants in 1932 from the central town of Pringsewu in Lampung.¹⁹⁶

Besides the landless Javanese who migrated to Lampung, there was another quite exceptional project for Catholic Eurasians who were struck by the economic recession of World War I. In 1918 the religiously neutral organisation for Eurasians, IEV (*Indo-Europeesche Vereeniging*) had started a settlement close to Tanjung Karang, called De Giesting (now Gisting). About half of its 300 people were Catholics. In 1936 the SCJ missionaries opened a post there for a permanent priest. But the whole undertaking was a failure. Most Eurasians came from urban areas and had no idea about agriculture. They could not earn even the income of the native farmers. An SCJ brother started a boarding school that concentrated on agricultural skills, but by that time the project was already considered a failure.

From the mid-1930s on the parish priest of Pringsewu tried to be present at the harbour of Telukbetung for the arrival of new Javanese settlers. Once he saw a large group of 12 families out of one village, preceded by their village head who came off the boat in procession style, following a boy of nine years old bearing a cross. They addressed the priest, identified from his cassock. This man asked rather optimistically, "Shall we conquer Sumatra through the Javanese?"¹⁹⁷ This did not occur and among the Javanese settlers themselves there was only very limited success. As was the case with the Javanese Protestants, there was a strong ethnic separation in Lampung, where Javanese soon became an important language and where the Javanese migrants formed a separate group. The new settlers in South Sumatra remained orientated towards their region of origin. In this way the Javanese Catholics of the Lampung region had closer relations to the Catholics of Central Java than to the Chinese Catholics of Metro, Palembang, or other cities of Sumatra. The same can be said of the Catholic Bataks, many of whom migrated to Java where they formed their own Batak networks. Therefore priests had to learn Chinese for Bagan Siapi-api, Nias and Batak in these regions, while the priests

¹⁹⁶ Hoogerwerf 1997:123–128.

¹⁹⁷ Hermelink 1939:25.

in Lampung had to learn Javanese until standard Indonesian became more common in the 1960s.

The increase from 1,500 Lampung Catholics in the 1930s to the more than 82,000 in 2000 runs more or less parallel to the rise of Catholicism, or rather Christianity in general, in Central Java. Here also the most spectacular growth took place in the second half of the 1960s: from 13,000 in 1965 to 42,100 in 1971. The figure for the Protestant Javanese Church GKSBS in Lampung is rather similar to these Catholic figures: 41,500 in 1987.¹⁹⁸

This was an area of poor farmers who often were attracted to the Communist Party that was forbidden in 1966.¹⁹⁹ It was, however, not only farmers who came to this under-populated area. Quite a few Catholic teachers also arrived and their schools became the cradle of new Catholic communities.²⁰⁰ As in Central Java, so also in Lampung two miraculous places of devotion grew out of caves, designed after the model of the Lourdes cave: the Goa Maria Padang Bulan (near Pringsewu) and the Goa Maria Fajar Mataram, near Bandar Lampung have become national centres of pilgrimage for Catholics.

A quite interesting, more or less historical, novel is the book *Saman* by the Catholic author Ayu Utami. This is, besides some books by Y.B. Mangunwijaya, the only novel about the life of a modern Catholic priest in Indonesia. It depicts the struggle of an Indonesian priest in South Sumatra, fighting against the power of the military and corrupt government officials who cooperate with landowners, the rulers of the big plantations. The priest, Wisanggeni, decides to leave parish work in support of the united action of workers in the plantation that are threatened with dismissal:

I can go back to the parish where the ladies will take care of me with much attention, as long as I preach for them and administer the sacraments. I can give retreats and recollections for the Catholic schools in the big city, where the pupils like me very much and send me letters full of poetry. But, this plantation is the life of the farmers. Whatever I do, I will never be able to carry the same burden as they do.²⁰¹

This short quotation reflects the post-Vatican II dynamics, debates and conflicts that were also part of the Catholic community in Sumatra, although it was, in this minority and diaspora situation, much less acute than in Flores (see chapter seven). The fictitious priest Wisanggeni became one of the fighters for the rights of petty farmers against the large-scale business of the great plantations. He left the priesthood and had to flee his country. In this process priests who stayed within the traditional structure, supported him. The 1970s

¹⁹⁸ Hoogerwerf 1996:179.

¹⁹⁹ Muskens 1974-IIIa:220.

²⁰⁰ Rosariyanto 2000:202–203.

²⁰¹ Utami 1998:96–97.

and 1980s were the period of the extra flow of money for development aid, but also the period of intensified political choices against or in favour of the military government of Soeharto's New Order. The small Catholic community, consisting of a quite diverse population, did not make one choice only, but within the overall structure various streams could live together. This can be considered as one of the stronger points of this religious community.

Simon Rae (Batakland until 1900 and Karoland); Karel Steenbrink (Catholics); Jan S. Aritonang (Batakland 1900–2005, and some other parts with contributions from Richard Daulay, E. Hoogerwerf and Uwe Hummel)

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CHAPTER FOURTEEN

CHRISTIANITY IN JAVANESE CULTURE AND SOCIETY

Java is by far the most populous of the islands of Indonesia. In 2000 out of a total population of nearly 206 million some 121 million lived in the very densely populated island of Java, some 830 per km² (about 60 in Sumatra, 10 for Central and East Kalimantan, 140 in North Sulawesi and slightly over 4 for Papua).¹ The numbers for Christians in Java in 2000 were;

Statistics for Javanese Christians in 2000²

Province	Number of Christians	Percentage	Total population
Jakarta	837,682	10.04%	8,361,079
West Java	703,604	1.9%	35,724,092
Banten	213,135	2.63%	8,098,277
Central Java	874,245	2.83%	31,223,259
Yogyakarta	245,062	7.85%	3,121,045
East Java	799,276	2.3%	34,765,998
Total	3,673,004	3.03%	121,293,750

Totalling 3,673,004, the Christians in Java represent a mere 20.5% of the sum of Indonesian Christians, while about 60% of the whole population live in Java. This figure alone is already a good indication of the minority position of Christianity in this most important island of the archipelago.

In 1800 there were virtually no native Christians in Java. Besides the white Christians there was a much larger number of Eurasian baptised, but the real growth of these communities took place during the last two centuries. Still, the vast majority of Javanese are Muslim. The capital of Jakarta, a melting pot of the various ethnic identities of the country, showed in 2000 slightly higher than the national overall number of Christians or 8.92%. Besides, there was a significantly higher number of Christians in the region of the Sultanate of Yogyakarta, while the province of West Java had by far the lowest number for the Christians. This chapter seeks to sketch a picture of the history of these communities.

¹ Cribb 2000:70, with some modifications.

² Leo Suryadinata 2003:3, 115–116.

In the first half of the nineteenth century there were no indigenous Javanese Christian communities. There were also no coordinated and continuing missionary efforts. Between 1822 and 1843 three missionaries of the London Missionary Society (LMS) worked in Batavia and some other cities. They were William Milne, Robert Morrison and Walter Henry Medhurst. The Dutch Indies was their second choice. They wanted to start a mission in China and they used the Chinese community of Batavia and other towns in the colony as a starting point for their final goal. Medhurst joined the British army during the first Opium War of 1843, as a translator, and had remained in China since then. The small Malay and Chinese congregations were left behind.³ Another missionary was the German Gottlob Brückner, who worked for the Baptist Mission Society of Britain and translated the New Testament into Javanese, had it printed (in Javanese characters) in Serampore between 1828 and 1831 and worked until 1857 in Semarang without many visible results. His translation of the Gospel of Mark was printed in 1831 but initially forbidden by the colonial authorities, fearing that active missionising among the Javanese might cause troubles. Only in 1848 permission was given to sell sections of the New Testament among the Javanese.⁴

The real beginning of Javanese Christianity started with some local initiatives by Eurasians. The first was Coenraad Laurens Coolen, born in 1775 of a Russian father and a Javanese mother of noble descent. In 1816, while still a soldier in the colonial army, he came into contact with a small group of pious commoners who were nicknamed “the Surabaya Saints,” with the German born watchmaker Johannes Emde (1774–1859) as their central figure. The colonial government did not like the activities of this small group and in 1820 Emde was even sent to prison at the instigation of a minister of the Protestant Church (*Indische Kerk*). After serving for some years in the colonial army and the forestry service, Coolen managed to get permission to clear a forest in the isolated region of Ngoro, close to Mojoagung, some 80 km southwest of Surabaya. Coolen became the founder of a new village that attracted many Javanese from the region. In the mid-1840s there were already about 1000 people. Coolen was a pious Christian, but also continued much of Javanese tradition and wisdom in his life. He was convinced that his son was the incarnation of the local saint whose grave was found in the forest of Ngoro. He was acknowledged as a *kiyahi*, a traditional wise and holy man, albeit in a Christian version, but still one who could give advice and receive visions. He did not urge the new villagers to become Christian, and accepted that many of them remained Muslim. But he set a number of specific rules

³ Steenbrink 2002.

⁴ Swellengrebel 1974:45.

for his foundation like abstention from work on Sunday. The Christians were obliged to attend Sunday morning worship, as well as the midweek meeting in private houses.

In the early 1840s a number of Ngoro villagers went to Emde in Surabaya to be baptised, something that was not practised by Coolen. Emde not only baptised the group but also told them to cut their hair, wear European clothes and refrain from semi-sacral *wayang* or traditional puppet play. They were initially chased away from Ngoro by Coolen who did not like that Christians should behave like Europeans. But later Coolen gave in, and 200 of his people were baptised in 1854, but he forbade them to cut their hair or to change their names as was customary for other Javanese who were baptised. Coolen translated the basic doctrines of Christianity into Javanese and composed hymns in traditional Javanese style where his version of the Christian creed came very close to the Islamic confession,

I believe in Allah, the One
There is no God but God
Jesus Christ is the Spirit of God
Who excels in his power
There is no God but God
Jesus Christ is the Spirit of God.⁵

That God is called Allah was not so sensational because this is common in the Indonesian languages. The second and fifth line, however, is not in Javanese but very close to the Arabic and Muslim confession: *la illaha illallah*. That Jesus is called Spirit of God (*Ruhullah*) is also identical to the Muslim creed and phrasing. Coolen was assisted by Paulus Tosari and Abisai Ditatrana who founded near Ngoro the new village of Mojowarno, for the next century the centre of Christianity in East Java. We will deal in more detail with this 'founding father' of Christianity in East Java in the special section on East Java below.

In Central Java the first major movement towards Christianity was led by more sophisticated and semi-professional, but also self-made Christians teachers, the most important of them being commonly called Sadrach. Born in northern Central Java about 1835–1840 under the name of Abbas, he not only followed the basic training in chanting the Qur'an as was common for Muslim children, but he became also a student of Islam at several *pesantren*, boarding schools that have the character of Islamic monasteries or seminaries in the countryside of Java. His first meeting with Christianity probably was through a gospel of John in Javanese translation that he received through an evangelist who preached at market places and distributed tracts and texts of the

⁵ Cf. Sutarman 1990:135.

gospel. He came into contact with Dutch missionary Jelle Jellesma in East Java (Mojowarno), and with the rather independent Javanese Christian evangelist and mystic Ibrahim Tunggul Wulung near Jepara. Under the name Sadrach (Javanese converts were given no names from the New Testament, but from the Old Testament) he was baptised in 1867 in Batavia by the famous lay preacher Frederik Lodewijk Anthing. Sadrach for some time worked as an evangelist and distributor of tracts in cooperation with Anthing, but finally established a Christian centre of his own in Karangjoso, near Purworejo, in the southwestern region of Central Java. As Sadrach Surapranata he became leader of a more or less independent church (only in loose relation to the Irvingite Apostolic Church) that was considered by some Protestant missionaries as rebellious and heretical. In its heyday the Sadrach community had some 5,000 members in more than 60 small communities. The schism between Sadrach and the Reformed missionaries of Central Java occurred in 1891 during the visit of mission inspector Frans Lion Cachet and was from the beginning contested by some missionaries with experience in the field who wanted to give more organisational and also religious freedom to this gifted and original religious leader who had a thorough knowledge of the Bible. Sadrach established a well-organised structure for his congregations, regulating baptism, marriage and festive days. He also included some Islamic practices and local wisdom teachings (*ngelmu*) and definitely never wanted to become a blind imitator of foreign missionaries.⁶ Only after the death of Sadrach, the greater part of his movement was reunited with the Protestant mission congregations, and finally with the *Gereja-gereja Kristen Jawa*. He will be discussed in more in detail below, in the section on Central Java.

In the hierarchical administration of the Catholic Church personalities like Coolen and Sadrach cannot so easily develop. But still, there is among the Eurasians of Semarang a quite striking example of some more or less “independent Catholic church” in the 1830s. One Richard James MacMootry, apparently of Scottish-Malay descent, had a part of his house in Semarang furnished as a Catholic church, complete with altar and tabernacle, a pulpit, communion-rail, chairs, chandeliers, confessional and baptismal font. The place was provided also with the necessary utensils such as ceremonial cloths for Holy Mass, a silver chalice and ciborium, a silver plate with two small cans for water and wine, two censers, while he used a copy of the Bible as his missal. During his confirmation visit to Semarang in 1833, Prefect Apostolic Scholten investigated and immediately condemned this whole enterprise. Some utensils were destroyed; some were confiscated, while Scholten gave orders for strict surveillance to pastor A. Grube, the not so strict parish priest of Semarang.

⁶ Sutarman Partonadi 1988; J. Waerts 2001–8:2–39.

At Christmas 1833 MacMootry still held the nocturnal Mass. On 2 April 1834 he sent a petition to Governor General Baud to be permitted to continue his religious and educational ministry for the benefit of:

the poor and the children in the outskirts of the city of Semarang, who have insufficient knowledge of the Dutch language and will be served by him in Malay... Besides, the petitioner's purpose is only to help poor people, who are unable to give decent clothing to their children and therefore cannot send them on Sundays to the service in the great Roman Catholic Church.

MacMootry, at that time 47 years old, had a modest job as clerk with the merchant J.M. Neill, and his salary was not sufficient to live decently with his wife and two children. Therefore he asked permission to "collect contributions once a month in Semarang and occasionally in the regencies such as Yogyakarta, Surakarta, Magelang, Jepara, Pekalongan and Juwana for the maintenance of the above mentioned church."⁷

MacMootry died shortly thereafter, while the governor general was still in the process of asking information to Prefect Apostolic Scholten about his case. Was this MacMootry a religious charlatan who for financial reasons tried to exploit the poor religious situation of Eurasian Catholics in Semarang? Or should we consider him a visionary leader on the same level as the Eurasian or indigenous Javanese Protestants like Emde, Coolen, Paulus Tosari and later also Sadrach who did not feel at home in the European congregation and started their own congregations? The sources do not give us enough facts to reach firm conclusions in this case. At any rate, the MacMootry incident is an indication of the character of the Catholic community of Semarang which at that time was not only financially but also culturally and socially very tightly bound to the colonial government and its personnel, but also counted poor members who did not feel at home in the 'white' parish church. The MacMootry congregation, if there ever existed something of this kind, did not survive its leader.

From the a-religious nineteenth century to the religious revival of the twentieth century: Catholics in Batavia, Semarang and other Javanese towns

In 1808, as a result of the European revolutionary spirit, freedom of religion was announced. This resulted in the return of Catholic priests to the colony. On 4 April 1808 two first diocesan priests arrived in Batavia. They were Jacobus Nelissen and Lambertus Prinsen. The former was appointed the first Prefect Apostolic (1807–1817), while Prinsen started a parish in Semarang.

⁷ Van der Velden 1908:58–60. Also Steenbrink 2003–I:16–17.

In 1810 the colonial administration allowed another two diocesan priests to come to Indonesia, Philippus Wedding for Batavia and Henricus Waanders for Surabaya.

In general, the policy of the government was not always conducive. Under the banner of the so-called *rust en orde* policy, the mission of the Catholic Church had to face plenty of difficulties. Anti-Catholic measures in the Netherlands under King Willem I were put into practice in the Dutch East Indies as well. On the other hand, Prefect Apostolic J.H. Scholten (1830–1842) forbade the Catholics to join Freemasonry and to have mixed marriages. The colonial government did not favour it and the relationship between the government and the church worsened when the Prefect Apostolic claimed his jurisdiction over the priests and denied that the government could appoint or move priests at will. In addition, for many missionaries working among the colonial officials was like cultivating a dry and barren earth.⁸

In 1842 the Prefecture became a Vicariate Apostolic and Jacobus Grooff was appointed the first bishop (1842–1846). He was forced to leave the East Indies in 1845 due to a conflict of jurisdiction with the governor general (J.J. Rochussen). He left behind four priests. Only after long negotiations between the Vatican and the Dutch government was an agreement made to give more free space to the Catholic clergy. Petrus Vrancken then came to take over the position as the second Vicar Apostolic (1847–1874). The authority to appoint and to move priests was reserved to the Vicar Apostolic. Moreover, the number of priests who were not paid by the government was not limited. The colonial government safeguarded its power over the missionaries (Protestants and Catholics), particularly for the policy of ‘Law and Order’. They were not allowed to carry out mission in the same territory.⁹

In 1859 there was a new development with the arrival of the first Jesuits to take the place of their predecessors, the diocesan priests. On 9 July 1859 two Jesuits, M. van den Elzen (1822–1866) and J.B. Palinckx (1824–1900) came to the Dutch Indies. When they took up their residency in Surabaya, the intention was for a mission to the whole of East Java.¹⁰ For the time being, however, they and their successors also concentrated their work on the European population of the colony, except for the areas of Bangka and Flores.

⁸ Vriens 1972:31.

⁹ Art. 123 of the 1854 Netherlands Indies Government Regulation: “The Christian ministers, priests and missionaries of other denominations, must be in possession of the special admission (*radikaal*), to be granted by or on behalf of the governor general, in order to be allowed to carry out their ministry in any given part of the Netherlands Indies territory. When this admission is found harmful or when its conditions are not complied with, it can be withdrawn by the governor general.” Later on, it became the art 177 in the 1925 Netherlands Indies Constitution without any alteration.

¹⁰ J. Hadiwikarta 2001:338.

In the later decades of the nineteenth and the first decade of the twentieth century Catholics were able to build large institutions in all major cities of Java. A huge cathedral in neo-gothic style dominated the landscape of the new centre of Batavia, not so far away from the grand dome of the Willem I Protestant Church. Jesuits and Ursulines sisters build great compounds for boarding schools that gave a first-class European education to Catholic but also to as many Protestant children. Besides a great Protestant hospital, the Catholic Carolus hospital was built in the 1910s. This was all for the European and Eurasian population, besides some wealthier Chinese and very few indigenous people. This was not only the case in Batavia. In all the major towns of Java there were Christian churches, schools and hospitals that represented the largest investments of the Christian churches as to buildings.

Although the Vicar Apostolic and a large section of the Catholic clergy enjoyed government salaries, they had a much more independent status than their Protestant colleagues who were more fully colonial officials. This brought the Catholic clergy in the first four decades of the twentieth century to a policy similar to that in the European homeland. Catholics should be brought into denominational organisations in all fields. A Catholic weekly, later a daily newspaper, trade unions for teachers, for railway workers, for Catholic personnel in the army, scouting, a union for students, and above all a Catholic political party became established in this period of denominational segmentation of society. This was at first an affair for the European population that followed the strategy of *verzuiling* (litt. 'pillarisation') of the Dutch clergy. The Javanese Catholics did not join these social institutions and in politics they started a nationalist Catholic party that did not follow the conservative line of the white Catholics of the colony. Due to the larger proportion of white women who migrated to the colony in the decades after 1900, urban Catholicism in the major cities of Java was even more separated from native society than it had been in the nineteenth century. In 1900 the European and Eurasian Catholics amounted to half the total number of Catholics, in 1940 they were 88,172 or still about 15.5% of all Catholics in the colony. Between 1945 and 1957 this group disappeared by return to Europe or integration in the Indonesian society.

Batavia had been a colonial town from its foundation in 1619. It did not have the traditional mosque at the market place (*alun-alun*) that could be found in towns like Bandung, Surabaya, and Semarang. But also in these other towns the church buildings were more impressive, showing a more modernising and renewing power, than the modest mosques. Only after independence (in most places only after 1960) were there grand mosques built in the centre of the towns, and in that period it became more and more difficult to build churches or claim Christian space anywhere in the bigger cities. Close to the Catholic cathedral of Jakarta the great Istiqlal Mosque was built, with a high

minaret and much greater prayer room, putting the cathedral in the shadow, literally, especially for those who look around the major square of the town, Independence Place or *Medan Merdeka*. Along the major road of the town, Jalan Husni Thamrin, there was, amidst embassies, ministries, department stores and hotels, the great building of the Adventist Church, but it had to capitulate and move in the 1990s. Christian presence clearly became less visible in the major towns of Java after independence.

In West and East Java the small flocks of Christians came from the rural areas and in most cases they were brought together in isolated Christian villages. Urban Christianity was until the 1950s something for the European and Chinese population, with the exception of Central Java where both Protestants and Catholics from the beginning were used to living in a diaspora situation of a tiny minority amidst a sea of Muslims. In the 1950s and 1960s more and more rural Christians also turned to an urban life. From the 1970s on, with the light decline of the Christian presence in primary and secondary education (although they still fostered the strong position as quality schools), there was more and more academic education organised by Christian institutions. Jakarta has now a score of Christian universities. In Yogyakarta we find side by side the Jesuit Sanata Dharma University and a branch of the Jakarta Atma Jaya University, led by the Catholic laity in cooperation with the diocesan clergy. Similarly, the mainstream Protestant Duta Wacana University of Yogyakarta developed in rivalry with the Evangelical Immanuel Christian University. All these institutions, however, could never dominate the educational market, and could not even compete with the much richer and more prestigious state universities. In the independent Republic of Indonesia, the cities of Java regained a more and more strongly Muslim character and Christian presence in the cities represented much more the fragmentation of the Christian denominations than was the case in the countryside.

For the period between 1945 and 2000 three issues dominated the Christian denominations which were probably much more important for urban people than for rural Christians. Firstly, from 1945 until 1965 the main issue was that of consolidation, proving that Christianity was not the religion of the coloniser and oppressor, but a living religion for true Indonesians. Secondly, 1965–1985 was the period of contribution to development. In this period we see the start of development aid in Europe. Churches should have become independent in this period but there was a contradicting counter-current of money. Particularly Germany and the Netherlands started supporting development projects proposed and managed by church personnel. Another issue that became very prominent in this period was inculturation or contextualisation. The Christian message should be brought into harmony with Indonesian local cultures. Thirdly, in the period 1985–2000 we notice more and more a distancing from actual politics; development organisations become indepen-

dent from the churches as NGOs. The Evangelical and Pentecostal churches become more prominent, mostly in the urban areas of Java. The Charismatic movement becomes strong among Chinese Catholics in the bigger cities. The devotion to Mary in places of pilgrimage, built in imitation of the European places of Lourdes and Mejugorje become stronger than the move towards inculturation.

On 3 January 1961 Pope John XXIII founded the hierarchy in Indonesia that was interpreted as an admission of the maturity of the local Church. Jakarta and West Java became one Ecclesial Province, which covers the archdiocese of Jakarta, the dioceses of Bogor and Bandung, while Central and East Java became another Ecclesial Province, which covers the archdiocese of Semarang, the dioceses of Purwokerto, Surabaya, and Malang. In organisation this period was also the end of the hegemony of the religious orders. More and more diocesan clergy became available and several diocesan priests were ordained bishop, although the majority of the Catholic clergy in Java (as in Indonesia as whole) are still members of the religious orders.

Protestants in the major cities of the colonial Dutch East Indies

Protestants—European or Indonesian—living in the major cities mostly belonged to the Protestant Church in the Dutch East Indies, the *Indische Kerk*. The status of this church was in some respects quite different from that of the Catholic community, because it was placed more directly under government authority. By a decree of 11 December 1835 the Dutch king, Willem I, commanded the fusion of the Lutheran and Reformed denominations (only effected in 1854), and the establishment of one church council for the whole colony (realised in 1844). This same king had already, in 1820, decreed that a royal committee (the *Haagsche Commissie*) would be nominated to select the ministers for the East Indies and maintain communications with the church in the colony. In later regulations it was laid down that the Church Board (*Kerkbestuur*) of the *Indische Kerk* should be nominated by the governor general, who also had the last word in many details of the life of this church. Besides Protestant Europeans, the *Indische Kerk* included the ancient Christian communities in the Moluccas, the Minahasa and Timor. Between 1815 and 1875 the *Nederlandsch Zendeling-genootschap* sent a number of missionaries to those provinces. In the Moluccas and Timor they could do little more than care for the existing congregations, but in the Minahasa they succeeded in christianising the greater part of the population, so that the number of Protestants there increased from several thousands in 1830 to 80,000 in 1875 (see chapter ten).

Nearly all descriptions of the Protestant Church are full of complaints about the domination of the colonial administration. But it is difficult to see how the

church could have survived if the state had not taken over its administration. Actually, several times the government offered the church its freedom, but this offer was refused. Not only during the 'irreligious nineteenth century' but also in the first decades of the twentieth century public life in the Indies did not show much religious enthusiasm. Anti-clericalism and active atheism was quite common among the intellectual elite. When Governor General A.W.F. Idenburg (1909–1916), a member of the Dutch Reformed Churches, issued a decree restricting government activities and public events in general on Sundays, the general (European) public was infuriated. Idenburg remarked that "the greatest enemy for Christianity *at this moment* is not yet Islam (it will be only so when it has been roused specifically), but the European population in these countries."¹¹ In reports of Catholic missionaries, too, we find a picture of the colonial official and employee as a rather lax religious person. Nevertheless in the history of the *Indische Kerk* during the nineteenth century several lofty personalities can be found.

One of these was Wolter Robert van Hoëvell (1812–1879, in the colony 1836–1848). Moderately orthodox, he was an example of the progressive and liberal attitude of Protestantism in the colonial state. He founded the first general magazine (1838) and the first Christian journal (1846) in the Indies. In 1848 he was one of the leaders of the demand for the abolition of slavery and for more democracy in the colony. The colonial government considered this action revolutionary, and when the Church Board also seriously reprimanded him, Van Hoëvell returned to the Netherlands. There he became a Member of Parliament and as such consistently advocated a more liberal colonial policy. J.F.G. Brumund, who was a minister of the *Indische Kerk* from 1840 until his death in 1863, was known for his research in the field of older Javanese history, especially the archeology of the Hindu period. Another prominent member of the colonial society was the Rev. A.S. Carpentier Alting (1837–1915), a liberal theologian who served as a minister in the Indies between 1885 and 1905. He was also Grand Master of the Masonic lodge in Batavia. He reformed and reorganised Freemasonry in the Dutch East Indies and made it into a pillar of ethical colonial policy, and he was also active for the education of the white population. The profiles of these three persons show how Protestant leadership was closely related to the liberal elite of the colony.¹²

During the first decades of the twentieth century the number of Europeans who came to the colony increased sharply. In the same years a religious revival

¹¹ De Bruijn & Puchinger 1985:212 and 262.

¹² Van Boetzelaer 1947:366–368 for these and more profiles. On Freemasonry in the Netherlands Indies, see Th. Stevens 1994.

occurred in Dutch Protestantism, including the Netherlands Reformed Church, which had been hit severely by the exodus of Kuyper's Neo-Calvinists. As a result, the Protestant Church of the Indies became stronger and at the same time more orthodox. After long preliminaries, in 1935 a reorganisation of the church took place. The administrative (but not the financial) bonds with the state were severed, and a new church order was designed which was more or less Presbyterian in character and included a creedal formula. But in 1942 all European members were imprisoned in the Japanese internment camps. The church was again European-dominated for a short time between 1945 and 1949. In 1948, the third general synod decided to create a 'fourth church,' the Protestant Church of West Indonesia (*Gereja Protestan Indonesia Barat*, GPIB), which would include all church members outside the three autonomous churches in East Indonesia (Minahasa, Moluccas, Timor), among them the great majority of the European Protestants. But in the next year the Netherlands ceased its efforts to maintain its grip on the former colony. Most Dutch people left Indonesia, and the remainder were expelled in 1956–1957, as a result of the conflict between the two countries about the status of New Guinea (Papua). From then on, the GPIB was the church of the Minahasans, Moluccans and Timorese living in the cities of Java and other parts of Western Indonesia (membership about 250,000). The Protestant Church of Indonesia (*Gereja Protestan Indonesia*, GPI), as it was now called, continued to exist, but only as a legal body; it has no congregations.

Although statistically rather important during the colonial period, the Europeans within the Protestant Church of the Indies did not leave a strong impression on the history of Indonesian Christianity, except for the impressive church buildings in the centre of the major towns of Java. Like the Netherlands Reformed (the *Hervormden*) in Holland, they did not create many denominational institutions and organisations, in the way Catholics and the Dutch Reformed (the *Gereformeerden*) did, who brought to Indonesia the 'pillarisation' (compartmentalisation along confessional or ideological lines) they had initiated in their home country. In politics the Dutch Reformed started, in the 1910s, a *Christelijk Ethische Partij* (CEP), that was not very successful, even after it changed its name to *Christelijk Staatskundige Partij* or Christian Political Party (1930). In 1945 their Indonesian spiritual heirs founded a Protestant political party, PARKINDO, and a few years later a Christian University, *Universitas Kristen Indonesia*, came into being in Jakarta (UKI, 1950), in time followed by many others.

Indigenous Christians in West Java

The Protestant congregations of the major VOC towns like Batavia and Semarang have been described in chapter five. From the seventeenth century onward the Portuguese-speaking *Mardijker* community in Batavia had been an important element of the Protestant congregation in that city. But with the decline of the VOC this mestizo culture disappeared from the capital. In 1807 church services in Portuguese were discontinued. Many *Mardijkers* accepted the majority religion and were absorbed by the Muslim *Betawi* population.

During the VOC era there were very few Christians outside these centres. About 30 km south of Batavia, in Depok, there existed a community of former slaves of Cornelis Chastelein. They originated from various regions of Indonesia, most of them from Bali and Sulawesi. Between 1696 and 1713 some 150 slaves were baptised. Under the will of Chastelein they were set free and received a piece of land. Although they were not really natives of West Java, still their community can be seen as the first truly Indonesian congregation in the whole of Java.¹³ Because of the general policy of that time not to evangelise among the Javanese, they remained for a long time the only Christians in the region. In 1878 the first theological seminary for indigenous ministers was established in Depok. Until the 1920s it was the major institution of its kind in the country. The students originated from all parts of the Netherlands Indies, including Papua, but the largest group came from Batakland.¹⁴

Inhabiting most of West Java (with the exception of Batavia/Jakarta and its outlying area (the *Ommelanden van Batavia*) with their mixed population, as well as the regions surrounding Cirebon and Banten that are close to Central Javanese culture and language), the Sundanese had and still have characteristics of their own. They have a distinct language, and during the period under consideration (1850–1942) the strong contrast between orthodox Islam and popular or *abangan* religion that dominated Central and East Java was not present among them. Sundanese culture was seen as basically Muslim and conversion to Christianity was much more exceptional than in the other regions of Java. Like the other inhabitants of Java, the Sundanese were not missionised until well into the nineteenth century. That was not because the colonial government had banned missions; until the 1850s there simply was nobody who thought about bringing the Gospel to the Sundanese. To tell the truth, the government did not like Christian missions entering Muslim territories, but once a mission agency applied for permission, after a few years of foot-dragging this was given. In the case of Sundaland, it was Isaac Esser (see

¹³ Coolsma 1901:14.

¹⁴ Hoekema 1994:35.

chapter seven) who first envisaged a mission among the Sundanese; he succeeded in attracting the interest of the Board of the *Nederlandsche Zendingsvereeniging* (NZV) to this region.

Even before the NZV sent its first missionaries, a layman started work in the *Ommelanden*, using indigenous preachers. The judge Frederik Lodewijk Anthing (1818–1883) was born in Batavia of a Dutch Lutheran father and a mother of German descent. At the end of his colonial career he was vice-president of the Supreme Court of Batavia. He was a committed Protestant and one of the very few missionary spirits in colonial Batavia. In 1855 he started evangelising among the indigenous population of Batavia and its surroundings. For this purpose, and together with other people, he founded the Society for Internal and External Mission (GIUZ, *Genootschap voor In- en Uitwendige Zending*). In 1867 he established a training school for evangelists that soon collapsed due to internal strife between its teacher and Anthing's society. In 1870 he retired from his office and dedicated himself to missionary work. At any given time no less than 57 native evangelists received a modest salary from Anthing. No wonder, then, that by the end of the 1870s he had spent his whole personal fortune in the mission. Thereupon he went to the Netherlands, where he tried to obtain financial and moral support. When the NZV Board declined his request for funds, Anthing turned to the Irvingites, the adherents of the Catholic Apostolic Church, founded in Glasgow in 1831 by Edward Irving. The widower Anthing also found his second wife among members of this church. In 1881 he returned to Java as an Irvingite 'apostle' to Java and continued his missionary work until his death in a tram accident in 1883. The Anthing mission established a number of small congregations in the *Ommelanden*, in fact mostly among the native workers on the large estates of that region, owned by Europeans or Chinese. After Anthing's unexpected early death it was uncertain who would take over his emerging chain of congregations. Most of these small congregations counted about 100 members. After some time, the responsibility was taken over by the *Nederlandse Zendingsvereeniging* (NZV, Dutch Missionary Society).

The NZV was one of the missionary societies founded by people who broke away from the *Nederlandsch Zendelinggenootschap* (NZG) in 1858–1859, when their struggle against the influence of theological modernism in that organisation had failed. In 1863 the first NZV missionaries arrived in West Java. Missions were established in a number of towns: Bandung, Cianjur, Bogor, Indramayu, and Cirebon. Until 1900, Batavia was left to GIUZ and its counterpart in the Netherlands, the *Java-Comité*. After mastering the language (Sundanese or, in the coastal area, Malay and Javanese, the missionaries at once started evangelising, mainly by visiting people at their homes.

However, the missionaries soon found out that they had been sent to a difficult field. The inhabitants of West Java, and especially the Sundanese, are in

general loyal and devoted Muslims who mostly fulfil the basic obligations of their religion, as already discussed above. The Islamic identity is very deeply rooted among them. Although it may seem to outward observers that their knowledge and practice of Islam do not really go very deep, they will not easily dissociate themselves from Islam as a religion and cultural identity. The Sundanese are very steadfast in their involvement and appreciation of Sundanese tradition, which they consider to be the heritage of their ancestors even when many elements of this cultural asset are not in harmony with the doctrines of Islam or are even openly in conflict with them. Both elements, Islam and the ancestral tradition or *adat*, are united in this culture, forming a strong identity; and to both people should be loyal. As Hendrik Kraemer put it in his West Java Report, "Islam is the crowning element of their *adat*."¹⁵

The close connection between local customs and religion unavoidably led to the identification of Islam with society and culture. People found it self-evident that Sundanese were Muslims. Therefore, transition to another religion could not be accepted. Religious and social leaders, even the indigenous civil servants, were keen to keep intact the identity of the Sundanese community as a Muslim community. People who accepted another religion were considered traitors and deserters.

Thus it does not come as a surprise that the missionaries were met by an invisible wall. People were friendly, courteous, but with a few exceptions simply refused to talk about religious matters. As for the religious leaders, even if the missionaries had wanted to discuss faith questions with them, they would not have been accepted as discussion partners, because they did not know Arabic and had no more than an elementary knowledge of Islam, let alone of Islam as it functioned in Sundanese society. Here the missionaries were confronted with the shortcomings of the preparation received before leaving for the mission field (see chapter six, first section). After some time, in order to gain the confidence of the native population, they turned to activities in the fields of education and health care. Besides, they tried to reach out through the distribution and sale of tracts and bible portions. The tracts were either translated from international examples in the field or written for this purpose by NZV missionaries. A Sundanese translation of the New Testament was finished in 1879, a full Bible in Sundanese became available in 1891. The translation was made by missionary S. Coolsma; in the revision he was assisted by the Sundanese nobleman Raden Gandakusumah, presumably a Muslim.

However, all these activities were to no avail. Hendrik Kraemer was not exaggerating when half a century later he called West Java "a desert, a spiritual

¹⁵ Kraemer 1958:115.

Nova Zembla for the [first generation of] Christian missionaries.”¹⁶ In 1880 baptised Christians on the NZV missionfield numbered 220, half of whom were Chinese. The landed peasantry, which formed the backbone of Sundanese society, was impervious to the Gospel. At least one missionary (C. Albers in Cianjur) had a good relationship with the local *bupati* (regent), whose son and heir even lived for several years with the Albers family to get a Dutch-language education, but it was unthinkable that a member of the Sundanese nobility would accept Christianity.¹⁷ Nearly all converts belonged to the landless class, and needed to be supported by the missionaries, who took them into their service or bought them a piece of land. It proved very difficult to build a stable community out of these elements, let alone that they could become fellow-workers in the evangelisation of their compatriots.

There was, however, one exception to this rule: the couple Ismael and Moerti, who were baptised by Coolsma at Cianjur on December 26, 1868 as the first-fruits of the NZV mission among the Sundanese. They belonged to the Sundanese middle class. Ismael was literate (a number of his letters to his spiritual mentor Coolsma have been published by the latter),¹⁸ and well-versed in Islam. Even before receiving baptism he started evangelising his Muslim fellow-countrymen, writing letters to religious leaders as far away as Bandung. Coolsma and Albers (who were very critical of the later converts and passed a harsh judgment on Ibrahim Tunggul Wulung) expressed their admiration for his deep understanding of the Christian faith. We see here an example of the paradox formulated by Guillot: among Muslims converted to Christianity, former *santri*, that is, orthodox Muslims, with their orientation towards Holy Scripture, are much more prepared to understand and accept Christian dogma than former adherents of popular Islam.¹⁹ Ismael’s activity did not last long; he died in 1872. Moerti outlived him by ten years. It is interesting to notice that in 1869 the Governor General P. Mijer, who was also very close to the missionary C. Albers, granted Ismael an audience.

Among the Chinese Christians (who were mainly found in Indramayu and Cirebon, outside Sundaland proper) Ang Boeng Swi (ca. 1810–1864) takes the same place as Ismael did among the Sundanese. He was the first Christian in

¹⁶ Kraemer 1958:98.

¹⁷ A report of a discussion between a missionary (D.J. van der Linden) and a regent (the *bupati* of Indramayu) in: Van den End 1991:112–114 (Indonesian translation in Van den End 2006:117–120).

¹⁸ S. Coolsma, *Soendaneesche Brieven*, s.a. (with Dutch translation). See also S. Coolsma, *Ismael en Moerti* (Rotterdam 1906). Several autographs of Ismael are kept in the archives of the *Raad voor de Zending* (Het Utrechts Archief, ARvdZ, 9–13a).

¹⁹ Guillot 1981:25, cf. 92. Half a century after Ismail, another converted *santri* on the NZV mission field, Kartawidjaja, wrote a spiritual autobiography, which was published by the mission in Dutch translation with the title *Van Koran tot Bijbel* (From Quran to Bible, 1914).

Indramayu (baptised 13 December 1858). Like Ismael, he was a 'seeker,' but he was different from his Sundanese brother in that he had found the faith on his own, through a New Testament given him by a local Dutchman. He became the founder and leader of a small congregation at Indramayu, but he died a few months after the arrival of the first missionary. His son, An Dji Goan (1831/1832–1895) was an elder of the congregation. He was said to have a thorough knowledge of Islam and Chinese religion besides Christianity. (On the beginnings of the Chinese churches on Java, see chapter nineteen.)

The relative success of the mission among the Chinese was one of the factors, which deterred the NZV Board from abandoning West Java. But in particular the Anthing congregations saved the NZV mission. In the 1870s, the missionaries began to feel the need for indigenous evangelists. As these could not be found amongst their Sundanese converts, they turned to Mr. Anthing. In 1875 Anthing sent several of his followers, who then started spreading the Gospel in the way they had learned from their spiritual father, but which was not always to the liking of the NZV missionaries, especially when, in line with popular Javanese religiosity, they presented the Gospel as an esoteric wisdom and used magical formulas to cure diseases. Slowly the congregations began to grow. After Anthing's death (1883) the NZV succeeded in taking over most of his flock, more than doubling the number of Christians in the care of the missionaries (in the case of non-Chinese Christians the increase was even fourfold) and securing the help of the Anthing-educated congregational leaders, whose descendants, the Atje's, the Djalimoen's, the Eliä's, the Rikin's, the Titus's, have a prominent place in the history of the Sundanese church.

If there was ever a case of the meagre cows eating up the fat ones, it was the incorporation of the Anthing congregations by the NZV mission. Fortunately, in this case the meagre cows did not stay meagre, but started to grow. However, this growth made the economic problems stated above even more urgent. The missionaries could not provide a job or buy *sawah* for all those people. The solution they found was one applied earlier on other mission fields: they purchased an estate (or were given tracts of waste by the government), where landless Christians or people who felt oppressed by the Muslim community of their native village could obtain a piece of land. In this way a number of Christian settlements came into being, which still exist today: Cideres (1882), Pangharepan (1887), Palalangan (1902), Haurgeulis-Rehoboth (1912). In 1915 more than one third of the non-Chinese Christians in the NZV mission field lived in these villages. The landlord was the local missionary, who drew up a set of rules according to which the tenants had to regulate their civil and Christian life.

The gathering of the indigenous Christians in separate villages solved the problem of poverty and social exclusion. However, in this way the Christians were even more isolated from their fellow-countrymen, and it became even

more difficult to give witness about Christ in the midst of the people. There arose also the erroneous idea among the common people that Christians were bought through the promise of money and land. After some time these weaknesses in the strategy of the Christian villages were realised by the NZV. Later policy tried not to alienate the new Christians from their environment. It was felt that the first missionary strategy had focused too much on individuals, without taking into consideration the consequences for the Christian community as a whole. From the 1910s on more and more attention was given to the social impact of missionary activities. Individuals who converted should no longer be separated from their communities. Therefore, after 1917 there were no longer any plans to establish Christian villages.

The number of Christians on the West Java mission field grew slowly but steadily (1,724 in 1900; 3,497 in 1922). The pupils of the mission village schools numbered 92 in 1883, 1,752 in 1910, 2,198 (among them 604 girls) in 1938. Besides, in 1933 the NZV had eleven Dutch-language schools (one of them, the MULO-Zending in Bandung, a secondary school). As on other mission fields, at first the teachers were educated by the local missionary, but in 1901 a teacher training school was established in Bandung, headed by a Dutch schoolmaster, where Sundanese was the language of instruction. The school was a *normaalschool*, which means that as preparatory training only low-level elementary education (village school) was required, while the graduates could teach at village schools and at the 5-year *standaardschool*. The first examination, in 1903, was attended by the government Advisor for Native Affairs, the famous C. Snouck Hurgronje. In 1917 for the first time a girl entered the school. The four or five years of teacher training were followed by one or two years of theological schooling. In this way the village school teachers could be employed also as congregation leaders and evangelists without adding to the financial burden of the mission (see chapter six). In 1932, due to cutbacks in government spending, the teacher training school was closed. The course in theology was to be continued independently. But the incipient church was too small to carry such an infrastructure. The two-year course was only given once, after which responsibility for the education of the evangelists reverted to the individual missionaries.

The missionary initiatives in the field of medical care fared better, because they served the population as a whole. Here, too, initially it was the individual missionaries who started giving medical treatment. In fact, they had received elementary medical training before leaving for the mission field. Often they used homeopathical medicine. The first hospital was opened in 1897 in Cideres; after the turn of the century several other hospitals were established, the biggest of which was Immanuel Hospital in Bandung (1910, from beginnings in 1901), which has been a great Christian medical centre for a century. More than the village schools, the hospitals were an important instrument of

missionary work: an evangelist would visit the wards every day; in Bandung the Sunday morning church service was obligatory for all patients who were able to come to the central hall. In 1914 the first doctor (a woman) arrived in Bandung; besides Dutch personnel the mission also employed Indonesian doctors, one of whom was J. Leimena, who after the war served as Minister of Public Health under Soekarno, held other cabinet portfolios and was seven times acting President (*Penjabat Presiden*).²⁰

During the last decades of the colonial era, important developments took place regarding the relationship of the mission with Islam, and that of the Christian congregations with the mission. As to the first, from the beginning Islam had been considered by the missionaries as an enemy, which had to be destroyed but which was also feared. As has been observed before, the missionaries had no adequate knowledge of Islam; they indeed studied the Quran (in translation) and Islamic literature available in Sundanese (often expressing popular Islam), but found it boring and lacking religious depth. This attitude they passed on to the converts. As a result, there was hardly ever real contact with Muslims on the religious level. Missionaries like Bernard Arps (on the mission field 1926–1956) wanted to change that. To them, Islam was not an opponent, but a religion, which had to be approached in a purely religious way. To realise that ideal, the Sundanese Christians would have to be living Christians, but also *Sundanese* Christians, no more estranged from adat.

No more identification of ‘Dutch’ and ‘Christian.’ No more bare seventeenth-century Dutch Calvinist village churches and church services. [What is needed is for them] to appreciate positively the valuable elements in their own culture; ennoble, sanctify, and inspire their own *adat*; take (especially the teacher-preachers) a real interest in the religious, political, social, and economical development of their own country and people.²¹

Arps and his like-minded colleagues were no religious pluralists, they still announced the Gospel, but wanted to present it to Muslims as a living faith, represented by Christian personalities. In this, they were representatives of the ‘ethical theology’, which was dominant in Dutch missions during the first four decades of the twentieth century.

Besides the attitude of missionaries and indigenous Christians towards the religious environment, the relationship between the latter and the mission also needed a fundamental change. In the first decades of the twentieth century, some steps were taken towards the organisation of an autonomous church. In the local congregations church councils were instituted; a number of evangelists

²⁰ Leimena 1995:338.

²¹ B. Arps to NZV Board, Report on the ressort West Priangan in 1927, ARvdZ, 115–39–9; published in: Van den End 1991:486; Indonesian translation in Van den End 2006:550.

were installed as leaders of a congregation; the gurus of several ressorts and of the mission field as a whole came together for discussions about the mission policy. As for these meetings, it should be added that the Conference of Missionaries was not fond of them and that several times the Mission Board in Holland had to intervene when the Conference decided not to continue them. In any case, these meetings were not supra-local ecclesiastical councils, as those present were not church office-bearers and did not represent their congregations. In fact, as late as 1934 no Indonesian Christian on the NZV mission field had been given the authority to administer the sacraments. There was one exception: Titus (1856–1917), one of the most prominent evangelists, originating from one of the Malay-speaking Anthing congregations, who had been ordained in old age in 1917 when through his efforts a group conversion had occurred in the village of Awiligar, near Bandung and it was deemed that the presence of a European would be damaging to the progress of the mission there. Titus died a few days later, even before he could baptise the Awiligar Christians, and the experiment was not repeated.

However, times were changing. Some Sundanese Christians were more in touch with society in general than was assumed by Arps. With the emerging of Indonesian national consciousness in the 1920s, within the Sundanese Christian community, too, European leadership was no longer accepted at face value, at least by the teachers and other educated people. They formed a union and protested at the low salaries paid by the mission, but also at the isolation from their fellow-countrymen caused (as they saw it) by missionary policy. Between 1927 and 1931 churches were instituted on several mission fields. In 1932 the Missionary Conference of West Java asked Dr. H. Kraemer for his opinion about the situation on their mission field. From May until October 1933 Kraemer visited all ressorts. He wrote an extensive report, which among other things contains an insightful description of Islam in the various regions of West Java.²² As he had done before on other mission fields, Kraemer recommended setting the congregations in West Java on their own feet. This advice was accepted and on 14 November 1934 the *Geredja Keristen Boemipoetera di Tanah Pasoendan* (the Indigenous Christian Church in Sundaland, actual name *Gereja Kristen Pasundan*, GKP) was instituted. Just as in other regions, the mission would work alongside the church, and for the time being the Church Board would be chaired by one of the missionaries. There was a Sundanese secretary, D. Abednego, and a treasurer of Chinese descent, Tan Goan Tjong. This situation lasted for eight years; full independence only came

²² The greater part of this report was published in an English translation in Kraemer 1958. The very informative thirty-odd pages on Islam were left out from this publication and consequently were not included in the Indonesian translation (Weinata Sairin (ed.) 1986). The original report never appeared in print.

about with the internment of the Dutch missionaries in 1942. At that time, the membership of the church was 5,500; in 2007 it is ca. 30,000, many of whom, however, are migrants from other parts of Indonesia. The Sundanese people as a whole remain a Muslim society.

The GKP did not include all Christians on the NZV mission field. For several reasons, most Christians of Chinese descent in West Java chose to stay aloof. There were those who from the beginning had been cooperating with NZV missionaries; another group had close contacts with the Methodist mission, which had been working in Batavia and Bogor from 1905 until 1928, and with Christian churches in China. This contrast more or less coincided with that between *peranakan* Chinese, those who had been born in Indonesia, often from mixed marriages, Malay-speaking, and *singkeh*, born in China and Chinese- (mostly Hokkien-) speaking. From 1927 onwards Pouw Peng Hong and Oen Tek Tjioe made efforts, among others, to found a united church including all Chinese Christians in West Java or even in the whole of Java (who at the time numbered about 3,500). They wanted to imitate events in China, where in 1927 the Church of Christ in China had been formed. The history of these efforts is very complicated. In the end two churches came into being: the *peranakan* founded the *Tiong Hoa Kie Tok Kauw Hwee—Koe Hwee Djawa Barat* or Chinese Christian Church, West Java Presbytery, which in 1958 took the name *Gereja Kristen Indonesia Djawa Barat*, the Indonesian Christian Church of West Java. Initially the membership of this church was only 1,600, but the church grew to 6,000 in 1951 and about 50,000 in 2000. Initially, the words ‘West Java Presbytery’ were added in view of the hoped-for union with the sister churches in Central and East Java. After long preliminaries, this union finally came about in 1988, when the *Gereja Kristen Indonesia* (GKI) was formed, which now has a membership of more than 160,000. The *singkeh* Chinese founded the *Tiong Hoa Kie Tok Kauw Hwee* (first beginnings 1928), which in 1958 also took an Indonesian name (*Gereja Kristus*, Church of Christ) and now has a membership of about 20,000.

The end of Dutch colonialism in 1942: Japanese, the struggle for independence in West Java and the further development of a Christian minority

After the Japanese army occupied Java in March 1942, there was a general ban on gathering by indigenous people and also church meetings were not allowed. With the help of Colonel Nomachi, a Japanese Protestant army chaplain, church life could be restored, without the Dutch missionaries who were sent to a detention camp, but the school buildings were confiscated. After the defeat of the Japanese in 1945, it took many years before some of the schools were returned to the church and several of these buildings were never returned.

The GKP, *Gereja Kristen Pasundan*, notwithstanding its name reflecting an ethnic identity, remained an extremely small minority in the very populous Indonesian province of West Java. It also became ethnically a more mixed church. Although the Chinese churches had separated themselves in 1938, it never became a truly pure Sundanese church. Many of the former 'Anthing congregations' were already mixed Malay-Javanese due to the closeness of the national capital Jakarta. Migrants from Minahasa, Batakland and the Lesser Sunda Islands also joined GKP. Many were considered as Christian (and no longer pure Sundanese) because of their marriage to people from outside West Java. Rightly therefore, Dr. Mintardja Rikin stated in his 1973 dissertation that the church is "not a tribal but a regional church."²³ At the end of the twentieth century there were only a few ministers left who would hold services in Sundanese because standard Indonesian was, for most members of the church, the common language. Therefore it became also more and more difficult to use traditional musical instruments (*gamelan*, *angklung*). Selected people only used specific Sundanese music in services and the Sundanese book of hymns, *Kidung Kabungahan*, at specific occasions. As the major regional Protestant church the GKP became an important member of the Indonesian Council of Churches in 1950, the WCC in 1961 and WARC 1970. In the 1950s and 1960s its international relations were extended from a sole relation with Dutch churches to a broader network, among them with the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand. In 2003 the GKP counted fifty congregations with some 30,000 members. This is only a small community, compared to the much larger number of Chinese Protestants (80,000 in GKI), while there are in the region many members of the Batak Church (HKBP), the former *Indische Kerk* (GPIB), some 130,000 Catholics and probably a much larger number of Pentecostals. They all brought the number of Christians in the region to a total of slightly over 700,000. The modest Sundanese Church is a good example of the problems Christianity had in winning over true Sundanese. In the early 1970s the GKP took care of 10 primary and 5 secondary schools, with some 75% of the pupils Christians. This is a fairly modest number compared to the 55 primary and 61 secondary schools of the Catholics in the same province of West Java. When we see the GKP in the perspective of other 'ethnic' or regional Protestant churches, especially in the outer islands, it must be seen as a very small Christian presence amidst a variety of other Christian denominations, but most of all amidst a huge Muslim majority.

²³ See Rikin 1973. This Dutch language dissertation, defended at Leiden University, has as its major theme the study of circumcision in West Java. Rikin defended the thesis that the ritual could be accepted for Christians in the region. It was too much for the Sundanese Christians and he was sidelined. Only later it was seen as a bold and well-argued attempt at inculturation.

The complicated conversion of Madrais adherents to Catholicism

Madrais is the shorter name of a member of the West-Javanese nobility, Prince Sadewa Alibasa Kusumawijayaningrat, born about 1835 in the village of Cigugur, some 20 km south of Cirebon on the slopes of the mighty mount Ceremai. After some Islamic education he received direct revelations and established a religious movement that in four aspects differed clearly from mainstream Islam: monogamy, no marriage before the age of 28 for men or below 23 for women, no circumcision, and burial in coffins made of good quality *jati*-wood. Madrais considered his social and mystical movement as a separate religion. He was expelled to Papua, but finally in 1925 in his old age, he received recognition for his movement from the Colonial Government, as “the Javanese-Sundanese Religion” (*Agama Djawa Sunda*, ADS).

Notwithstanding protest by Muslim clerics, especially during the Japanese rule, ADS was able to develop and even claimed, in the early 1950s, some 100,000 adherents. Madrais’ son Tedjabuana, already an old and sick man, was the leader when in 1964 the court of justice in the town of Kuningan, supported by the army and the national government, banned the Madrais movement. Its members could no longer legally marry according to the rules of the sect, widows would receive no allowances, and they could no longer even claim inheritances. In the 1950s and early 1960s the Madrais movement had been one of the most prominent of the ‘new Religious Movements’ or *aliran kepercayaan* who tried to survive notwithstanding the policy of the government that freedom of religion was only for the five major recognised religions of Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, Protestantism and Catholicism. They suggested that the wording of the Constitution of 1945 guaranteed “Freedom of religion and *kepercayaan* (faith)”. Their position was that they were a faith movement and should be given the same rights as the great global religions. The army, always a strong opponent to Communism, was afraid that they would be used as a safe haven for communists and pushed this prohibition in all its consequences.

At that time ADS leader Tedjabuana no longer lived in the mountain village of Cigugur but in nearby Cirebon. He had close relations to a Catholic priest, Hidayat Sasmita, and therefore he decided to ask for baptism. After a full night of teaching he was baptised on 30 July 1964. At the same time he dissolved the religious movement of Madrais and suggested that his followers should also turn to Catholicism, but he gave them full freedom to act according to their own free choice. It were not only Madrais members from Cigugur who wanted to convert to Catholicism, another concentration was in the village of Cisantana, only two km uphill from Cigugur. Other groups lived in diaspora in West Java. The new converts received baptism not after the usual introductory and learning period of two years, but after only a few months, with the

obligation to continue learning the doctrine of the Catholic Church. In the early 1970s there were already about 2,000 baptised as Catholics. For Sunday Mass a *gamelan* orchestra was trained and hymns in Sundanese language and musical tradition were composed. Nevertheless the basic structure of the Catholic liturgy was followed, as in global post-Vatican II Catholicism. For the liturgy in households, concentrating on traditional sacred meals or *slametan*, Sundanese prayers and hymns were composed and printed in a booklet. The Catholic holidays of Easter and Christmas were celebrated with great pomp in the palace-sanctuary of Cigugur and in the smaller churches that were built at other places with active cooperation of the local congregations. This was the first and only mass movements towards Christianity after more than a century of mission work in the Sundanese territory.

According to later Madrais tradition, the founder of the movement had given a prophecy about the entrance of his followers into Catholicism, "My children, you should not be afraid, be strong in times of turmoil. You will know my descendant, a messenger from below the White Tamarind." The White Tamarind was interpreted as the white gown of the Holy Cross priests who would lead the young Catholic community. From their side the Catholics considered the special regulations of Madraisism like indissoluble monogamous marriage and the ban on circumcision as a way towards their religion.

Some ex-ADS accepted Islam, while a handful addressed the Protestant GKP Church in Cirebon by mistake because they did not realise the difference in denominations. They stuck to their first choice and in the 1970s they were followed by several hundreds related to the start of the conflicts between the Catholic clergy and Tedjabuana's successor Djatikusumah.

Tedjabuana died 5 March 1978 in Cirebon, still a Catholic, at the age of 82 years. He was succeeded by his son Djatikusumah who from 1974 on used to stay in the palace-sanctuary of the movement in the mountain village of Cigugur. The Catholic priests, warm followers of the strategy of inculturation, had not built a new church for the new converts, but mass and religious ceremonies still took place in the great hall of the palace-cum-sanctuary of the descendent of Madrais. During the Catholic mass the major role was for the priest while Prince Djatikusumah, seated on a grand throne, could only watch the ceremony. Also in giving instructions he was no longer the leader of the ADS but this role was clearly taken over by the clergy.

This was also the period of the beginning of development aid and the Catholic priests could start many projects in the field of cattle breeding, vegetable growing, irrigation, all sponsored by foreign aid. This also meant that Tedjabuana's and later Djatikusumah's role became rather marginal. At Christmas 1978 Djatikusumah took the initiative to organise an ecumenical celebration of Christmas, giving a rather important role to the Protestants. In December 1980 Djatikusumah began a process of re-establishing the

independent movement and turned away from Catholicism. The Catholics then started building a grand church of their own. Pangeran Djatikusumah, in early 1981, declared himself no longer a Catholic and founded a new organisation *Paguyuban Adat Cara Karuhun Urang* (PACKU, Organisation for the Restoration of Customary Tradition). On 11 July 1981 he applied for membership of the union of free spiritual organisations (*Badan Koordinasi Musijawarah Antar Penghayat Kepercayaan terhadap Tuhan Y.M.E. Indonesia*) of Golkar, the powerful governmental political party, and this was accepted on 17 July 1981.

Djatikusumah hoped that a majority of his former followers who had turned Catholic would follow this move and become members of PACKU. This did not happen. Only about one out of four became followers of PACKU, most of them government officials (because of the official recognition of PACKU by a Golkar body). Also Djatikusumah's brothers Pangwedat and Sadewa, living in Cirebon, remained loyal to Catholicism. The Catholic priests decided not to seek a confrontation; PACKU would be accepted as a cultural organisation. Especially for those Catholics who wanted to join the festive days of *Seren Taun* ('Thanksgiving Day') it would not be considered as an act of apostasy if they did so. The procedure of moving out from Catholicism was executed in a surprisingly open and bureaucratic way. An act of 'apostasy' or declaration of leaving Catholicism was signed and handed over to the parish priest of Cigugur who received some 500 formulas.

There was some unexpected action from another side: on 3 August 1982 the Supreme Court of the Province of West Java declared that PACKU was illegal, because it was seen only as the revival of the *Agama Djawa Sunda* that was banned in 1964. It behaved like a religion and not like a socio-cultural movement and therefore could not be accepted within the Indonesian system of law.

The court decision was only one in a very long series of judicial cases that has accompanied the existence of Madrais from 1900 until today. But until now this decision has never been revoked. It had serious implications for the various parties involved. For the Madrais leader himself, Djatikusumah, it suggested that the only way out would be a concentration on his movement as a socio-cultural movement, not a full religion. On 14 December 1976 the central building, that was also the dwelling place for Djatikusumah and some 20 members of his family, the Paseban Tri Panca Tunggal, was recognised as a cultural heritage (*cagar budaya*). In the later 1980s and 1990s the ceremony of *Seren Taun* became the central ritual for the movement. The national ministry of tourism even started promoting the festival for local and international tourists as a meeting where they could see "the life of society in Cigugur, West Java, who inherited their ancestors' religious cultural values." A booklet published by the Ministry of Education and Culture tried to promote a visit

to the ceremonies, just as national tourism offices promoted visits to burials in Bali and Toraja. It emphasized the open character of the ceremonies. The English text stated: "The *Seren Taun* ceremony is not owned by one specific group but is a multi-racial and multi-religious ceremony. Every person can take part in it." The Indonesian text of this English version even more expressly stated that, "it is not the possession of only one group, but all become one in it: Muslims, Protestants, Catholics, Hindus, Buddhists and adherents of free religious movements (*Penghayat*)."²⁴ This is much more liberal than we have seen in the history of the movement, but we must judge this against the language of propaganda as used by the ministry of tourism.

Although the adaptation of the Catholic liturgy for ex-Madrais members continued in places like Cigugur (with masses in Sundanese, gamelan music orchestra on Sundays and choir singing in Sundanese style), the diocese of Bandung decided in 1989 to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the conversion of the first group of Madrais adherents with a remarkable project. In nearby Cisantana, where also a concentration of ex-ADS Catholics was found, a dry and infertile hill was bought, where a large Way of the Cross with fourteen attractive chapels was built. On top of the hill a Lourdes grotto and a modest church with a dormitory for pilgrims was built. This compound of the 1990s can be considered as another move in the drastic religious changes in this region: it was a turn from adaptation to Sundanese culture towards a European-style emphasis on devotion to Mary, with great imitation-Lourdes statues of Mary, and also fitting in with the new mode of charismatic Catholicism of that time. We have given somewhat more attention to the religious quest of the Madrais people, because it has been until now the only mass conversion movement in West Java, although in respect to the overwhelming number of Muslims it still remains a small number of some 6,000 baptised.²⁴

The turbulent decade for West Java: 1995–2005

Like other regions of Indonesia, West Java also felt the increased tensions between the religious communities that accompanied the fall of Soeharto in May 1998. After the first great series of attacks on churches in East Java: Surabaya (9 June 1996) and Situbondo (10 October 1996), there was a chain of violence in the town of Tasikmalaya in the heart of the mountainous region of Priangan, West Java. Tasikmalaya is, like Situbondo in East Java, an area with many orthodox Islamic boarding schools or *pesantren*. The series of aggressions started with a problem within a *pesantren*. A pupil of one of the

²⁴ See Steenbrink 2005 for more details and references to the changes in the Madrais Movement.

Islamic schools, a son of a policeman, complained that his teacher beat him. The latter was summoned to the police station together with some of his senior students. Without clear reason, there were rumours that this teacher had been beaten and died in the police station. Within a short time a mob was gathered who burnt down the police station. The following day they came together again and then continued their destructive action into factories, hotels, banks, shops and a number of Christian schools and churches. This happened not only in the town of Tasikmalaya, but someone organised trucks that brought youngsters as far as Cileunyi and Kalaksanan, at a distance of some 70 km, to continue their violence. Apparently an action against the police, known for their corruption and greed, and for taking money also from the poor, was turned into an anti-Chinese and anti-Christian action. Moderate Muslim leaders openly accused hard-line Muslim Adi Sasono of involvement in the riots; he expressed his intention that the action was planned to throw the blame upon the moderate Muslims. Among those who went around plundering and burning there were many from outside the region and among those who were finally convicted only two or three pupils of the traditional Islamic schools of the district were found. Four people, mostly Chinese shopkeepers, were killed; the damage was enormous and in total 15 church buildings were destroyed by fire or otherwise (out of the 18 in the whole district of 1.5 million people). There were only 3,800 Christians in the Tasikmalaya district who nevertheless were among the richest of the population (mostly Chinese shopkeepers and entrepreneurs) and the Christian buildings were very visible and prominent in the landscape of this dominant Muslim region. Of the churches two were of the GKP, the Sundanese Church, two were Catholic, one from the Batak Church HKBP, while most others were Pentecostal and/or Evangelical. This also mirrors the variety of Christians in the region.

A quite different but similarly clear incident that shows some features of Christianity in West-Java is the so-called Sibuea affair, 1999–2003 in the great city of Bandung. One Mangapin Sibuea, a Batak, born about 1940, had been educated at the Bible School of the Pentecostal Church in Pematangsiantar (1965) and also at a similar school in Beji, Batu (East Java). In the 1980s he had been for some time a minister in a Pentecostal church in Philadelphia, but he returned to Indonesia in the late 1990s. His prophecies had started on 28 February 1999 when he heard God's Spirit speaking to him in English, ordering him to repeat the prayer, "O God, come into my heart, answer me!" Sibuea called himself the Apostle Paul II, had gathered twelve apostles around him, and finally collected more than 200 faithful, who had sold everything in order to join him on his way to heaven from the great turbulations of doomsday. He had predicted the end of the world for 10 November 2003, at 3 pm. He spread his message through pamphlets, but also through a VCD, a disk with images and sound of his sermons. Many of his followers came from the

Moluccas, some from Papua, others from Timor and from Batakland. The sect had been banned already by the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs as a heresy and wrong doctrine (*aliran sesat*) in 2000, but only after the failure of 10 November 2003 he was taken to prison. On 6 April 2004 he was sentenced to two years' imprisonment.

This small affair shows us some quite peculiar aspects of the more recent developments of Christianity in Indonesia. In the larger towns it is a floating population, migrants from many different parts of the country, who seek comfort and social contact in the vibrant Pentecostal churches. They are monitored by the Indonesian government, but can develop in relative freedom until something strange happens, as in this case where people had sold their possessions, and had started a ten-day fast before the expected event of their being raised to heaven.

In the Catholic Church we can see a comparable development in the move of the most famous Carmelite priest Dr. Yohannes Indrakusuma to West Java. Indrakusuma, born in 1938 in East Java, studied theology in Malang and obtained a Ph.D. in Indonesian studies in Paris with a dissertation on the mystical teachings of the new Pangestu sect (1973). In 1988 he moved to Cikanyere, a small village 100 km from Jakarta in a mountain resort, a recreation area for people from Jakarta. A grand church was built and a retreat centre with a capacity of 252 beds, besides a small convent for true Carmelite monks who lead a contemplative life. Indrakusuma teaches a combination of traditional Carmelite spirituality with modern charismatic renewal. The emphasis is on inner healing, but some spectacular physical healings are said to have taken place and certainly part of the great crowds that visit this Catholic place are hoping for miracles. The place is located amidst a traditional Muslim population but until now has caused no trouble in a more and more open Sundanese society (see further in chapter eighteen).

Protestants in Central Java: the heartland of Javanese culture

By Central Java is understood here the area which is covered by the present province of *Jawa Tengah* (Central Java), together with the territory of the *Daerah Istimewa Yogyakarta* (the special region of Yogyakarta). This last region has retained a special status because of the active role of the Sultan of Yogyakarta in the fight for independence. Therefore the Catholic bishop for this region has his seat not in Yogyakarta but in Semarang, with another diocese ruled from Purwokerto. Although this is a very densely populated region (34.3 million in 2000 on 36,600 sq. km or nearly 1000 per sq. km) it is less industrialised than other areas of Java. Several mountains, often around 3,000 meters high, dominate the landscape. Mount *Merapi* near Yogyakarta is

a still active volcano. In general the soil is very fertile; one-third of the land is used as rice fields. Sugar cane, too, has been an important crop as well as tobacco. Already in the nineteenth century coffee plantations had been developed on the slopes of the mountains and in some areas indigo and rubber were or are important.

The history of Central Java is rich and complex. In many respects it is connected closely to the history of other parts of Indonesia, especially East Java and Madura. Both in Central Java and in East Java the Javanese language is the vernacular. Until the sixteenth century this whole area was coloured by Hindu and Buddhist cultures and religions. In the neighbourhood of Yogyakarta the famous *candi* (temple) Borobudur (Buddhist) and *candi* Prambanan (Hindu) remain today as impressive witnesses to those centuries. Besides these, many other, smaller, *candi* could be mentioned here, as well as other old buildings in the Old Javanese architectural style (including mosques as the still extant *menara Kudus*, minaret in Kudus, built in 1549). The well-known Hindu epics of *Ramayana* and *Bharatayuda* continue to play an important role in folk culture, as in the different *wayang* stories (shadow plays), in names given to children and businesses, and in literature and art (even within churches!).

Around 1527 the old Hindu-Buddhist kingdom of Majapahit collapsed.²⁵ Its dominant role was taken over by the Islamic state of the Sultan of Demak, then an important harbour on the central north coast of Java. Demak succeeded in conquering other ports on the north coast, both in East and West Java. Several cities of the north coast became influential centres of Islam, which according to later traditions was spread through the witnesses of nine *wali* (*walisongo*, nine saints of Islam in Java). The tombs of several of them are holy places of pilgrimage. One city on the north coast even got an Arabic name: Kudus (*Al Quds*, holy city, in the Islam tradition: Jerusalem). As a result of this strong influence, the north coast of Java up to the present time carries a *santri* type of Islamic influence. Many *pesantren* (Islamic religious schools) are to be found here.

From the sixteenth century onward the respective rulers in the southern part of Central Java were constantly squeezed between several political and religious powers. On the one hand, the above-mentioned Islamic sultanates were competitors. Yet besides these powers, the Dutch VOC became more and more influential. Though during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the kingdom of Mataram continued to be the most powerful, and sometimes even succeeded in closing down all the seaports of the north coast, nevertheless it constantly had to struggle for its life, often by bloody wars. Mataram covered the area that later was named *Vorstenlanden* (principalities) by the Dutch, that is the cities of Surakarta and Yogyakarta where the rulers built their *kraton*

²⁵ De Graaf 1949:61–79; Ricklefs 2001:41–44.

(fortified palaces). However, these Mataram rulers from time to time also fought each other.²⁶ No less than three royal families were competing with each other. Nevertheless, from 1757 until 1825 Central Java experienced peace; the royal families succeeded in creating harmony by intermarriage and the VOC was weakened militarily. This period became a creative era that established in the end the excellent spiritual role the sultanates of Yogyakarta and Surakarta fulfil up to the present time, based upon a Hindu-Islamic tradition. In these parts of Central Java Islam has a strong *Sufi* character. Most important became the ethical wisdom literature which was produced at the courts; Pakubuwono IV (c. 1769–1820) is said to be the author of the famous book *Wulang Reh* ('Teachings on Conduct or Rule'); his son, the later Pakubuwono V instigated the compilation of *Serat Centhini* ('The Book of Centhini') which belongs to the so-called *Suluk* literature, that is, Javanese literature concerning religious subjects, often in the Islamic mystical tradition.²⁷ This ruler also stimulated other authors such as the famous Raden Ngabehi Ronggowarsito (1802–1873) who among other works wrote the *Serat Wirid* ('The Book of Sacred Teaching'). Later, this type of literature became the object of research of a number of Dutch and Indonesian scholars, missionaries and theologians, like the Jesuit priest Piet Zoetmulder (a renowned authority on the relationship between pantheism and monism in this *Suluk* literature), Harun Hadiwijono (pastor, later professor of systematic theology in Yogyakarta), Soelarso Sopater (professor at the Sekolah Tinggi Teologi Jakarta and past chairperson of the PGI), the missionaries J.H. Bavinck and A. Wind, and others.

Neither Yogyakarta nor Surakarta, however, was in an economical sense the most important city. The VOC at first had had its regional headquarters in the harbour town of Jepara, but from 1708 onward Semarang became the main trading post for Central and East Java. It still is an important and industrious city, with rather many Chinese inhabitants, who propagated trade and banking. A famous example became the Oei Tiong Ham conglomerate, named after a Semarang-born and *peranakan* oriented second generation Chinese, Oei Tiong Ham (1865–1924). This conglomerate which spread out over the entire Indonesia and Singapore region, owned banks and sugar factories; Oei Tiong Ham himself was known as the 'sugar king' (*raja gula*).²⁸

After the brief British interregnum (1811–1816) the Dutch managed to expand their direct military and economic influence, no longer by means of the (private) VOC that had ceased to exist in 1799, but as a colonial power. Once more the Central-Javanese rulers waged an unsuccessful war against the Dutch, the so-called Diponegoro war (1825–1830). After that, they ceased to

²⁶ Ricklefs 2001:126–139.

²⁷ Harun Hadiwijono 1967:12.

²⁸ Leo Suryadinata 1997:28–31.

have any political and military strength. However, to the present day they continue to function as important spiritual powers. Hendrik Kraemer, who lived in Yogyakarta between 1922 and 1928 as ‘pathfinder’ of the NBG, correctly described Central Java and especially the royal courts as “the last historical place where Java’s independent political power and therefore its authoritative cultural property can be observed.”²⁹

During the nineteenth century Central and East Java suffered several times from drought and other natural disasters such as the eruption of volcanos (Merapi, Kelud). Also, the compulsory delivery of certain agricultural products to the colonial power had a negative economic influence. All this led to a temporary decrease in the population in certain areas and to migration to other parts of Java. The consequent feelings of mental and spiritual uncertainty became the breeding ground for several social and religious protest movements³⁰ and, in a way, for the spread of Christianity.

In the *Vorstenlanden* the struggle for national emancipation started when in 1908 the medical doctor Wahidin Soedirohoesodo and others founded *Boedi Utomo* (The Elevated Endeavour) as a cultural organisation of Javanese students, *priyayi* (Javanese nobility) and other intellectuals, followed in 1911 by the founding of the political movement *Sarekat Dagang Islam* (Islamic Trade Association), later renamed *Sarekat Islam*. The attitude of the Reformed missionaries towards these movements varied from benevolence to straight-out rejection.

After Indonesia’s independence in 1945, the role of the sultans of Surakarta and Yogyakarta became less conspicuous, though Sultan Hamengkubuwono IX (r. 1939–1988) especially played an important role in the politics of the republic, as a cabinet minister under Soekarno and later under Soeharto, and even (1973–1978) as vice-president of the republic. At the end of the twentieth century his heir, Hamengkubuwono X, was involved in creating the conditions for the so-called *Reformasi* after Soeharto’s fall.

Finally we have to mention here, that in 1965–1966 the bloody clash between Soeharto’s army and certain Islamic groups on one hand, and members and sympathisers of the Communist Party (PKI) and nationalists on the other hand, did cost tens of thousands of lives in Central Java and left deep scars which are felt till today. Both in East Java and in Central Java thousands of victims and accused people came to the Christian churches to seek refuge and comfort. During the economic and political uncertainty of the final years of Soekarno’s reign and during the first decade of Soeharto’s regime the churches grew rather spectacularly.

²⁹ Kraemer 1928:11.

³⁰ Drewes 1925; Sartono Kartodirdjo 1973.

Earliest Christianity in Central Java

The earliest Christian presence in Central Java can be dated before 1753. In that year the Protestant Church in Semarang got its first Dutch pastor³¹ (also chapter five). However, before that year a church building already existed. In 1794 the still existing, conspicuous 'Koepelkerk' (*Gereja Blenduk* dome) was dedicated.³² We do not get the impression that it was a lively community; it existed mainly of Dutch colonials. Of course, the pastors belonged among the dignitaries of the city and some of them succeeded in becoming quite wealthy.³³

No wonder then, that the first missionary who worked here, Gottlob Brückner (1783–1857), often complained about the lukewarm Protestant congregation and about the extreme indifference he met in evangelising. In a letter to the Baptist Missionary Society he complained that he could hardly find three or four God-fearing Dutch individuals in this town!³⁴ Brückner had arrived in Batavia in 1814, together with the missionaries Johann Christoph Supper and Joseph Kam, on behalf of the NZG and the London Missionary Society. Influenced by the Baptist missionary W. Thomas Trowt, who had arrived in Semarang a little earlier and died soon afterwards, he was (re-) baptised in 1816 and then became a Baptist missionary. A modest and pious man, Brückner was the first to translate the Bible into the Javanese of the north coast.³⁵ However, he did not succeed in gathering a congregation around him and several times the BMS expressed its disappointment about his lack of visible results. After his retirement and death, the BMS decided to discontinue the work in Semarang. It would take almost a century before Baptists restarted missionary work in Central Java; this time they came from the USA.

In this paragraph we also have to mention the efforts of the *Nederlandsch Bijbelgenootschap* (NBG) that commissioned J.F.C. Gericke (1799–1857), like Brückner a pupil of J. Jänicke in Berlin, to translate the Bible into the formal Javanese of the courts of Yogyakarta and Surakarta. From 1827 till 1857 he lived and worked in Surakarta.³⁶ It was not his task to work as a missionary and we do not hear of any Christian community there as a side effect of his work.

Finally, in Semarang, Jepara and Tegal small Armenian centres were found. The Armenian colony in the Dutch Indies, especially in Batavia, goes back as

³¹ Coolsma 1901:13.

³² Van Troostenburg de Bruyn 1884:175.

³³ Van Boetzelaer 1947:169.

³⁴ Letter to BMS December 8, 1843; Archives BMS.

³⁵ Swellengrebel 1974:39–49; Coolsma 1901:242.

³⁶ Swellengrebel 1974:49–84.

far as 1656, and probably it had already spread into Central Java at the end of the eighteenth century. Many Armenians in Java were well-to-do merchants.³⁷ Their roots were in New Julfa, Isfahan (Persia). Also, they remained in touch with their Holy See in Edchmiadzin, and with compatriots in India (Bengal) and Singapore.

So, until around 1850, we only find a few Dutch-speaking congregations in the major cities and towns of Central Java, served by only one or two Reformed pastors.³⁸

Lay evangelists in Central Java during the second half of the nineteenth century

After 1850 drastic changes took place and the map of missionary activities becomes complicated from that time on. First of all, we have to point to private evangelising efforts by three women, Elisabeth Jacoba Le Jolle-de Wildt (1824–1906), Johanna Christina van Oostrom-Philips (1815–1877) and her sister-in-law, Christina Petronella Philips-Stevens (1825–1876).³⁹ Mrs. Le Jolle taught and proclaimed the gospel to the Javanese labourers of the coffee plantation near Salatiga (30 km to the South of Semarang) that was administered by her husband. On behalf of this work she asked and received help from missionary J.E. Jellesma who sent a Javanese assistant (‘helper’ in the Dutch language missionary literature), Petrus Sedoyo. In 1855 this led to baptisms by missionary W. Hoezoo (see below) and later to a congregation of around fifty souls in a new settlement Nyemoh near Salatiga. More to the south, in Banyumas, Mrs. Van Oostrom owned a batik industry; several of her female workers and others became Christians because she held church services with them. Since she had contacts with Hoezoo, the first group of nine persons was baptised by him in Semarang in 1858. Hoezoo himself did not receive permission from the government to work in Banyumas, but dispatched a Javanese co-worker, Yusup, to assist her. Near Kebumen and later in Purworejo, Mrs. Philips, whose husband was involved in the indigo cultivation, acted in a similar way. She received help from Abisai, Tarub, Sadrach and others, which led to the baptism of no less than 1,000 Javanese persons between 1860 and 1870. The pastor of the Protestant Church in Purworejo administered baptism to these Javanese Christians.

The most interesting aspect of the efforts of these women is the fact of their openness to Javanese Christians and “seekers of truth” and their willingness

³⁷ Paulus [1935]:7–13.

³⁸ Van Boetzelaer 1947:361.

³⁹ Partonadi 1988:44–46; Reenders 2001:12–13; Sumartana 1993:14–20; Van den End & Weitjens 2002:234–236.

to ask their help in reaching out to the indigenous population. Whereas many missionaries, as we will see below, felt bound to their Dutch interpretation of gospel, creeds and catechisms, and therefore often looked down upon Javanese Christians because of their so-called syncretism, these three women treated the new converts as their equals. Therefore, their attitude to and meetings with persons like Ibrahim Tunggul Wulung, Sadrach Suropranoto and others gave to the latter the feeling that their ways of contextualising the gospel as *ilmu* (knowledge, wisdom), were legitimate and appropriate. Sumartana even states, “The appearance of the second generation of missionaries, such as Jellesma and the mission bodies on Java, can be described as the sign of the emergence of a process of ‘purification’ against the accommodative tendency that smacked of syncretism.”⁴⁰

The next phase in Central Java: mission through full time missionaries

In connection with the above mentioned three women we also have to mention again the name of F.L. Anthing, who worked as a judge in Semarang and later in Batavia. To many Javanese Christians and seekers of truth he lent a ready ear; several of them became evangelists themselves. It seems that an informal network existed of such evangelists who with unflagging zeal travelled over Java from West to East and back. They cooperated with the above-mentioned Dutch Christians (who themselves were partly offspring from mixed marriages and therefore well acquainted with Javanese society), sometimes as their co-workers, sometimes as independent evangelists and congregational leaders. Research into their role still is a desideratum. The names and concepts of Asa Kiman, Ibrahim Tunggul Wulung and Sadrach Suropranoto will recur below and also in chapter sixteen.

The work being done by these lay evangelists has laid a foundation for evangelisation during the next decades, when missionaries from Dutch and German mission organisations started to work in Central Java. No less than four organisations and their workers need to be mentioned here.

Nederlandsch Zendeling Genootschap: NZG. From 1849 until his death in 1896 the NZG commissioned missionary W. Hoesoo to work in Semarang. Together with his Javanese co-workers, such as Asa Kiman, he succeeded in founding a congregation there that at its peak in 1875 counted 150 members. Hoesoo, who wrote several tracts and reports in the *Mededeelingen* and *Maandberigten van het Nederlandsch Zendelinggenootschap*, was also responsible for missionary outposts to the east of Semarang (Kayu Apu near Kudus,

⁴⁰ Sumartana 1993:36.

where Filemon became a trustworthy leader of the small congregation, Pati and even Rembang) and—as we saw above—to the south, near Salatiga. All in all Hoozoo's work area counted some 250 baptised persons around 1860. Unfortunately this number decreased in later times; besides, the NZG apparently paid more attention to the work in East Java and it had no intention or means to extend the work in Central Java. Hoozoo even had to hand over part of his work to missionaries of other organisations and after his death this missionfield was divided between the *Doopsgezinde Zendings Vereeniging* and the *Salatiga Mission*.⁴¹

Doopsgezinde Zendings Vereeniging: NZV. Soon after W. Hoozoo had arrived, the Mennonite Missionary Association (DZV), which had been founded in 1847, was allowed to open a missionfield of its own in the residency of Jepara. Its first missionary, Pieter Jansz (1820–1904), was a capable and passionate, though not easy going or docile man. Jansz started his work in the neighbourhood of Jepara as the private schoolteacher of a wealthy Armenian owner of sugar factories, Margar Soekiazian (Soekias). However, soon the characters and religious insights of Jansz and Soekias collided. From then on Jansz worked as a fulltime missionary and though his work was not very successful in the beginning, he founded several small rural congregations in the area around the mountain Muria. Jansz, too, asked and received assistants who had been educated by Jellesma in Mojowarno, East Java. The first of them was Sem Sampir.⁴²

Jansz became well known for a number of reasons. First of all he was an able lexicographer who subsequently translated the Bible into the Javanese language on behalf of the British and Foreign Bible Society. As Gericke, whom he was acquainted with, had done, Jansz too used Javanese specialists to assist him. In a photograph taken around 1887, we see Jansz (retired by then as a missionary) at work in Surakarta together with Raden Ngabehi Djojo Soepono. Unfortunately we know nothing about this literate assistant. Secondly, Jansz wrote an interesting treatise about land reclamation and evangelisation. In fact, he followed previous ideas by Coolen in East Java and Mrs. Le Jolle in the Christian settlement Nyemoh near Salatiga, which also had been put into practice by Jansz's successful opponent Tunggul Wulung. However, Jansz expanded these ideas to bring Christians together in separate villages, as some kind of missionary strategy. After he retired from active service, his ideas were practised in three settlements near Jepara. The credit side of this approach has been that the number of Christians indeed grew; unfortunately, both their

⁴¹ Coolsma 1901:242–250.

⁴² Jansma 1968:15–52; Hoekema 1997:9–24; Hoekema 2001:25–74.

isolation from a wider society and the fact that the missionaries functioned both as spiritual leaders and as landlords, had a negative impact on the later independence of these congregations.⁴³

Belonging to a church which out of theological conviction and tradition kept a distance from the government, Jansz did not evade a fundamental conflict with the colonial government when he was required, in 1859, to stop his missionary work because of a rather harmless treatise *De tijd is vervuld* (The time is fulfilled). This treatise was an explanation of Mark 1:15 with a subsequent exhortation to immediate repentance. The silly misinterpretation of this text by the assistant resident in Pati caused a grotesque conflict that even led to questions in the Dutch parliament. Jansz did not yield and from now on continued his work even though his government permission to evangelise had been withdrawn and the gentlemen of his own mission board far away in Amsterdam (who wanted to maintain good relations with the government) felt not amused.

Finally we have to mention his conflict with Ibrahim Tunggul Wulung (ca. 1800–1885), an itinerant guru, whom he first met in 1854.⁴⁴ Tunggul Wulung was a hermit who was said to have a secret mystical knowledge. He sought contact with persons like Jellesma in Mojowarno (who baptised him), Anthing in Semarang, Jansz and others, and finally settled down with a large group of followers in Bondo, an unfarmed area near the coast of the Java Sea, which was considered to be *angker* (taboo), only a few kilometres away from Jansz' congregations. Cooperation between these two men proved to be impossible, though time and again Tunggul Wulung tried to seek contact. Here Jansz' European conception of the gospel became a serious impediment. He was turning his followers into *Kristen Londo* ("Dutch Christians") whereas Tunggul Wulung's followers became known as *Kristen Jawa* ("Javanese Christians"). Their conflict became a model of similar conflicts between western missionaries and indigenous evangelists in Java during the latter part of the nineteenth century and the first decades of the twentieth century. As to numbers of adherents, it was like the competition between Saul and David. Jansz only had a few hundred followers, Tunggul Wulung at least a thousand. Unfortunately he did not leave any written documents. His teaching may have been a blend of Islamic, Buddhist and Christian truths, which connected with his charismatic, almost messianic appearance that had a great appeal to his followers. After his death his congregations successively became part of the (Mennonite) mission church. However, until today his name is mentioned with deep

⁴³ Swellengrebel 1974:84–96; Hoekema 2001:47–54.

⁴⁴ Hoekema 1979; Yoder 1981.

reverence and his tomb in Bondo almost has become a place of pilgrimage not unlike the graves of the Islamic *wali songo* (the above mentioned ‘nine saints’ who brought Islam to Java).

Nederlandsche Gereformeerde Zendings Vereeniging: NGZV. In the third place we have to mention here the work of the NGZV, 1859, founded by the Amsterdam pastor of the Scottish Free Church, Rev. Carl Schwartz.⁴⁵ Its first missionary, A. Vermeer, started his work in 1861 in Tegal, on the northwest coast of Central Java. Later contact was made with Mrs. Van Oostrom and Mrs. Philips. Through these contacts the NGZV found new mission-fields in the districts of Bagelen, Banyumas and Kedu, to the west and northwest of Yogyakarta. In the 1880s, permission was given by the Sultan of Yogyakarta, Paku Buwono IX, and by Prince Paku Alam V to establish congregations in Yogyakarta itself, where the Dutch colonial government had no direct authority. However, by then the gospel had come to Yogyakarta through a photographer at the court of the Sultan, Kassian Cephas, who belonged to the circle of Mrs. Philips and had been baptised in 1860 in Purworejo. Another Christian from Yogyakarta to be baptised was a relative of the Paku Alam serving in his army, Raden Mas Suryahasmara Natataroena. Natataroena’s house functioned as a meeting place for the steadily growing congregation till a meetingplace was found at the newly built Christian hospital in 1900. Missionary Jacob Wilhelm baptised Natataroena in 1887 in Purworejo; permission to administer the sacraments in Yogyakarta itself was only given in 1891. Shortly after his baptism Natataroena had his child circumcised, which led to much discussion among the missionaries and in fact was a signal of disagreement as to the inculturation of the gospel.⁴⁶ Wilhelm, though mostly open to the Javanese culture, in this case sent a stern cable from Purworejo to Yogyakarta, saying, “Natataroena. Jogja. Christians should not circumcise their children. If they do so and break God’s law, it is inevitable they will be judged by God, Wilhelm.”⁴⁷

Rightly Partonadi mentions this circumcision in the context of Sadrach’s community. His name was mentioned above; as to his theological position we refer to chapter sixteen. Here we explain briefly the historical events concerning Sadrach. By all means he was the most influential independent Javanese Christian of his time. No wonder, several studies have been dedicated to his life and work.⁴⁸ Sadrach had been raised as a *santri*, student at Muslim schools. He became involved in the same network of seekers of truth to which Tunggul Wulung belonged, went to Anthing in Batavia (Jakarta) and was baptised

⁴⁵ Coolsma 1901:157–189; Reenders 2001:3–29.

⁴⁶ Partonadi 1988:197–202; Reenders 2001:189–191.

⁴⁷ Partonadi 1988:198; Reenders 2001:190.

⁴⁸ Guillot 1981 and Partonadi 1988.

there in 1867. For a time he became a follower of Tunggul Wulung in Bondo. Then he moved to Mrs. Philips-Stevens and helped her to expand her house community. Motivated by “self-confidence and a spirit of independence”⁴⁹ he founded his own community in Karangjasa, Bagelen in 1870. Till his death in 1924 this community of *wong Kristen mardika* (independent Christians) experienced much growth. Sadrach was charismatic, organised his congregations like a community around a mosque (he even called churches *mesjid*, mosque), and taught the Gospel as a new *ngelmu*, spiritual wisdom. He always tried to respect the missionaries and to maintain good relations with them. However, this cooperation with the Dutch missionaries and churches became more difficult. The mission and the *Indische Kerk* (the Dutch Protestant Church, which had strong ties with the colonial government) tried to control his movement which was seen as a threat, both because of its heterodox ideas and because of the number of Sadrach’s followers (around 3,000 in the early 1880s) whereas the total number of Christians belonging to the NGZV around 1890 was said to be almost 6,400.⁵⁰ Sadrach’s refusal to get his people vaccinated after a smallpox epidemic in 1882, based on a ‘fundamentalist’ reading of the Javanese translation of I Tim. 5:6–7 and II Cor. 6:3, triggered off a crisis. It was seen as insubordination and he was arrested for a couple of weeks. After that, Wilhelm was the only missionary communicating with Sadrach on the basis of mutual trust. On Old Year’s Eve 1882 Wilhelm wrote in his diary, “Silently I watched the turbulences in the field of mission; it did not befit me to judge. In my opinion justice was entirely on the side of the Christian communities and on the side of Sadrach.”⁵¹

Wilhelm continued to choose the side of Sadrach, but all the tensions around the movement caused his untimely death in 1892. Shortly after, in 1893, all relations with the NGZV were broken off. Sadrach looked for a new partner and found it in the Irvingite *Apostolische Kerk* in Batavia, where Anthing, too, had sought a refuge. Sadrach was appointed an apostle in that church which added to the recognition of his leadership. He kept that position till his death.

Salatiga Mission. A fourth mission organisation, which started work in Central Java, is the *Salatiga Mission*. After Mrs. Le Jolle had repatriated to the Netherlands in 1857 she contacted the so-called *Ermelo Mission* that had been founded in 1850 after a spiritual revival in the Reformed congregation of this village in the Netherlands. In 1868 this mission sent missionary R. de Boer to continue the work in Nyemoh. Later the *Neukirchener Mission*

⁴⁹ Partonadi 1988:65.

⁵⁰ Coolsma 1901:181; it is not certain that his statistics are reliable.

⁵¹ Reenders 2001:27.

in Germany, founded in 1880 after a similar revival,⁵² joined this effort by sending a number of missionaries who succeeded in founding several communities in the whole residency of Semarang and also in the residency of Rembang. The early practice of the *Neukirchener Mission* was similar to that of later faith missions. All in all they counted over 900 baptised Christians at the end of the nineteenth century.⁵³

During the nineteenth century Christianity in Central Java grew due to the activities of at least four kinds of agents. First were the European lay evangelists like Mrs. Le Jolle and Mr. Anthing, who wanted to share the gospel with Javanese labourers and others. Second were the Javanese seekers for truth and some Javanese *guru Injil*, assistants of western missionaries. They showed great mobility, formed a well-informed network, and had the strongest appeal for the Javanese inhabitants. Some of these *guru injil* came from East Java. Third were the missionaries from Central and East Java. Though their sending organisations held different confessional views, on the mission field itself the missionaries cooperated closely shared printed material (tracts, hymns, bible translations) and organised conferences together (from 1880 on). Marriages between them or their children were not unusual. Hardly any of them, however, were able to free themselves from the normative character of their western views. Finally, the existing *Indische Kerk* expanded its presence in Central Java, especially in the southern parts. By baptising Javanese Christians on the request of lay evangelists like Mrs. Philips, it became interested in the religious developments of the local population. Sometimes there was a clear rivalry between the *Indische Kerk* and the missionaries, who often did not hold in high esteem the *predikanten* (ministers) of the *Indische Kerk* (most of whom stayed only a few years on the same post), and the ethics of the Dutch colonial population. At other moments both of them together showed a deep concern as to the path of the independent Javanese evangelists like Sadrach.

All in all the number of Christians grew substantially, though not spectacularly. Around 1909 there were probably about 5,000 Protestant Christians in Central Java, Sadrach's followers not included.⁵⁴ Economic and social factors certainly played an important role as to this growth. The missionaries opened informal schools for the Javanese population and gave medical treatment in as far they were able to provide this. In general the congregations were found in rural areas, sometimes in special Christian villages. As to the missionaries, contacts with Muslims always took place as part of their evangelising efforts. Their assistants and independent charismatic leaders like Sadrach showed a more open attitude towards Islam.

⁵² Van den End & Weitjens 2002:42–43.

⁵³ Coolsma 1901:189–205.

⁵⁴ *Hedendaagsche Zending* 1909:256–257; Reenders 2001:847 and 887.

New perspectives for Central Java at the turn of the century

In 1894 the NGZV handed over its work in Central Java to the *Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland* (GKN), except the work in the residency of Pekalongan that was transferred to the *Salatiga Mission*. The GKN had been founded in 1892 as a fusion between the congregations belonging to the so-called *Afscheiding* (Separation, 1834) and to the *Doleantie* (Anxiety, 1886) and can be seen as a confessional reaction against the liberal views prevailing within the *Nederlandse Hervormde Kerk* (NHK). Its church order was congregational with a higher authority in provincial synods. After a few years, the GKN mission work was well organised by local 'sending' churches and surrounding regional networks of congregations. According to the principles agreed upon by the important Synod meeting of Middelburg, 1896, they did not send (lower educated and not-ordained) missionaries to the missionfields but ordained missionary ministers, alongside teachers and medical doctors.⁵⁵ This was one of the factors in the renewal of the mission work in Central Java.

A second, external factor in this renewal and reorientation process has been the so-called 'ethical policy' of the Dutch colonial government at the beginning of the twentieth century. It led to a more positive attitude towards the work of the missions, and thus to permission to start work in the *Vorstenlanden*, as well as to more generous subsidies for educational and medical work. Missionary work in Yogyakarta had been able to start in 1891, before this 'ethical policy' became the leading vision of the colonial government. At that time the town had 58,000 inhabitants; in 1930 there were 136,000 people.⁵⁶ Also permission was obtained to start missionary work in Surakarta (1910).⁵⁷ As to the opening of the latter mission field, missionary H.A. van Andel relates a revealing statement of the Soesoehoenan of Surakarta, who, when asked to give permission to the Christian mission to establish a mission post in his city, answered:

I have no objection against Christianity; in fact, several members of my family are Christians. However, it is contrary to my religion to give a formal permit. Let the governor general send them; I will show no resistance at all. However, as head of the Islamic religion I cannot give a permit; that would be contrary to my faith.⁵⁸

Governor General, A.W.F. Idenburg, who as a representative of the 'ethical policy' and as a devout Christian was very sympathetic toward the work of the *Gereformeerde* (GKN) mission, then gave the requested permit! In both cities, Surakarta and Yogyakarta, medical work started first, but quickly the

⁵⁵ Reenders 2001:29–44, 236–249.

⁵⁶ Reenders 2001:46.

⁵⁷ Reenders 2001:47, 235, 468.

⁵⁸ Reenders 2001:Document 158, 507–509. See below how the Jesuit Driessche obtained a similar rather vague permit to baptise Javanese from the Sultan of Yogyakarta in 1914.

urban congregations started to grow with schools and a teachers' seminary. In fact, the mission of the GKN was the first to emphasize the necessity to work in urban settings.

At the edge of Christianity, theosophy arose. It had a limited support; its adherents were to be found among the more educated people in urban areas (including at the feudal courts) and its ideas did fit in well with the spiritual thinking of *priayi* and (Indo-) Europeans. During several decades it exerted a certain influence, and time and again missionaries warned against it.⁵⁹

Of a totally different nature was the *Bala Keselamatan* or Salvation Army.⁶⁰ In 1894 the first Salvation Army missionaries arrived from the Netherlands. One of the first things they did was to pay a fraternal visit to Sadrach in Karangjoso!⁶¹ From 1895 till 1913 Semarang served as its headquarters; then the main office of the Salvation Army moved to Bandung. Nevertheless, the social, medical and evangelising work in Central Java continued, and in the early years the Salvation Army was not only active in Semarang but also in places like Magelang, Rembang, Pati, and Kudus. Following the example of the Christian settlement Margorejo in the Muria area, in 1902 the Salvation Army founded a colony for victims of serious floods on the north coast, and of devastating eruptions of Mount Merapi and Mount Kelud, who had fled to Semarang. Several hundreds of people were gathered there. 'Salib Putih' (White Cross), near Salatiga, later was to continue as an independent Christian project on behalf of homeless people and beggars. After World War II it came under the auspices of the GKJ.⁶² In 1915 the Salvation Army also founded a still existing ophthalmology hospital in Semarang; in addition, the *Bala Keselamatan* got involved in a wide range of social activities. Though very soon the Salvation Army worked in many provinces of Indonesia, Central Java remained an important part. In the terminology used by the Salvation Army, it was a *division* with a commander of its own. The officers of this international church came from abroad (mainly Netherlands and Australia), but very soon also from Indonesia itself. The *prajurit* (soldiers) were "recruited," of course, from the local population. In the beginning some missionaries regarded the work of the Salvation Army with suspicion, since it started its work in areas where other missions were active already.⁶³ Others, however, like Pieter Jansz (whose daughter Marie joined the *Bala Keselamatan*) were friendly and cooperative. In a similar way some missionaries were hesitant as to the work of Johannes van der Steur (*Pa van der Steur*) among soldiers near Magelang. Van

⁵⁹ Reenders 2001:417–421.

⁶⁰ *Hedendaagsche Zending* 1909:211–217; Brouwer 1994.

⁶¹ Brouwer 1994:14.

⁶² Siswopranoto 1988.

⁶³ Reenders 2001:716.

der Steur became wellknown as the initiator of an educational institution and orphanage on behalf of thousands of children of mixed race, many of them born from relations between Dutch soldiers and Javanese women.

Finally, in the 1920s several Methodist Episcopal congregations were to be found in Banyumas, Semarang and elsewhere. American Methodists stimulated this work.⁶⁴

The Gereja-gereja Kristen Jawa: 1900–1940

In 1900 self-governance within the GKJ began, as the congregation in Purworejo received its own church board.⁶⁵ The work in Yogyakarta and especially Surakarta prospered. The intensive contacts with the upper class of *priyayi* led to a type of congregation that showed self-confidence and power. The first medical doctor (J.G. Scheurer, from 1893 on) and the first hospital, Petronella hospital (now Rumah Sakit Bethesda), were established in Yogyakarta. In 1904 the characteristic church building in Gondokusuman (Yogyakarta) was built and a year later the teachers' seminary (Keuchenius School) opened its gates, serving also as a training school for indigenous evangelists. From 1911 on this training school, headed by Rev. D. Bakker, functioned independently as a seminary; it developed into the present *Universitas Kristen Duta Wacana*. Within twenty years after it started its work, the mission of the GKN supervised a number of hospitals and well-equipped medical personnel. The latter were sent by churches in the Netherlands but comprised also educated Indonesians. Also a number of schools had been opened.

An important part of the missionary method was the publication and distribution of Christian literature in the Javanese and Malay languages. Probably no other mission has paid so much attention to the spread of written material. Periodicals like *Mardi Rahardjo* and *Penaboer* had a circulation of tens of thousands of copies.⁶⁶

Rev. Dr H.A. van Andel, during thirty years one of the most eloquent and authoritative missionaries on the field, together with his very talented wife, J.C. van Andel-Rutgers,⁶⁷ considered it his duty to open a dialogue with the *priyayi* in Surakarta; however, he also was of the opinion that work among this group was to be reserved to the European missionaries and could not be done by Javanese assistants. In fact, this was also the position of Hendrik Kraemer, though his Barthian theology differed greatly from Van Andel's.

⁶⁴ De Jong 1997:8–9.

⁶⁵ Hadi Purnomo & Sastrosupono 1986:39; Reenders 2001:309.

⁶⁶ De Jong 1997:12–13.

⁶⁷ See on her Van der Woerd 2004.

Nevertheless, the latter was unable to stop the changes of the time and Raden S. Nimpoeno, who originally was from Surakarta but lived in the Netherlands, was in 1922 the first one to contradict him at this point. Dutch ministers were unfit to approach these *priyayi* in a real sense; this could only be done by highly trained Javanese pastors, according to Nimpoeno.⁶⁸

After one candidate to become a Javanese minister unfortunately had died in 1909 before the decision to ordain him had been taken, finally in 1926 the first Javanese minister was ordained, Ponidi Sopater. Two years later he was followed by four others: Raden J. Wirjatenaja, Zacheus H. Soesena, Idris Nakam Siswawarsana and Soedarmadi. In February 1931 the first Javanese synod meeting (*Pasamoewan Gereformeerd Djawi-Tengah*) gathered in Kebumen, presided over by Soesena.⁶⁹ In the next year, this synod accepted a Presbyterian church order, in which the Heidelberg Catechism was accepted as the appropriate guideline to interpret the Bible. Besides, the *Confessio Belgica* and the decisions of the Synod of Dordrecht had to form a protective wall against syncretism and mysticism.⁷⁰

Though the Christians in the area of the mission of the GKJ lived in or near the place where Indonesian nationalism was born, not too many of them were politically active. Some Christians from Central Java joined *Mardi Pratjojo* ("Promoting faith"),⁷¹ founded at Pentecost 1913 in Mojowarno (East Java), as a Christian rival to the *Sarekat Islam*. However, "it appeared unable to stand out on the political stage as a Christian organisation which could participate in the world movements in the era of progress."⁷² After a brief success, *Mardi Pratjojo* run down due to disagreement about the question of whether it was to be a means of evangelisation or a tool of political emancipation. Lack of leadership and insufficient support from the missionaries were other reasons to discontinue. In 1918 it was succeeded by the *Perserikatan Kaum Kristen* (Union of Christians) in which, alongside East-Javanese leaders such as Jerobeam Mattheus, Raden Samuel Martohadmodjo and others from Central Java also became board members.⁷³ Martohadmodjo was a strong and independent member and elder of the Gondokusuman congregation in Yogyakarta, who once organised a *wayang kulit* (shadow play) performance in his garden, which led to irritation among native Christians and missionaries. He was also one of the editors of the progressive periodical for Christian teachers, *Taman Swara*.⁷⁴

⁶⁸ Reenders 2001:Document 208, 654–656.

⁶⁹ De Jong 1997:77–82, Document 1.

⁷⁰ Müller-Krüger 1968:209–213; Van den End 1986:69; De Jong 1997:92–101, Document.

⁷¹ Ngelow 1994:71; Sumartana 1993:124–131.

⁷² Sumartana 1993:127.

⁷³ Sumartana 1993:132–136.

⁷⁴ Reenders 2001:676–680, 575.

Finally we need to mention here the missionary attitude of the early GKJ. In 1899 the GKN Synod of Groningen had recognised the Dutch Reformed Kwitang Church in Batavia (Jakarta) as a sister church. When later Javanese members of the GKJ migrated to Batavia, they found a base of their own church there. More important yet was the responsibility the GKJ took as to the many migrants to Lampung, South Sumatra.⁷⁵ As early as 1905, the government had opened the possibility for Javanese farmers from East and Central Java to migrate to this area in South Sumatra. Among them were some Christians. As to the pastoral care of the latter, especially the name of Josafat Darmohatmodjo must be mentioned here. In 1933 he was ordained as pastor of Purworejo. In 1935 his congregation asked the GKJ synod to consider an own missionary task in Lampong and in the next two years Darmohatmodjo made exploratory visits to the Javanese living there. In 1938 the Synod meeting in Kebumen officially accepted the work among those people. From that moment on, the growing congregations in Lampong remained a part, later a classis (presbytery) of the GKJ until the Lampung church became independent in 1987 (see chapter thirteen).

The Protestant Churches in North Central Java: 1900–1940

In fact the other mission fields in Central Java followed the trends set by the mission of the GKN, though their main orientation was towards the young churches in East Java. Both the *Salatiga Mission* and the *DZV* worked mainly in rural areas, and were led by missionaries, not by academically trained ministers. Also, the stimulus provided by higher educated Javanese and by the nationalist movement was not clearly felt in North Central Java.

In Margorejo the *DZV* had also opened a teacher-training seminary, which functioned well between 1904 and 1925 when government subsidies started to dry up. It hardly provided trained evangelists, however. Although Jansz Sr. and N.D. Schuurmans had done praiseworthy work in the field of health care, professional medical work did not start till Dr H. Bervoets came over from East Java in 1908 and a hospital was built in Kelet in 1915; also, in the latter year an institution for leprosy patients, *Donorodjo* ('Royal Gift') was opened near Kelet. Several medical doctors from the Netherlands were to work in these institutions next to German-Russian nurses; also, the name of the Javanese midwife Justinah has to be mentioned here.⁷⁶

However, the missionaries did not keep pace with these professional developments. Several of them came from the ranks of German-Russian Mennonites;

⁷⁵ Hoogerwerf 1997; Reenders 2001:822–826; cf. chapter thirteen.

⁷⁶ Jensma 1968:76–88.

their context was a rural type of leadership. Therefore, the expansion of the mission work stagnated in the early twenties, a process that would last until 1926 when the first German missionary (Hermann Schmitt) brought rejuvenation. After his arrival, and thanks to an impressive plea by the missionary doctor K.P.C.A. Gramberg in a board meeting of the DZV, work in urban areas like Kudus (cigarette industry and printing mills), Jepara (woodcarving industry) and Pati (an administrative centre) started.⁷⁷ The ideas of Kraemer, as written down in his church visit reports that later were translated as *From Missionfield to Independent Church*, certainly played an important role as well. Kraemer was highly esteemed as an advisor to both the missionaries and the DZV board.

Due to the standstill mentioned above, the DZV mission field lagged behind as to independence of congregations and training and ordination of pastors. The rural congregation of Margorejo had been given rules and bylaws in 1924 (mainly taken over from Mojowarno in East Java) and its *guru Injil* Roebin Martoredjo was ordained as pastor, but in fact the missionaries continued to govern. A really revised *Pranata Pasamoewan* was accepted not until 1938 on behalf of the federation of congregations in the Muria district. Adult baptism was emphasised in it as well as the Apostles' Creed and also non-violence as an evangelical principle.⁷⁸

Here we recognise the hand of the missionaries. And not until 1937 were two young candidates sent to Bale Wijata, Malang and one (Soehadiweko Djododihardjo) to the *Hoogere Theologische School* (HTS) in Batavia to receive theological training.⁷⁹

The *Salatiga Mission* continued its work in the other districts of North Central Java under similar circumstances as the DZV. The first congregation here to become independent was Purwodadi (after 1926); in 1937 several other congregations followed. In the same year a *Parepatan Agung* ("Great Meeting") was convened, which can be considered the beginning of the independence of this church.⁸⁰

*Evangelisation among Chinese Indonesians*⁸¹

In 1856 the *Genootschap voor In- en Uitwendige Zending* in Batavia, in which Mr. Anthing played a role, had invited Gan Kwee from Amoy, China, to become an evangelist in Java. He stayed till 1873 and travelled all over Java. One of his

⁷⁷ Jensma 1968:94–96.

⁷⁸ Jensma 1968:111–112, Van den End 1986:72.

⁷⁹ Hoekema 2001:101–103.

⁸⁰ Sumarjo 1994.

⁸¹ For a more detailed account of Chinese Christians in Java see chapter nineteen.

early converts was Khouw Tek San in Purbalingga who from 1866 on became the initiator of mission among Chinese in Central Java.⁸² In 1867 in Purbalingga 68 Chinese were baptised as a result of his efforts.⁸³ Some Chinese joined Sadrach's movement; in fact, it was a Chinese evangelist in Magelang, Liem Cu Kim, who drew Sadrach's attention to the Apostolic Church in Batavia.⁸⁴ Also, in spite of the language difficulties, other Chinese joined incidentally one of the Javanese-speaking congregations of the European missionaries. As early as 1905 the Methodists started to pay attention to the Chinese minority in Central Java as well. This Methodist influence became felt especially in the field of church hymns.⁸⁵ Within the *Bala Keselamatan* Chinese *prajurit* ('soldiers') and officers were found from the beginning.

In the southern part of Central Java, the mission of the GKN became aware of the possibilities for evangelising among Chinese people as early as 1910.⁸⁶ At that time, in Yogyakarta around twenty Chinese Christians were counted—out of a total of some 5000. Several times H.A. van Anandel urged his sending church in the Netherlands to start a separate mission effort among the Chinese. The Javanese were Muslims; it was the Chinese heathen who needed a specific missionary approach. Javanese and Chinese belonged to different peoples, according to Van Anandel. Later he made a plea to accommodate them, for the time being, within the one, non-divided missionary church. In 1924 Van Anandel reported about the newly arriving *singkeh* Chinese in Yogyakarta and Magelang who understood neither Javanese nor Malay.⁸⁷ In 1928 Diong Hong Sik was appointed as an evangelist to them, in Magelang.

So, around 1920 in several separate places, Chinese speaking church services were held which led to a Chinese congregation in Solo. It started in 1922 and became independent in 1933. In 1936 another congregation was founded in Purworejo.⁸⁸ Not until 1940, when World War II had already begun, the first Chinese pastor was ordained, Andreas Kwee Tiang Hoe.⁸⁹

The 1930s and World War II

The number of Christian congregations and of Protestant Christians made a big leap between 1900 and 1940. In the latter year the number of baptised

⁸² Widyapranawa 1973:23–24; Hartono 1999:25, see also chapter nineteen.

⁸³ Widyapranawa 1973:23.

⁸⁴ Partonadi 1988:92.

⁸⁵ Widyapranawa 1973:230.

⁸⁶ Reenders 2001:459.

⁸⁷ Reenders 2001:518; 545–547; 698–701.

⁸⁸ De Jong 1997:182, 186–188; 202–204.

⁸⁹ De Jong 1997:265.

members of the mission of the GKN was estimated 1,700 by J.A.C. Rullmann;⁹⁰ for the (Mennonite) Muria area an estimation of 5,000 adults and children is given.⁹¹ Many congregations that had formed part of Sadrach's movement joined the mission of the GKN after 1933. Most missionaries did not have an open eye towards the inculturation of the Gospel. However, from their discussions about *adat*, circumcision, *wayang*, and about Sadrach's independent Christians, we learn that the Javanese church members were seriously looking for ways to bring Gospel and culture in contact.

As an effect of rising nationalist feelings in Java and elsewhere, several local Christian communities became self-governing in the 1920s and 1930s. The first indigenous synod meeting took place in 1931. This also implied the receiving of church orders.⁹² Theological training reached a higher level, especially in the mission field of the GKN, and a number of Javanese church leaders were ordained as pastors. All mission churches in Central Java were active in the field of education and medical care; Javanese and Chinese teachers, doctors and nurses attained a prominent position in these fields. The role of women in the churches itself remained modest, in line with the situation of the sending churches in Europe. Nevertheless several noticeable exceptions have been mentioned.⁹³

Besides emphasis on evangelisation to the Javanese people, attention to spreading the gospel among mainly *peranakan* Chinese became important. Often the churches that originated among these Chinese were totally or partly independent. On all mission fields in Central Java Chinese believers were influenced by travelling evangelists like John Sung. Though on a personal level contacts between leaders and missionaries of the respective churches (GKJ, GKJTU, GITJ) were cordial, there was not yet any serious effort to cooperate closely or even merge.

Finally, Islam was seen as a missiological problem; open contacts with Muslim leaders hardly existed, contrary to contacts with prominent adherents of Javanism.

On 10 May 1940 German armies occupied the Netherlands and from that moment on German missionaries (now belonging to the enemy) were detained. In Central Java this hit the work of the *Salatiga Mission* and to a lesser extent that of the DZV. Together with 400 other German internees some of these missionaries died in a tragic way on board of the motor vessel "Van Imhoff" that was to take them from Sumatra to India, when it was torpedoed by the Japanese, 19 January 1942.

⁹⁰ De Jong 1997:273.

⁹¹ Martati Ins. Kumaat 1973:13.

⁹² Van den End 1986:69, 72.

⁹³ Van der Woerd 2004:138–166.

Once the Japanese had entered Java (28 February 1942), the fate of most Dutch missionary workers became deplorable too. From 1943 on, almost all of them and their families, like all enemy citizens, were detained in Japanese camps, where a number of them, including several workers of the GKN died. In the meantime, the position of most Javanese and Chinese Christians was hardly any better. Right after the arrival of the Japanese army, not only Europeans but also indigenous Christians were attacked by rioting mobs. In Surakarta the European district was looted as well as the Chinese Sangkrah church.⁹⁴ A hard fate struck the congregation of Margorejo on the Mennonite mission field. There the church was burnt down and five pastors and elders were forced to recite the Islamic confession of faith.⁹⁵ The shock and the shame pursued them during the rest of their lives. The mission hospital in Tayu was looted and a Chinese doctor almost lost his life. The saddest story is that of the missionary H.C. Heusdens (himself belonging to the Christian Reformed Church and temporarily working on the Mennonite mission field) who even after repeated urgent requests declined to leave the 300 patients of the leprosy institute Donorodjo. He rather chose to die for them. One of his patients, a Balinese evangelist Nyoman Regig, wrote a moving report about his last moments and his death.⁹⁶

Several church leaders were detained, tortured by the *Kempetai* (Japanese secret police) and even died in prison. Others unfortunately followed the Japanese or became apostates. Schools were closed and many teachers and evangelists had to look for other sources of income because the mission could not pay their salaries any longer.

The accelerated independence and the compulsory ecumenical cooperation between churches and Christians during the years of war and the early time of independence have been a blessing in disguise. These changes had been impossible as long as the European missionaries were in charge! In the Muria area, the congregations gathered in a *musyawarah* (deliberation) on 30 May 1940 and formed an independent *Association of Evangelical Christian Congregations in the Residencies Pati, Kudus and Jepara* that—after several changes of name—now is the GITJ. And at a meeting in Yogyakarta, June 1942, a provisional inter-church consultative body of Javanese churches was formed, which laid the foundation for the even broader *Dewan Permusyawaratan Gereja-gereja* (DPG) in 1946.

Nevertheless, in many places the churches suffered great losses as to membership, buildings, financial means and spiritual energy. In Surakarta, for instance, the number of (adult) confessing members decreased from almost

⁹⁴ De Jong 1997:27.

⁹⁵ Djojodihardjo 1977:89–97.

⁹⁶ Nyoman Regig 1977:109–119.

5,000 in 1939 to 2,700 in 1949.⁹⁷ The GITJ in the Muria area lost almost half of its members between 1940 and 1950.⁹⁸ The situation of the GKJTU⁹⁹ and the *Bala Keselamatan*¹⁰⁰ was worrisome in a similar way.

Post-war time: a new independent spirit

The years between 1945 and 1950 were hard and intense for the population of Central Java. The struggle between the young Indonesian Republic and the Dutch who refused to recognise its independence was partly fought out in this province, Yogyakarta being the heartland of the Republican troops, and the north coast predominantly being in the hands of the Dutch occupier.

This military and political situation made contacts between the churches until 1950 difficult, though not impossible. In the previous section we mentioned the foundation of a *Dewan Permusyawaratan Gereja-gereja* of Central Java. Many Christians hoped that all the churches of Central and East Java, particularly the Javanese speaking churches, would be united. In fact this DPG became one of three regional Councils of Churches in Indonesia, which—prepared by a meeting in Yogyakarta, November 1949—led to the formation of the *Dewan Gereja-gereja di Indonesia* (DGI) in 1950.

In October 1953¹⁰¹ and again in 1959 the Javanese speaking churches of Central and East Java convened to discuss unity. It was decided to cooperate closely, though a real unity was never reached.¹⁰² Incidentally we hear complaints that the GKJ suffered from a lack of ecumenical awareness and wanted to do everything on its own, “A legacy of the *Gereformeerd* (GKN) Mission?”¹⁰³ A lasting ecumenical cooperation took place as to higher (theological) education in Yogyakarta and later also in Salatiga, in the use of a Javanese hymnbook, and in the sharing of catechetical and missionary material.

In 1964 the matter of unity became a hot issue again within the DGI; it was suggested that all regions would form their own regional Council. As a result, after the dramatic start of the Soeharto government in 1965, which claimed many victims in Central Java, a *Dewan Gereja-gereja Wilayah Jawa Tengah* (Regional Council of Churches of Central Java) came into being, which was also supported by the Chinese churches and several Pentecostal churches.¹⁰⁴

⁹⁷ De Jong 1997:27, 797.

⁹⁸ Martati Ins. Kumaat 1974:17.

⁹⁹ Cooley 1975:6–8.

¹⁰⁰ Brouwer 1994:205–210.

¹⁰¹ De Jong 1997:452–457.

¹⁰² De Jong 1997:518–522.

¹⁰³ De Jong 1997:749.

¹⁰⁴ Ukur & Cooley 1979:594–598.

As an advance toward the proposed unity of Central Javanese churches, the GKJ and the GKJTU merged in 1949.¹⁰⁵ Since the GKJTU maintained no contacts with the (German) *Neukirchener Mission* after the war, it was weakened in finances and personnel and had to hand over part of its work to the GKJ. Unfortunately, the merger of both churches did not last; the leaders of the GKJTU felt 'forced' into it, and the proposed church order of 1951 was too *Gereformeed* in their eyes. In 1953 it was decided to continue as an independent church.¹⁰⁶ During almost twenty years this fact disturbed the relationship with the GKJ and until 1972 the GKJTU was therefore unable to become a full member of the DGI.¹⁰⁷

After many deliberations, the Mennonite GITJ also decided to remain independent. It may be that both GITJ and GKJTU felt threatened because they were smaller partners in this deal, compared with the well-oiled, broadly supported and larger GKJ and GKJW. Historical ties and theological differences (baptism, synodal versus congregational structures, confessions) apparently were a greater hindrance than had been anticipated. The GKJ had close ties with its Dutch partner church and soon after independence a rather large number of mission workers were present again on the mission field. The GKJTU got its first worker from overseas not earlier than 1965. GITJ (and GKMI) were a little more fortunate; as early as 1949, 1950 the North American *Mennonite Central Committee* (MCC) was able to send some personnel, and in 1953 Dutch and German mission workers, too, were welcome again. Nevertheless, their support, both financial and as to manpower, remained limited compared to the support provided to the GKJ (and GKI). A side effect within the latter churches was a strong dependence on the Dutch GKN, which resulted in a conflict in the seventies.

Baptists, Evangelicals and Pentecostals as post-war phenomena

As elsewhere in Indonesia, in Central Java too, a number of new church bodies were founded after Indonesia became independent. Most charismatic churches arrived in or after the 1980s, but some other churches are older. We mention here four post-independence churches, which have their base and main constituency in Central Java itself (cf. chapter eighteen).

One of the oldest Pentecostal churches is the *Gereja Isa Almasih* (GIA, Jesus Messiah Church); its early name was *Sing Ling Kauw Hwee*. Tan Hok Tjoan, a Chinese Christian from Langoan, Minahasa, was its founder. Tan

¹⁰⁵ De Jong 1997:378–386.

¹⁰⁶ Cooley 1975:7–11; De Jong 1997:35–37; 649–653.

¹⁰⁷ Cooley 1975:12–13.

worked at the Customs office and originally followed a Dutch Pentecostal church. In 1946 he left this Pentecostal church because of ecclesiological and organisational differences and started his own congregation; first as a house church, later gathering in a movie theatre in Semarang and from 1950 on in a church building.¹⁰⁸ From then on, the church expanded rapidly. In order to emphasize that it wanted to be a genuinely Indonesian church it changed to its present name, GIA, in 1955. During the same church meeting a church order and a confession of faith were accepted. The seventh synod meeting, in 1971, accepted five principles: Spirituality, knowledge, evangelism, order, and ecumenical attitude. Hence this moderate Pentecostal church opened a seminary, *Abdiel* in Ungaran (south of Semarang) in 1967, accepted a presbyterial-synodal leadership and became a member of the DGI/PGI. It was one of the first churches in Central Java to have ordained women ministers in the 1960s and 1970s; the first women ministers in the GKJ did not appear until the end of the 1980s. Now GIA has over a hundred congregations, and some 5,000 members. Several other Pentecostal churches are active in Central Java as well, such as *Gereja Bethel Indonesia* (GKB).¹⁰⁹

In 1951 Southern Baptists from the USA arrived in Indonesia. Soon after 1955 they had church buildings in several places in Java, including Semarang, Yogyakarta, Surakarta and Magelang. A seminary was founded in Semarang in 1954; it attracted and still attracts students from several denominations.¹¹⁰ Since this church does not cooperate within the DGI or the DGW, the work among students in cities such as Yogyakarta has been seen as a threat by some other churches. However, when in the early seventies leadership came into the hands of Indonesians and it had become clear that the church was too conservative and too much dependent upon foreign missionaries, the Baptists started to change. Avery Willis, who did research into motifs for conversion within GKJW, GKJ, GITJ, GKJTU and the Baptist Church, concluded, "Baptists on the whole have ignored lessons that might have been learned from over one hundred years of cultural adaptation by other denominations; they have Westernised the members of their churches."¹¹¹

Starting as a prayer group within the Mennonite GKMI in the seventies, the *Jemaat Kristen Indonesia* (JKI) was founded in 1985 as a charismatic split-off, which is said to have now almost 15,000 members, even outside Indonesia in California. This church is exemplary in its use of modern, evangelistic methods to reach people and found new congregations. Especially among Chinese-Indonesian youth a strong longing for revival can be found. The JKI

¹⁰⁸ Eleas 2005:52–65.

¹⁰⁹ See for an older survey Ukur & Cooley 1979:107–114.

¹¹⁰ Smith n.d.:128–130, Willis 1977:176.

¹¹¹ Willis 1977:185.

started a huge training school on the slopes of Mount Merbabu near Salatiga and plans to build a mega-church in Semarang to host over 5,000 people. Elsewhere, in the main cities of Indonesia, similar trends can be found. Charismatic churches often attract middle-class people and students in the large cities, who no longer feel at home in their traditional churches. This, of course, is sometimes seen as a threat by established churches, which are inclined to follow the path of charismatic churches. Different kinds of music, hand clapping and prayer services have become quite common in traditional congregations as well, even in villages.

A last example of a young church based in Central Java is the small Eastern Orthodox Church that was founded in 1990 in Surakarta.¹¹² Its founder was Daniel Bambang Dwi Byantoro, a gifted young man. While studying in Seoul, Korea, he happened to read a book on Orthodoxy, felt attracted to its liturgy and theology and after a lot of wandering around (Athens in Greece and Syracuse in the USA) finally became an orthodox priest himself. Though in the meantime Bambang himself left this church again, the congregations in Surakarta, Yogyakarta, Jakarta and elsewhere in Indonesia continue to exist under the (Greek) Ecumenical Patriarch in Hong Kong, though as fragile small communities. It is not easy to define why Orthodoxy would appeal to Javanese people. Headley, an orthodox priest himself, points to the fact that Javanese people, especially *abangan*, do not emphasize doctrine (like in the GKJ), but the experiences in their inner heart (*hati nurani*) and the importance of a socio-cosmic harmony; hence they feel attracted to the prayers in the rich orthodox liturgy and to the cosmological dimension of salvation which plays an important role in Orthodoxy.¹¹³

Post 1945: The internal life of the churches: confessions and church order

The now independent churches needed to reconsider their confessions and church orders, which dated from the time when the missionaries still ruled their churches. In fact, all churches accepted the Apostles' Creed to express their unity with the world church and with the DGI. The Mennonite GKMI accepted an extensive confession of faith in 1958, which shows close affinity with an older confession of the North-American Mennonite Church.¹¹⁴ A much more contextual confession of faith was accepted in the 1990s.

The GKJ, too, adopted a church order in 1950, based upon the presbyterial-congregational model of the GKN in the Netherlands. It did not correspond

¹¹² Headley 1990.

¹¹³ Headley 2001:224–234.

¹¹⁴ Yoder 1981:314–318; Van den End 1986:109–117.

with the 'Javanese way of thinking' that is attached to respect for one's superiors, according to the survey that this church undertook in 1986.¹¹⁵ The church order of 1985 took more distance from the European model, now men and women can be ordained.¹¹⁶ For different reasons, both GITJ and GKJTU needed more time to adapt their church orders to the new times. Since the GKJTU had its origin in the *Neukirchener Allianz Mission* and had a congregational structure, it had inherited a lack of clarity as to this point. However, in 1988 its synod decided to formulate a church order and a catechism. The GITJ suffered from internal problems in the 1980s and 1990s that paralysed the work at a synod level for several years. In 2000 the reconciled synod accepted a new church order. It is quite striking that much more attention is given to church order than to the theological content of the confession. The latter is often just a reference to age-old confessions of the first ecumenical councils or of the European churches.

Theological training

After 1945, the theological school of the GKJ in Yogyakarta reopened its doors in 1946. From now on both GKJ and GKI Jateng were its sponsoring bodies. Before the war the *Salatiga Mission* had its own training school, which for the time being was not reopened; after all, the GKJ and the GKJTU were in the process of merging. After 1965 the GKJTU re-opened its school for evangelists, Sabda Mulya, in Salatiga.

The GITJ opened a school of its own in 1950, supported by European and North American Mennonites. Five years later this school merged with *Bale Wijata* in Malang, East Java. One Dutch and one Canadian teacher participated in this new venture. In 1960s the Reformed Church in the Netherlands (NHK) and the *Gereformeerd* church (GKN) started to cooperate in ecumenical bodies. Hence, in 1962 *Bale Wijata* merged with the school in Yogyakarta; the *Sekolah Tinggi Theologia Duta Wacana* was opened as an ecumenical school at an academic level. Since then, the names of noted theologians like Harun Hadiwijono, D.C. Mulder and (now) E. Gerrit Singgih are connected with *Duta Wacana*. In the mid-1980s the *Sekolah Tinggi Theologia Duta Wacana* developed further into a *Universitas Kristen Duta Wacana* (UKDW) that now has several faculties.

Though the GITJ, too, was represented in its board, the admission level of this new school proved to be too high for most students from the GITJ and the GKMI in the Muria area. Hence, in 1965, these two churches started their own

¹¹⁵ Hadi Purnomo & Suprihadi Sastrosupono 1996:169.

¹¹⁶ Djunarso Kartiko Hadi 1987.

school, *Akademi Kristen Wijata Wacana*, which functioned until the 1990s. By then, the GKMI had already withdrawn from the AKWW; most of its students preferred to study either in Yogyakarta or in evangelical schools.

In the meantime in 1956 in Salatiga a Christian Teacher Training College had been opened, *Satya Wacana*, which, after three years, broadened its horizon to become a Christian University with faculties of Law, Economics, Education, English, Theology and also sociology and technology.¹¹⁷ No less than ten churches participated in it. For many years the lawyer and noted ecumenical leader Prof. Mr. O. Notohamidjojo was Principal of this university, which is well known outside the Christian community.

Next to these ecumenical efforts, Evangelical and Pentecostal theological seminaries and universities opened their doors as well. Government information (1994) mentions no less than 13 theological colleges in Central Java and the *Daerah Istimewa* Yogyakarta; a recent website even records 17. We have mentioned already the Baptist Seminary in Semarang (1954) and the Pentecostal Seminary *Abdiel* in Ungaran (1967); eight years later the evangelical *Sekolah Theologia Tinggi Injili Indonesia* opened its gates near Yogyakarta. The borderline between 'evangelical' and 'ecumenical' also crosses the main protestant churches; therefore these schools also attract students from GKI, GKMI and GKJ. Since the academic level cannot always be guaranteed, this situation is not really fruitful to the development of the churches as a whole.

Church Growth

Though statistics of religious affiliation are not very reliable and trustworthy comparisons are hard to make, it seems clear that the churches in Central Java experienced their largest church growth rates in the period between 1960 and 1970. This decade is marked by severe political antitheses between communists, nationalists and Muslim parties during the latter years of Soekarno's presidency, culminating in the tragic clash or coup d'état in 1965. Hundreds of thousands of alleged communists tried to find refuge in the churches when the new Soeharto Government decided in 1966 that all Indonesians must profess a recognised religion. Government statistics (Department of Religion) mentioned for Central Java 155,000 Protestants and 110,000 Roman Catholics in 1968.¹¹⁸ According to De Jong¹¹⁹ the GKJ counted 60,000 members in 1964; 90,000 in 1969 and 130,000 in 1972. The growth rate of other churches has been comparable. Willis gives a growth rate of the Baptists in Central Java of

¹¹⁷ De Jong 1997:576–580.

¹¹⁸ Hadi Purnomo & Suprihadi Sastrosupono 1986:24.

¹¹⁹ De Jong 1997:798.

20.8% between 1960–1965 and 21.6% between 1965 and 1970; their growth rate was smaller than that of GKJ, GKJTU and GITJ.¹²⁰ The Roman Catholic Church experienced a similar growth, from 92,000 members in 1962 to 234,000 members in 1972 within the diocese of Semarang.¹²¹

Willis, Ukur and Cooley and others give a number of reasons for this growth within the Javanese churches of East and Central Java. Next to the government decision mentioned above, efforts by the churches, spiritual needs of the inner life (*batin*), influence from village leaders, personal witness by neighbours or family members, protection out of fear of being labelled as a communist, service of the churches through hospitals and schools, miracles like the power to exorcise demons have been mentioned here.¹²² Though this growth rate has decreased since the 1980s, nevertheless almost all churches still seem to grow faster than the population growth in general.

Development of church and society

Next to theological training, the churches needed to be prepared for independent life within their local societies. Two aspects have been emphasized: self-support and self-activation of the congregations and urban or rural development. The medical work of the churches (hospitals, small clinics) continued to function well, as did the educational programme. Continuing the latter programmes was to be more difficult in the 1980s when government regulations became strict, Islamic schools and hospitals became competitive and subventions from western partner churches and organisations decreased.

GKJ and GKI worked closely together within the *Lembaga Pendidikan Kader* (LPK, Institute for Cadre Training) which started to function in 1958. Its aim was “to equip the Christians to become living and witnessing members of the body of Christ in the midst of the world.” Until the 1980s Dutch missionary ministers worked here side by side with Indonesian pastors like Soelarso Sopater and Benyamin Abednego.

From the 1970s onwards the attitude of Christians in Central Java towards culture started to change. Yogyakarta became a centre of cultural renewal within the churches, both Protestant and Roman Catholic. During the 1960s and 1970s it was tried, for instance, to use *wayang* (shadowplay) performances based upon Bible stories as a means of evangelisation. Though this was a success, Harun Hadiwijono, professor of systematic theology and a truly orthodox

¹²⁰ Willis 1977:178–182; Ukur & Cooley 1979:198.

¹²¹ Ukur & Cooley 1979:77.

¹²² Tasdik 1970:11–12; Willis 1977:223–224; Ukur & Cooley 1979:200–201; see also Hoekema 1986.

Reformed theologian, once confessed privately that he still preferred the *real* shadow play themes from the Hindu tradition in which noble characters combat each other above the Christian *wayang wahyu!*

In the field of visual arts and dance the name of Bagong Kussudiardjo (1928–2004), a well-known painter and choreographer in Yogyakarta, has to be mentioned here.¹²³ Notwithstanding lack of support from the first generation of foreign missionaries, many local churches have accepted in the meantime visual art and dance, and wall paintings, mosaics and even stained-glass windows with Biblical or Christian motifs have decorated several church buildings.¹²⁴

Church, other religions and state

Around 1940 Islam still was seen as a missiological problem. In this respect, too, the attitude changed in the seventies. The theological faculty of the UKDW for instance, started to exchange staff and students with the *Institut Agama Islam Negeri Sunan Kalijaga* (IAIN) in Yogyakarta. This cooperation continues to the present day. Also, the *Institute for Inter-Faith Dialogue in Indonesia* (INTERFIDEI), founded in 1992 by the late Th. Sumartana, has its office in Yogyakarta. It organised several seminars and workshops; the results of these gatherings have been published in several volumes.

However, the feelings of Christians towards the developments in Islam were not always positive and Sumartana and others were often blamed for running too far ahead of the troops. From research being done during 1980s in four GKJ congregations in the district of Karanganyar, it became clear that only half of the Christians there had no problems with the more prominent place Islam had been receiving in this period. Over 50% of the Christians who were interviewed were not in favour of mixed marriages and 74% of them had never had a real dialogue with Muslims; 53% agreed with the conclusion that Islam was able to grow due to the weakness of the church, which is apathetic and fails to give sufficient information and tools to build up the Christian community. Besides, Islam was able to expand because of government assistance according to these Christians in the same research.¹²⁵

The shocking and violent anti-Chinese riots in May, 1998, as well as social and religious violence from 1996 onwards, resulting in the damaging and burning down of church buildings, including more than fifty damaged churches in Central Java in the years 1996–1998 (ICCF 1997), did make Christians hesitant as to the aims of certain factions within Islam. Severe clashes between *Laskar*

¹²³ Takenaka 2004:4–5.

¹²⁴ More on Christian Art in chapter twenty.

¹²⁵ Sardjono 1987.

Jihad gangs and Christians in Poso, Central Sulawesi, and on Ambon also affected the Christians of Central Java, since some of the *Laskar Jihad* had their roots there. Nevertheless, in general the harmony (*kerukunan*) between people of different religions is still maintained and practical cooperation in the sense of *gotong royong* (mutual aid) never really suffered from this crisis.

In a few cases Christians have raised their voice as to human rights issues. Headed by Yosef Widyatmadja the *Yayasan Bimbingan Kesejahteraan Sosial* (YBKS, Foundation for Guidance in Social Prosperity issues) in Surakarta has been very active as to labourers' rights during the 1970s and 1980s. Critical staff members of the *Universitas Kristen Satya Wacana* in Salatiga, such as Arief Budiman and George Aditjondro, even had to give up their positions because they were too outspoken on human rights issues. Together with other NGOs and with outstanding individuals like the Catholic priest Y.B. Manguwidjaja, several church-related human rights groups devoted themselves to the cause of 6,000 peasants of the village Kedung Ombo near Boyolali, who without any appropriate compensation had to leave their homes and land between 1986 and 1991 when a controversial, World Bank sponsored barrage was built to create a huge water reservoir. And after the government published still pending plans to build a nuclear plant at the north coast of the Muria peninsula, east of Jepara, a church-related human rights group helped to defend the rights of farmers in that area whose traditional rights to the land had never been confirmed by legal papers.

Generally speaking, however, Christians most often supported the regional and national government; as a tiny minority they hardly had another choice. Some prominent theologians and lay Christian leaders got themselves mixed up in the recent debates about an eventually Muslim state instead of the Pancasila state. After the PARKINDO was forced to merge with other parties in 1973, many Christians took the side of the new *Partai Demokrasi Indonesia* (PDI) that had a strong base in Central Java; later they followed Megawati Sukarnoputeri's *PDI-Perjuangan* (PDI in Struggle).

All churches in Central Java have grown rapidly from the time of independence until now. Nevertheless, their total number (less than one million) does not surpass 2% of the total population; therefore they remain a small minority. This is one of the factors that define their identity. Many Christians are middle class people and the urban church buildings often show a certain pride and wealth. Antagonism between ecumenical and evangelical or charismatic churches is slowly disappearing since the church services in many churches move in the direction of charismatic services. It is not felt that there is a fierce competition, and dogmatic differences are not overemphasized.

Whereas around 1940 all churches in this region were confined to Central Java, now many churches have branches in other areas as well. The earlier gentlemen's agreement not to evangelise in each other's territory is generally

still maintained, though in university cities all kinds of churches can be found. Besides, the GKJ and GITJ have substantial branches now in Lampung and other migration areas outside Java. Often *Bahasa Indonesia* has replaced the Javanese language in church services, especially in urban areas and this opens these churches for members belonging to other ethnic groups. Originally Chinese churches such as GKI and GKMI showed a clearly evangelistic zeal; the GKMI even has an own missionary organisation PIPKA and mission workers in Bali, Singapore and Hong Kong. They, too, are open for members of other ethnic groups.

After the fall of Soeharto in 1998 the continuing political crisis caused much unrest in religious affairs. The churches still suffer from this uncertainty, which does not create an advantageous climate for religious dialogue. Nevertheless most Christians would agree that they live in good harmony with their direct neighbours. Therefore, the prospects of Christianity in this part of Indonesia are not unfavourable, though church growth in the next decades probably will be limited compared with the growth during the decades behind us.

*Frans van Lith SJ: the twentieth century Catholic start in Muntilan
and Yogyakarta*

As in most regions of Indonesia so also in Central Java Protestant missionaries came somewhat earlier than Catholics. They were also more successful. In the province of Central Java there were in 2003 about 500,000 Protestants and 373,000 Catholics, a quite exceptional number, because many of them were converts out of Islam. They still are a tiny minority in a population of more than 33 million (with a vast majority of Muslims, besides 27,000 Hindus and 68,000 Buddhists). In the special region of Yogyakarta the Catholics were with 165,000 far more numerous than the 80,000 Protestants. For both denominations the city of Yogyakarta is an important centre of their organisations.

Until 1900 there were few indigenous Catholics in Java. There were concentrations of Eurasians in Semarang, Yogyakarta and Ambarawa. The latter place was a central compound for the military where many European Catholics often lived with a Javanese woman. Their children were accepted in the Catholic orphanage of Semarang (Franciscan Sisters) or the Protestant in Ambarawa (Pa van der Steur). There was also a group of converts from the about 3,000 West African soldiers who entered the colonial army between 1840 and 1870. They received an extra payment at baptism and after that a higher salary than non-Christians. This proved to be a good incentive to follow religious classes and to become baptised. Priests, however, complained about the quality of their conversion. Some Africans even applied twice for baptism: Protestant and Catholic, in order to receive the allowance twice. Another group in the

army were the many Manadonese who served in the colonial army. Quite a few of them opted for Catholicism while serving in Java, instead of the majority Protestantism. As has been described in chapter ten, they became the beginning of the small but consistent group of Catholics in the Minahasa.¹²⁶

Catholicism among the indigenous population of Central Java started with some peculiar conversions from Protestantism to Catholicism. It was first the old and sick missionary M. Teffer (1826–1907) who in 1894 sought consolation and support from the Catholic clergy in Semarang and joined their denomination. Together with Teffer two Javanese ‘catechists’ or teachers of religion changed from Protestantism to Catholicism. They were Johannes Vreede and his brother Martinus Martodiredjo. Together with four others they were hired by the Jesuit Mission Superior Julius Keijzer (1847–1896) who saw in this group a good opportunity to start a mission to the Javanese. Vreede and perhaps also some others had worked in West Java under the supervision of Anthing, others later worked in Semarang with Protestant missionary P. Bieger. As in the Anthing preaching strategy they could work rather independently. This was also the case because the priests only spoke Malay. The Jesuit Frans van Lith arrived in the Indies on 4 October 1896, first studied some Javanese in Semarang and then moved to Muntilan in late 1897. In early 1898 it turned out that most of these catechists were involved in financial manipulations with mission money, were opium addicted and in one case had two wives. All but one were dismissed.

Notwithstanding this bad start, Van Lith continued work in Muntilan, together with his colleague Petrus Hoevenaars who had settled at the same time in nearby Mendut. They both opened some simple schools, but also wanted to attract village chiefs through economic ties. Van Lith had taken over the debts that some village heads had with Chinese lenders in order to be able “to continue his close relation to them.” He developed plans for a textile industry. But none of these strategies led to the expected quick growth of conversions. Quite unexpected was the turning of four small villages in the Kalibawang region to Catholicism, a result of the disintegration of the Sadrach congregations after the break with the Protestant mission in the 1890s and Sadrach’s connection with Irvingianism. In this mountainous region, from the 1930s on, the most famous Catholic place of pilgrimage, the Sendang Sono sanctuary was located.

It would be difficult to write the history of the modern Archdiocese of Semarang without mentioning Xaverius College in Muntilan, Central Java. It was the first Catholic boarding school (at high school level, including a teachers’ training at secondary school level) for the Javanese native people. There are

¹²⁶ Steenbrink 2003:12–16.

several important persons in the history of the Catholic Church in Central Java and in Indonesia who were graduates of Xaverius College, Muntilan. The history of the Catholic Party of Indonesia, founded in 1923, was closely connected with the history of Xaverius College since I.J. Kasimo and his colleagues were students of the college. The first Javanese native priests were all graduates of the college. There were many teachers spread in various places in Central Java and other places who were trained in the college.

The moment Frans van Lith started, 1904, coincided with the beginning of the political ethical movement of the Dutch colonial government, in the first decade of the twentieth century. One of its ambitions was to give primary education to the whole population and during this period, there were an increasing number of schools for the native people and an increasing number of the students as well.

Thanks to government subsidies the Muntilan initiative could grow steadily. In 1922 the graduates of Xaverius College already numbered about 600. Many of the students of Muntilan came from people who wanted a good career for their children. A quite interesting example of a parallel school and conversion career is found in the autobiography of a man born under the name of Soekiman. Anton Soekiman, born in a Javanese family with nominal adherence to Islam, was one of the many young boys of Yogyakarta who came around 1910 to Muntilan. In his autobiography, written in the mid 1920s while a student of theology at a Jesuit college in the Netherlands, he wrote about his first encounter with Catholic mission personnel. This person was a Franciscan Sister who watered the flowers in front of their religious house in Yogyakarta, "A human being that only partly belonged to the world, without ever laughing, always praying, never in anger but also never friendly: without passion, absolutely ascetic."¹²⁷ At his government primary school there was a Catholic teacher who occasionally came for religious classes given to the few Catholic pupils. His reading of the Bible was in an extremely solemn and dull way. The other pupils imitated for fun this style of reading. In retrospect Soekiman called it a Protestant habit, due to the Protestant background of the first catechists of Muntilan.

Still, Soekiman came to Muntilan, because it was easier and cheaper to enrol in that teachers' training course than at the government institute of Yogyakarta. There was only one opening for alumni of all six primary schools of Yogyakarta and many of these Javanese boys wanted to become government officials. Therefore the young Soekiman joined the procedure to enter the school in Muntilan, was accepted and promised himself never to become a Christian, but only to follow the course to become a teacher. As was the case

¹²⁷ Soekiman 1927:7.

with nearly all the pupils of Muntilan, Soekiman also accepted Catholicism. In his own words, he discovered the weak sides of Javanese culture, especially the cruelty of the feudal class, many of whom were addicted to opium and did not bother about the poverty of the common people. Children who came to a European school “become industrious and hard-working, simple in their outward appearance; cock-fighting and that kind of entertainment disappear; honest trade that is despised by the feudal class, is now accepted as honest work.”¹²⁸ For Soekiman it was most of all this disciplined hard work that was the major value of Christianity. He regretted that the strong separation between the Europeans and the Javanese was so strict. This separation reminded him of the caste system in British India. If this separation had been less strict, Christianity could have been flourishing much more strongly and quickly.

The college grew not only in number of the students, the program developed simultaneously. There were various programmes for extended primary school in Javanese but also in the more prestigious Dutch course. At the secondary level the school used Dutch. There was a teachers’ training programme that used the Javanese language, and another that used the Dutch language. To support the school program, Van Lith received assistance from various sides: finance and teachers from the Society of Jesus, as well as from the government. In order to support the small staff of the college, young Jesuit students for the priesthood were sent from the Netherlands. The first three arrived already in 1909. They were in their early twenties and had finished their first Jesuit noviciate and two years study of philosophy in the Netherlands. They came to Muntilan to teach at the secondary school, besides learning Javanese. After two or three years they returned to the Netherlands. In the 1930s they also followed courses of philosophy and theology in Java. These first Dutch Jesuit students were not really qualified for teaching, but later groups followed some special courses in the Indies or even before their departure in the Netherlands to become officially qualified as secondary school teachers. This was important for the recognition of the school by the government and also for the related subsidies.

Van Lith wanted to remain close to Javanese culture, but at the same time he had a good feeling for the development of a modern colonial society where Dutch language and Western civilisation became more and more important during the first decades of the twentieth century. These teachers’ training programmes also received official recognition from the government, though they started from a very simple programme. Thereafter, the graduates spread to various provinces: Central Java, West Java, East Java, Batavia/Jakarta, and even some to the outer islands. They occupied various professions: most of

¹²⁸ Soekiman 1927:11–12.

the graduates became teachers, several also officers on various institutions like banks, post offices, railway stations; some continued their studies in various fields, and some were candidates for the priesthood.

Xaverius College, run by the Jesuits, did not request students to become Catholics since the goal of Van Lith was to educate Javanese to become teachers. However, the college gave opportunity to the students to take non-obligatory courses of religious instruction. To become candidate for baptism a student was required to ask permission from his parents.¹²⁹

After some years of running the Xaverius College, F. van Lith asked the Franciscan Sisters of Semarang to start another boarding school for girls. It was built in Mendut, 10 kilometers from Muntilan. It started in 1908 with a primary school, and was completed with a vocational school for household practices and a high school. Since 1916, there was also a teachers' training department on the compound. Besides providing education for the native girls, another goal of this school was to collaborate with Xaverius College to prepare Catholic families among the Javanese.¹³⁰ Together the priests and the sisters arranged from 1909 on programs where boys and girls of the two schools could meet each other. It was through these frequent meetings that the students of the two schools could continue their relations, even after they had graduated from the schools. They still made contact though they lived in separated places.¹³¹ Many of the first generation of Catholic families came in this way from the two schools.¹³²

As these were the first generation of Catholics, the priests who worked in the parishes worried about their moral life since they lived among people who had no contact with other Catholics. At a pastoral meeting of the parish priests of the Vicariate Apostolic of Batavia, 9–10 December 1935 in Muntilan, F. Sträter declared that Javanese Catholics could be divided into three groups, namely: those baptised since childhood, those baptised as students, those baptised as adults. The second group was the largest. They had some problems that needed to be considered. After they had finished their study, they lived among non-Christians, and they experienced isolation. Formerly they had studied during four years or even longer in the strong discipline of the boarding school. After

¹²⁹ A. Soegijapranata 1933:17–23.

¹³⁰ F. Hasto Rosariyanto 1997:259.

¹³¹ After many years, the result of the strategy was still visible. The Van Lith Museum of Muntilan holds a collection of letters between Floriberta Sumardiyati and Simatupang showing the result of the strategy. The two were students of Mendut and Muntilan. After graduation Floriberta Sumardiyati lived in Muntilan as a nurse, and Simatupang lived in Bangli, East Java, as a sugar factory employee. They kept contact through letters. Finally they married and were blessed with 6 children.

¹³² The first couple of alumni/ae of Mendut and Muntilan schools married on 13 October 1913. *Buku Kenangan Reuni XIII ex siswi Suster Fransiskanes*, 1955.

they left school, they lived far away from other Catholics. Sometimes it was suggested by their parents that they should marry a non-Catholic partner. They lived in an environment which made them 'morally in danger', particularly the practices of gambling and poligamy.¹³³ To solve these problems, the priests frequently make home visits as a pastoral strategy. The Catholic bishops were at that time quite restrictive and as a rule did not give permission to marry a non-Catholic.¹³⁴ A conversion story similar to that of Soekiman is available for Willibrord J.S. Poerwadarminta, well-known as the author of a standard dictionary of Indonesian. He also went to Muntilan for the benefit of a good education and to become a teacher and government employee but, like almost everyone, he converted. He did not become a priest, but wanted to marry, and to do this there was the problem of having his fiancée converted, as the Catholic priests would not give dispensation for a mixed marriage at that time. The young lady who was already selected by his parents (who were not Catholic), consented to conversion to Christianity, took a three-month course, was baptised, and then they married.¹³⁵

One reason to opt for Muntilan as the centre of the Catholic mission was the colonial ruling that no Catholic preaching among native Javanese was allowed in the areas that were controlled by the Sultan of Yogyakarta and the Soesoehoeenan of Surakarta (the Principalities or *Vorstenlanden*). In the Yogyakarta region the Protestants had received permission to work since 1891, but there could be no 'double mission' and therefore the Catholics were excluded from this region, except for pastoral work among Europeans and Eurasians. In March 1897, while still learning Javanese, the Jesuit Petrus Hoevenaars, during a short stay in Yogyakarta, had baptised 72 Javanese. In very polite and formal but clear wording Hoevenaars was criticised by Resident J. Ament of Yogyakarta and received orders not to carry out any activity in the Principalities. About Easter 1905 Petrus Hoevenaars, then working in Mendut (located in the Kedu districts and outside the Principalities), had asked children of three schools in and around that place to come in their most beautiful clothes for a picture at the ancient Buddhist shrine of Mendut. After the photograph was taken, the children were brought into the church, to see what a church was like inside. Petrus Hoevenaars sprinkled some water upon them with the *aspergillum*. Later there were rumours that the children (virtually all of Muslim descent) had been baptised at that event. Therefore many children were withdrawn from the schools and parents protested to the

¹³³ G.Budi Subanar 2001:130.

¹³⁴ Although Frans van Lith was not a parish priest, he made frequent visits to the families of alumni, even to families who lived in areas far from Muntilan. F. Sträter did the same with the motive to coordinate the catechists. Testimony of Sastradwidja, in: Maryana 1996:69–78.

¹³⁵ Putu Lasminah 1980.

local colonial official. This affair was not settled as easily as in 1897. Bishop Luypen in Batavia received an official reprimand from the side of Governor General Van Heutsz (a Catholic himself) on 2 July 1906, blaming the priest for “imprudent practice.” Hoevenaars by that time had already been removed to Cirebon.¹³⁶

Notwithstanding this government ban on direct mission by European Catholic missionaries that lasted until the 1920s, there were many pupils from the Principalities who entered the school in Muntilan. A position as a teacher was very popular among the population but there was a very limited number of pupils who could enter the government teachers’ training school in Yogyakarta. Many students of the broad class of the Yogyakarta nobility opted for the Muntilan school. Most of them converted to Catholicism and brought their new religion back home. In the early 1910s a Javanese convert to Catholicism was contracted to work in the Yogyakarta region. This was Raden Mas Josef Poerwadiwirja, born a Muslim, for a long time a member of the Theosophical Society, a convert to Protestantism and also close to several individual mystical (*ngelmu*) teachers. He ended his spiritual quest with conversion to Catholicism and was contracted by the Yogyakarta parish priest Henri van Driessche (himself a Eurasian, born in Surabaya 1875, died 1934) to work among the nobility and common people in Yogyakarta, because no formal permit was needed for native evangelists. Van Driessche, however, was very cautious. In September 1915 he managed to get a letter from the court of the Sultan of Yogyakarta, “that there were no objections against the transition to the Roman Catholic religion by the Sultan’s servants if they wanted to do this.” Soon after this letter some Catholic *abdi dalem* were nominated for functions in the Sultanate, where they had to swear the oath of allegiance. They were allowed to do this on the Bible and no longer on the Qur’an as was the previous common practice. When in 1927 the Minor Seminary was opened in Yogyakarta, followed by a Catholic secondary school in 1928, the Sultan was present to give his blessings for these undertakings.¹³⁷

In 1918 the *Canisius Vereeniging* was founded to coordinate the mission schools in Central Java. It was a foundation of Catholic schools whose teachers were mostly graduates of Xaverius College.¹³⁸ The spread and increase of the teachers was very surprising and was the beginning of the spread of Catholicism in various regions of Central and East Java. In the late 1930s the number of Catholic schools for the Javanese in the Principality of Yogyakarta had reached 110. In the Residency of Kedu there were 90 Catholic schools, a further 60 in Semarang, and in Solo 40. All these cities were located in what

¹³⁶ Steenbrink 2003–I:208–212.

¹³⁷ Steenbrink 2007–II:389–392.

¹³⁸ J. Weitjens, in: Muskens 1974–IIIb:861.

later became the province of Central Java. The number of Catholic mission schools in East Java was far less than in Yogyakarta and Central Java.¹³⁹

The teachers, who taught in mission schools during the day, had another duty in the afternoon and evening. They became religious teachers who gave religious instruction to the people in various places. Each teacher had two or three occasions per week to give religious instruction to the catechumens in different places. Therefore, many of these schools became the origin of parishes in various places in Central Java.¹⁴⁰ While H. van Driessche became the chaplain for the Javanese, F. Sträter who was the Novice Master of the Indonesian Jesuits from 1922, became also the coordinator of the teachers in the mission schools. These two Jesuits visited many persons in various areas to coordinate and supervise the work of the teachers. They also approached native families when they heard about interest in Catholicism. After the first start of Van Lith in Muntilan, Van Driessche and Sträter thus extended the work in the Yogyakarta Sultanate. Johannes Prenthaler became the first resident parish priest in the Kalibawang region after 1929.

If we compare the large educational compound of Muntilan to similar Catholic centres in East Indonesia like Langgur on Kai, Lela and Ndonga on Flores, Woloan in the Minahasa and Nyarumkop in Kalimantan, the special position of Muntilan is very clear. Muntilan could start immediately with secondary schools, a training institution for teachers and not with primary schools of three years only. At a very early stage it changed to Dutch as the major language for instruction. Besides, there was much stress on Javanese as a cultural and sometimes also a liturgical language. Malay was neglected in Muntilan as a means for instruction and communication. The Catholic mission considered Malay to be a Muslim language and preferred Javanese, alongside Dutch.

Missionary work was not entirely a clerical initiative. There was in Central Java one quite spectacular Catholic project carried out by the pious Schmutzer family, owners of the sugar plantation of Ganjuran, south of Yogyakarta. The Schmutzers had owned this plantation in Bantul since 1862. In line with the increase in religious activities among the Catholic Europeans in the Indies in the early twentieth century, here also we find the first active promoters of missionary work: the two brothers Joseph (born 1882) and the younger Julius who together took over the plantation in 1912. During their study in the Netherlands they had been active in the Catholic students' movement and were deeply influenced by the new spirit of the ethical politics. They formulated the rights of their labourers in a treaty with a labour union in their plantation

¹³⁹ Anton Haryono 2003:25–27.

¹⁴⁰ R. Maryono (ed.) 1996.

Tjipto Oetomo. The contract had details about the maximum working hours, a 5% increase of salary per year, a pension plan, health insurance and sick-leave, life insurance, housing facilities, and holidays. In 1918 all personnel was still Muslim and the holidays were fixed as three for the festival at the end of the month of Ramadan (Grebeg Puasa), two for Grebeg Besar (Idul Adha), two for the commemoration of Muhammad's birth (Grebeg Maulud). The board of Tjipto Oetomo had the right to see the balance and the financial details of the sugar estate.¹⁴¹ In 1920 Joseph moved to Buitenzorg (Bogor), because of his position as delegate and later even vice-chairman of the Volksraad, but he stayed in contact with the sugar plantation and his family there. In 1920 Julius Schmutzer married Caroline van Rijckevorsel, a younger sister of the Jesuit priest Leopold van Rijckevorsel who had been in the Java mission since 1909. Caroline van Rijckevorsel had worked as a nurse before she married Julius Schmutzer, and she opened a small clinic in the buildings of the estate in 1921. In 1922 a separate building was constructed for this clinic that was also visited by a medical doctor from Yogyakarta. In 1930 the clinic was transformed into a proper hospital, entrusted to the Carolus Borromeus-sisters. These same sisters worked in the Catholic Hospital Onder de Boogen (now Panti Rapi) of Yogyakarta that was opened in 1929 at the initiative of Julius Schmutzer and some other prominent Catholics of Yogyakarta.

In 1919 an extended primary school was opened in Ganjuran, followed by three village schools in 1923. In 1930 the estate took responsibility for twelve primary schools, commonly called the twelve apostles. All teachers were graduates from Muntilan. They made quite a few converts in the region, where in 1920 only some European Catholics were present.

When the Schmutzer family left the estate in 1934 there were already 1,350 Catholics, still a small minority in this region but a remarkable community. For the period after 1934 the place became more and more known because of the chapel, built in the style of a pure eighth-ninth century Hindu-Javanese shrine (candi), such as is found in the compound of Prambanan. The building of this shrine had started in 1927. In the basement a 57 cm high statue of Jesus has been buried, with an inscription on a copper plate, "Even when this candi ever will be destroyed, Christ King will forever remain in Ganjuran." The sugar estate was burnt down by a Dutch bombardment in 1948, but since then the beautiful shrine that survived the attack has become one of the major places of pilgrimage for Javanese Catholics.

¹⁴¹ For more precise details see the summary by Jan Weitjens SJ of the MA thesis by Lucia Esti Elihami, "Sejarah Berdirinya Paroki Hati Kudus Yesus Ganjuran," Yogyakarta: Sanata Dharma, 1995; in the "Schmutzer Collectie", Nijmegen, KDC.

Albertus Soegijapranata and the solid establishment of Catholicism in Central Java: 1930–1963

In some romantic expressions Muntilan was called the Bethlehem of Java, because a whole generation of Catholic leaders received their formation here between 1905 and 1940.¹⁴² Among this first generation of Xaverius College we find Albertus Soegijapranata (1895–1963), and Adrianus Djajaseputra (1894–1979), the bishops of Semarang and Jakarta, Ignatius Kasimo and friends, founders of the Indonesian Catholic Party and many others. Among the former pupils of Mendut School there was Mrs. Maria Soeyadi Darmaseputra Sasraringrat, the founder of *Wanita Katolik Republik Indonesia* (WKRI, the Indonesian Catholics' Women Association).¹⁴³ There is something like a 'Muntilan-Mendut' lineage, the children of the graduates of these schools who continued to cherish the memory of the two famous institutions. Among the well-known people of this second generation of children of Muntilan-Mendut families we must mention Cardinal Julius Darmaatmadja, Archbishop of Semarang (1983) and later of Jakarta (since 1996), Prof. I. Sugeng Istanto, the former President of the Atmajaya Catholic University in Yogyakarta, Yusuf Bilyarta Mangunwijaya, a priest and architect (1929–1999), writer P. Swantoro, former vice-Director of Kompas, a national newspaper, and many others.

Of the lay people, the most prominent of the first generation was Ignatius Joseph Kasimo Endrawahjana, born in 1900 and educated in Muntilan where he was baptised in 1912, completing his primary education. Kasimo had also studied at the agricultural college in Buitenzorg (Bogor) and worked since 1921 in Central Java, first in a rubber plantation later as a teacher and consultant for agricultural subjects. In 1923 he was one of the founding members of *Pakempalan Politik Katolik Djawa* (PPKD, Catholic Javanese Union for Political Action). This was established as a political union to be developed into a nationalist party, independent from the Catholic Party that was set up by the white Catholics in the Dutch colony. The clergy always tried to keep the Europeans, Eurasians and indigenous Catholics together, but realised very soon that in this field it was impossible. From 1931 until the end of the colonial period it was I.J. Kasimo who was appointed a delegate in the *Volksraad* the embryonic parliament. Also in the later period of independence Kasimo remained the major Catholic politician until the party (*Partai Katholik*) was dissolved and integrated into the nationalist party in 1973, as part of the

¹⁴² G. Budi Subanar 2003:74.

¹⁴³ In 1945, after Indonesian independence WKRI joined the Indonesian Catholic Party. *Atas Nama Pelayanan: Sejarah Wanita Katolik Republik Indonesia*. DPP WKRI-CRI Alocita, 1992; *Dinamika Sejarah Wanita Katolik Republik Indonesia*. Jakarta 1995.

reduction of the number of political parties to three under General Soeharto. Kasimo died in 1986.¹⁴⁴

In 1942, when the Japanese invaded Indonesia and took over the territory from the Dutch colonial authority, diverse tragic events occurred. The foreign missionaries were interned in various camps. The Japanese authority took over most mission buildings, including schools, hospitals and monasteries. In this difficult situation, the first generation of the Javanese Catholics struggled to live a Christian life under the guidance of the first indigenous bishop, Albertus Soegijapranata SJ.

Soegijapranata, who was ordained as the first Indonesian bishop on 6 November 1940, made important strategic decisions. After the Japanese occupation of March 1942, he travelled to various places showing that he was still free and to fight against the rumour that he was in prison. The bishop coordinated the faithful in many ways. He wrote letters sending the small number of native-born priests to various places to give pastoral advice and lead liturgical services. He wrote letters giving the native-born priests authority as officers to register Catholic marriages. He wrote letters to give authority to the laity as guardians of mission buildings. He asked permission from the military office to exempt the Javanese nuns from the military programmes. On behalf of the native faithful, teachers of mission schools worked without any salary. Religious instruction was given by groups of youth. Various families and the youth collected food and money to support the European missionaries in the detention camps.

On 17 August 1945 the independence of the Republic of Indonesia was proclaimed. Thereafter, the new republic needed people who took responsibilities in various fields and some of the Xaverius College graduates took responsible positions. Although most of the Catholic Javanese had received an education as teachers, some changed their professions: bureaucrats, military, artists, etc. Most of them, however, continued their profession as teachers.

The beginning of the new independent country was not easy since there were two military actions by the Dutch army that created a chaotic situation. Defending the new country, on 3 January 1946 the government of the Indonesian Republic moved the capital of the country from Jakarta to Yogyakarta. Showing his solidarity with the new republic, on 13 February 1947 Soegijapranata moved the centre of the Apostolic Vicariate of Semarang to Yogyakarta. There were various motives why the bishop joined the movement towards independence. Most important was that he wanted to show that Catholicism was not part of the colonial system.

¹⁴⁴ For Kasimo also Van Klinken 2003:52–68.

Motivating the Catholics to integrate their activities within the nationalist perspective, Bishop Soegijapranata invited the Catholics to integrate the two values of Christianity and nationalism. He laid the basis for this integration in the teachings of the faith. In this respect, Mgr. Soegijapranata often cited the interpretation of the fourth of the Ten Commandments (Ex 20:8, “Honour your father and your mother”), which was repeated in his speeches and pastoral letters:

If we are really good Christians, we should be real patriots. Therefore, we feel that we are 100% patriotic, since we are also 100% Catholic. Even, according to the fourth of the Ten Commandments, as is written in the Catechism, we should love the Holy Catholic Church. So, we should love the state, as well, with all of our hearts.¹⁴⁵

One of the challenges for Catholicism after the independence of Indonesia was the growing influence of communism. In 1955, at the proposal of Soegijapranata, the Indonesian Bishops’ Conference promulgated a *Catholic Manifesto* that forbade communism and supported the national Indonesian ideology of *Pancasila*. There were some professional organisations based on Pancasila established as Catholic unions and associations: the Pancasila Association of Labourers, Pancasila Association of Peasants and Fishermen, Pancasila Association of Businessmen, Pancasila Association of Paramedics spread in various places.¹⁴⁶

Central Javanese Catholics in a period of church renewal and development

After the death of the politician Soegijapranata in 1963, the new archbishop of Semarang was the social activist Justinus Darmojuwono (1914–1995; since 1967 also a cardinal). His first two years were for a larger part devoted to the debates at the Second Vatican Council. Coming home to the Archdiocese of Semarang after attending the council Darmojuwono had to face a chaotic situation after the failed communist coup that eventually brought General Soeharto to power. The impact of this affair was very tragic. According to various estimates the victims who were killed numbered between 200,000 up to 2,000,000 people. The Indonesian Communist Party has a long history, with a first major uprising in 1926. However, the history of the 30 September 1965 Movement is still open for discussion. The effects for common people

¹⁴⁵ At the opening of the Indonesian Catholic Congress (*Konggres Umat Katolik Seluruh Indonesia-KUKSI*) at Semarang 27 December 1954; Pastoral letter for Lent on 16 February 1957; Pastoral letter in October 1959.

¹⁴⁶ G. Budi Subanar 2001:216–217.

were most dramatic in Central and East Java, where the communists had a very strong following.¹⁴⁷

As the Second Vatican Council ended, Darmojuwono's task, to introduce and apply the constitutions and decrees of the council, was suspended for some years because of the impact of the tragedy of the 30 September Movement.¹⁴⁸ Tracing the policy of the Cardinal on account of the impact of this affair, it is necessary to divide this into two periods. First of all were the policies when the screening of the membership of the party started after the incident. The second was his policy on account of the impact of the affair on those who were the victims, those who were accused of being members of the Communist Party, their families, and all Indonesian citizens. It was the Secretary of the Archbishop P. Carri SJ who reacted to the affair, and who gave guidance to the faithful in responding the affair, since the Archbishop of Semarang, Cardinal Justinus Darmojuwono, was still in Rome attending the last session of the Second Vatican Council. Supporting the military action to screen the membership of the communist party, there were three letters. The first letter (22 October 1965) written by the Vicar General of the Archdiocese of Semarang, P. Carri called the faithful to show the spirit of Catholicism *Pro Ecclesia et Patria* in which Indonesia, based on the Pancasila ideology, would appreciate the pluralism of society, and conviction about God. There was another letter to the priests and the religious members of the Archdiocese of Semarang that forbade joining the military action to screen the membership of the Communist Party (issued by P. Carri 6 November 1965). The third was to the lay people asking them to support the military action to make a screening of the membership of the Communist Party, with a prerequisite not to get involved in violent action. Cardinal Darmojuwono signed this last letter of 6 January 1966. These letters were very important, since after the affair, the military authority mobilised the people to screen the party membership and systematically to wipe out the communist party's influence.¹⁴⁹

After his arrival from Rome, the Cardinal himself visited the parishes in the archdiocese of Semarang. The Cardinal also asked the military authority to give security and protection to the people based on a peace commitment.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁷ Cribb 1990.

¹⁴⁸ "The closing of the sessions of the Second Vatican Council happened at the same time as the tragedy of 30 September Movement in Indonesia with its implications. Therefore, for some years after, the constitution and decrees of Vatican II could not be applied yet in pastoral care." Darmojuwono 1981.

¹⁴⁹ Webb 1986.

¹⁵⁰ Letter of Archbishop A. Djajasiswaja of Jakarta to the Archbishop of Semarang dated February 18, 1966; a letter of Mgr. Justinus Darmojuwono to A. Djajasiswaja dated 22 February 1966, and an open letter of Mgr. Justinus Darmojuwono dated 13 February 1966.

Until 1967–1968, the impact of the affair still continued. A proposal to give an identity card to the Catholic faithful was refused since it would only create a bigger conflict, though there was a difficulty that the new adherents were still accused of being communists, since they were accused of having no religion.¹⁵¹ Paying attention to the tragedy, the Indonesian Bishops' Conference through the Archdiocese sent a letter to the parish priests, inviting them to give attention and help to the victims in the region.¹⁵²

It is against the background of this national tragedy that the growth in the number of Catholics happened. After the affair, the Indonesian government created a policy, which asked citizens to choose one out of the five official religions: Buddhism, Catholicism, Hinduism, Islam, and Protestantism. As the consequence of this policy, there was a big wave of conversions among the Indonesian people. Before this there were many Indonesian people who were adherents of the traditional beliefs without properly or openly being affiliated to one of the formal religions. Such a wave of conversions into “the official religions” became a common phenomenon in all regions of Indonesia.¹⁵³ To support the Catholic faithful of the Archdiocese of Semarang who were involved in assisting the other Indonesian citizens becoming Christians, the Cardinal encouraged them in his pastoral letter of Advent 1967. There was a big risk taken by the persons or families who tried to help the children of the victims of the chaotic situation. On the other side, for the citizens who became Catholic, this was not without risks, whether because of the society or of their families. There are documented cases about village heads, as well as military commanders of the detention camps in Buru, who prevented people from converting to Catholicism.¹⁵⁴

Regarding this tendency, Cardinal Darmojuwono asked priests not to easily baptise people. Talking about the preparation of the new members of the People of God, the Cardinal cautioned that it is necessary to avoid the tendency to seek a big number of conversions of those with motives of escape and seeking security. He laid down some conditions for the catechumens and for the process of the catechumenate period and gave an important role to the basic community in the formation of the new catechumens for the sacrament of baptism. Such condition for the new conversions caused discussions among the parish priests in the archdiocese of Semarang.¹⁵⁵

¹⁵¹ Report from the meeting of the advisors to the Archbishop, 11 November 1967.

¹⁵² A circular of the Vicariate General of the Archdiocese of Semarang dated 13 February 1968.

¹⁵³ Spyer 1996, Heffner 1993, Willis 1977.

¹⁵⁴ D. Tatag & B. Sardjono 1997:32–38 for the village of Sukorejo; on Buru a letter by Bishop Andreas Sol of Ambon to the Vatican Pronuntius Jos Mees in Jakarta, 13 March 1973.

¹⁵⁵ Note from a meeting of parish priests of the Archdiocese of Semarang, 20 November 1965.

In 1969, the policy of Cardinal J. Darmojuwono for the political prisoners of the 30 September Movement and their families was institutionalised as the *Program Sosial Kardinal*, the Cardinal's Social Program. Making his program known, the Cardinal discussed this with some leaders of other religions before he founded the institution. Therefore in Semarang this became an ecumenical activity. In 1981, the activity of the *Program Sosial Kardinal* reached many regions in Indonesia outside the Archdiocese of Semarang: Jakarta, Bogor, Bandung, Purwokerto, Malang, Surabaya, Pontianak, Banjarmasin, Ujung Pandang, Ambon, Medan, Pangkal Pinang, Padang, Palembang, Tanjungkarang.¹⁵⁶ Such a service was not an easy one, and not without risk. Once, there was a priest who was arrested and interrogated by the military office because of his activities of giving service to the ex-political prisoners and their families.¹⁵⁷

In ten years the number of Catholics increased dramatically. Between 1964 and 1973 the Catholics of the archdiocese of Semarang increased from 103,195 to 234,135. The sharpest rise was between 1967–1972 with its peak in 1969 when 15,778 adults were baptised, or 8% of the total of the Catholics of this region. In 1973 the 'new Catholic' adults, those baptised during the last nine years, constituted even 48.5% of the total number of Catholics of the archdiocese.¹⁵⁸

Such a situation also stimulated many people to get involved in various activities. To support the religious instructions among the people, for instance, many people volunteered to work as catechists. Another impact of the increasing number of Catholics was the growing number of parishes.

Marriage was a special problem in this region where Catholics lived not in closed communities but in diaspora, with an overwhelming majority of Muslims. The Dutch clergy usually made mild judgments about European Catholics who wanted to marry Protestants. But for marriage with indigenous Javanese Protestants they were quite severe and did not like to apply too easily the possibilities for dispensation that were available according to Canon law. Concerning Catholic family formation, Mgr. Soegijapranata lamented about priests who easily gave dispensation for mixed inter-religious or inter-church marriage. For him the Catholic nuclear family would be the centre of the Catholic Church in this dominant Muslim region. This concern was shared by his successor, Darmojuwono.

¹⁵⁶ In Jakarta this work was initiated by diocesan priest Stanislaus Sutopanitro, *Hidup*, 14 May 2000:32–33.

¹⁵⁷ G. Budi Subanar 2001:245.

¹⁵⁸ G. Budi Subanar 2001:242.

Below we show the quantitative data of mixed marriages in the Archdiocese of Semarang for 1970.¹⁵⁹ 2,796 Couples married. Among them, there were 697 couples that had dispensation because of *disparitas cultus* (i.e. Catholic with Protestant) or *mixtae religionis* (with a Non-Christian). Among the 697 couples, 561 could be traced for a research ten years later.¹⁶⁰

Couples who became fully Catholic	115 (20.49%)
Couples who were as before marriage	253 (45.09%)
Couples who divorced	27 (4.81%)
No information	135 (23.70%)
Catholic party lost his or her identity	25 (4.45%)
Non Catholic became a catechumen	6 (1.96%)
Total	561 (100%)

One of the serious issues among the Christian families was the question of family planning. This issue became important because there were opposing views between the governmental strategy to promote family planning through methods that deviated from the teaching of the church (*Humanae Vitae*) regarding to the morality of contraception. With a few exceptions the Catholic leaders left the practical decisions to lay people. Like other hospitals, Catholic hospitals also provided the various methods made possible by the government programme *Dua anak cukup* ('two is enough'). Darmojuwono wrote in 1973:

The problem of the Family Planning Programme is not only a matter of the method of birth control, since we must express the responsibility to appreciate life. It is a challenge to handle together a crucial problem without creating tension and disturbance, but to help every person to become more mature and more integrated with a solidly formed conscience.¹⁶¹

Cardinal Darmojuwono retired in 1981 from the see of Semarang and became again a parish priest, in a small village, close to poor people. He died in 1994. He was succeeded by another Jesuit, Julius Darmaatmadja who was moved to the see of Jakarta in 1996 after the death of Leo Soekoto. This shows the need of the Jakarta see for politically experienced leadership. A diocesan priest, Ignatius Hardjoatmodjo, became the next archbishop of Semarang.

¹⁵⁹ Cardinal J. Darmojuwono, *Perjalanan Umat Allah*. 1981:15–16; private manuscript in the Archives of the Semarang Archdiocese.

¹⁶⁰ G. Budi Subanar 2001:215.

¹⁶¹ Pastoral letter for Lent of Cardinal Justinus Darmojuwono, "Menuju Keluarga Bahagia (Toward a Joyful Family)," 13 February 1973.

The history of the Catholics is, of course, much more than only that of the key figures like Van Lith, Kasimo, Soegijopranoto and Darmojuwono who have dominated this section about Central Java. As to the last decades of the twentieth century we can only give a fragmentary picture. For the period until 1985, there was the double movement of emphasis on inculturation and on development programmes. As to adaptation towards the Javanese cultural heritage there was from one side the need to make Catholicism a less foreign religion. An important centre here was the Catechetical School of Yogyakarta, in the 1990s included in the theological faculty *Wedhabakti* of the Sanata Dharma University, established by the Jesuits of Yogyakarta. Father Edmund Prier and his choir *Vocalista* created a new style of church music, different from classical Catholic Gregorian chant, also different from the Evangelical style, but close to traditional Indonesian music. Fellow Jesuit Rudi Hofmann started a new style of Christian art by commissioning six Balinese artists to make about one hundred biblical paintings. From use as slides, later as videotapes, he moved towards radio and television programmes, integrating pictures of everyday life into religious programmes. Complementary to the emphasis on inculturation is the fear that Indonesian society will have to face secularisation and that Christians are perhaps not prepared for this wave, as in the case of Europe. Like Soritua Nababan in Batakland, it was the Yogyakarta Jesuit F. Heselaar who again and again insisted upon the modern world as the greatest challenge for Christians in Java.

Catholic religious education started in the 1910s at primary and secondary level. These schools created the first generation of Catholics in Central Java. In the period since 1965 it is mostly the family that is considered to be the cradle of Catholic life, where values and a religious lifestyle must be acquired. That is the more individualised way of the Christian diaspora of Central Java. The great institutions of the past like church buildings, hospitals, a chain of schools, right up to universities, are continued, but the outward manifestations have become more and more modest during the later decades of the twentieth century.

Christians in East Java

With regard to its geography the northern parts of the province of East Java (including Madura Island) are lowland and relatively less fertile. The central part, on the other hand, is quite good for plantations with its mountains spreading volcanic soil and rivers flowing down the hills to fertilize the island. According to the 2000 statistics, the population in this province is 34,756,400 people; the Catholics are just 266,596 people (0.76%), Protestants about 533,400 (or 1.5%, double the number of Catholics). The majority of the population

(26 million) speaks Javanese, 7 million speak Madurese, and a few groups speak the dialect of Osing (Banyuwangi, in the eastern part of the Java)¹⁶² and the dialect of Tengger (around the mountains of Semeru, Bromo, and Tengger).

Culturally speaking, the people can be distinguished in five cultural areas. The first group inhabits the western part of the Province (Blitar, Magetan, Ngawi, Pacitan, Ponorogo, Tulungagung, Trenggalek), which has a close affiliation to the Surakarta and Yogyakarta culture. The second is the culture area of *Brang Wetan*, the so-called remnant culture of the Hindu Majapahit kingdom (1200–1518), which can be found in the central part of the province (Jombang, Malang, Mojokerto, Surabaya, Nganjuk, Sidoarjo). The third is the coastal area of the northwest coast, which covers Tuban, Lamongan, Bojonegoro and Gresik. The people of this group mostly speak the Javanese *Brang Wetan* and live side by side with the Madurese. The fourth is the Madurese cultural area, which consists of the whole island of Madura and the northeast coast of East Java (Situbondo, Bondowoso, Lumajang, Jember, Pasuruan, Probolinggo). The fifth is the Osing culture area, which covers the whole district of Banyuwangi (the eastern part of East Java). Regarding the East Javanese culture, in general the scholars speak about the Javanese-Madurese-Osing culture.¹⁶³ All this, however, just represents the rural-agrarian or folk culture, which is different from the urban-industrial or ‘elite’ culture of big cities such as Surabaya, Malang, and Jember. The former belongs to a homogeneous society and the latter to a pluralistic one. The distinction might be in accord with the one that the scholars use to make between the ‘small tradition’ of rural culture and the ‘great tradition’ of urban culture. Sociologist Jamie Mackie says that East Java is more urbanized than the other provinces of Indonesia.¹⁶⁴

The Protestant Churches of East Java

As we have already mentioned in the beginning of this chapter, Christianity in East Java started with a circle of ‘Saints of Surabaya’ with the German-born Johannes Emde as their initial centre. One of the reasons for Emde (1774–1859, born in Arolsen, Germany), to seek his fortune in tropical countries as a watchmaker, was to test the truth of Genesis 8:22 implying that there was no region on earth without winter season. In 1814 Emde was visited by missionary Joseph Kam who encouraged him to spread Christianity among the Eurasian and native population. Emde, himself married to a Javanese woman, started

¹⁶² Beatty 1999.

¹⁶³ H. Supriyanto 1996:1–6; S. Yuwana Sudikan 1999:1–8; cf. Hars Nasruddin 1992:94.

¹⁶⁴ Jamie Mackie 1997:48–50.

religious services in his house. His wife was very instrumental in gathering some native people also among his following. Emde was mediating in the baptism of several native people, whose baptisms were dispensed by ministers of the 'white' *Indische Kerk*. Emde received sections of the translation of the Gospel of Mark and of religious tracts, produced by Brückner in Semarang.

Most of the small group of Javanese who were won by Emde lived in the village of Wiung, on the outskirts of the predominantly European and Eurasian town of Surabaya, the second town of the colony and the great harbour for the sugar, coffee, indigo, and tobacco plantations of East Java. Emde considered conversion to Christianity also as part of a process of becoming westernised. Male and female converts had to cut their long hair, in the church men had to take off their *blangkon*, a woven and painted cloth worn as the typical Javanese hairdress, and they were no longer allowed to wear the *keris*, the short sword worn as a sign of free men, although the *blankon* and *keris* were signs of proper Javanese clothing. Converts even had to give up traditional Javanese dress for a European outfit. The Javanese *gamelan* music was absolutely forbidden, as well as circumcision, participation in common ceremonial meals in villages (*slametan*), visits to the graves of ancestors, cockfighting and gambling. They did not join the services in the Dutch speaking Protestant church, but Emde considered some knowledge of Dutch as necessary for a better understanding of the new religion. These aspects made the preaching by Emde unfit for the inauguration of true Javanese Christianity. Some people called these Javanese converts *Kristen londo tanpa kursi*, "White Christians without chairs."

Coenraad Laurens Coolen has also already been mentioned above as the initiator of the first long-lasting foundation of a Christian community in East Java. Until his death in 1873 Coolen was the leader of a community of people who wanted to realise a Javanese style of Christian life. They created Christian expressions in the traditional shadow play or *wayang*, used Javanese music and dance and articulated their religion as some kind of *ngelmu*, a magico-mythical practice. Their *mantra* resembled the Muslim confession of faith about God as the Only God and Muhammad as his prophet: they confessed their faith as, "God is great and the prophet Jesus is his son." In their liturgy this was repeated again and again. The Ten Commandments, the Apostles' Creed and the prayer Our Father were also repeated as basic texts in the congregations. It was not only the farmers, working on the new agricultural settlement owned by this former soldier, but also many people from outside who came seeking knowledge and spiritual insight from this founder of a new Javanese-Christian tradition. They frequented Ngoro especially on the occasions when the *wayang* was performed. Ngoro was not an exclusively Christian village, although Coolen had set the rule that no manual work should be undertaken on Sundays. There were many farmers who wanted to remain Muslim. Coolen

even had an *imam* installed who had to see to it that the Muslims observed the elementary Muslim rules and customs, whereas he himself remained the pastor of the Christians.¹⁶⁵

Coolen was initially hesitant to administer Baptism and the Holy Supper for his faithful. Probably this was caused not only by his wish to develop a style of Christianity distinct from the European one of the larger cities of Java. At the beginning of his spiritual career in the 1810s he divorced his European wife and took a Javanese wife on his estate of Ngoro. After the five children with his first wife, he had six children with one or even two Javanese wives in Ngoro. This caused many problems with the Surabaya Saints led by Emde. They looked with mixed feelings at the self-declared Christian leader Coolen, and took him often for a syncretic and deviating charlatan.

An intermediary figure between Emde and Coolen was Paulus Tosari (1813–1882), from a family originating from the island of Madura. Like Sadrach, Tosari had studied at Islamic boarding schools, *pesantren*, but during a visit to Ngoro had become a follower of Coolen through the help of some people from the village of Wiung, close to Surabaya. In company with some people from Wiung, Tosari was baptised in Surabaya by Emde on 12 September 1844. These ‘dissident Christians’ could not return to Ngoro and therefore they started clearing the forest around a deserted settlement that later was given the name Mojowarno, six kilometres from Ngoro. This finally became the cradle of Christianity in East Java. While Coolen’s former assistant Abisai Ditotruno was the vigorous character that organised the initial clearing of the forest, it was Paulus Tosari who became the first spiritual leader, until his death in 1882.

These small pockets of Christianity were made known to the outside world by the inspection trip of L.J. van Rhijn (1846–1848) who asked a permit from the governor general to send missionaries to this region. From 1851 on it was Dutch NZG missionary Jelle Jellesma (1817–1858) who served this new congregation, followed by W. Hoesoo between 1860–1864. They were wise and modest missionaries who could respect indigenous leaders like Tosari and did not replace him but joined him in his leadership. Jellesma and his followers had the strong conviction that Javanese Christians should not be isolated from Javanese culture. They also knew that they could not do the basic work themselves, not alone because of the scarcity of foreign workers but for the single reason that the Colonial Government would only allow unpretentious missionary work by European people in this overwhelming Muslim region. Jellesma made many trips outside Mojowarno but mostly concentrated on the training of native Javanese evangelists and teachers. Between 1848 and 1849

¹⁶⁵ Van Akkeren 1970:61.

Jellesma had studied Javanese with Bible translator J. Gericke in Surakarta and he was instrumental in the publication of the full Javanese translation of the bible in 1854.

The origin of East Javanese Christianity in new and isolated villages like Ngoro and Mojowarno could create communities that were really embedded in Javanese culture and truly Christian, but also, like the Mennonite villages of North-Central Java, quite separated from their environment. The settlement Mojowarno received some extra financial input from missionary organisations and the Colonial Government. In 1871 a great storehouse was opened to support agriculture. The opening in 1894 of a hospital in Mojowarno and the start of model schools did not really open it up for integration into the overwhelmingly Muslim culture of East Java. It was quite strange that the resident of East Java charged all the greater mosques to give financial subsidies to this hospital, because many of its patients were Muslims. Later, colonial advisor Snouck Hurgronje protested against this measure, because in this way “the European administration abused its authority by supporting the Christian missionary activities through contributions that were taken from specific Muslim sources.”¹⁶⁶

Local congregations not only emerged in Ngoro and Mojowarno. About 1880 there were already more than 20 small rural communities in a very dispersed diaspora. There were some congregations among migrants from heavily Muslim Madura. Their best-known centre became Sumberpakem in the Besuki region (1887, J.P. Esser). The number of congregations would grow to some 70 in the 1950s, totalling some 35,000 Protestants at that time. Several of these settlements were set up as new villages that could start through buying a tobacco plantation (Kendal-Payah, 1880) or by government permit to clear forest (Parerejo, 1899). On the whole this Javanese Protestant Christianity remained mostly a rural movement.

The first local congregation to be declared independent was the major establishment of Mojowarno in 1926. They elected a church council and had to find and control their own finances. Many rural congregations were quite reluctant to follow this step of Mojowarno. They were afraid that they were too poor to bear the responsibility of financial independence. While in urban regions the spirit of nationalism had grown faster, this was still absent in these lonely Christian villages. In Swaru, at some 25 km or five hours walking from Malang, a first congregation was established in the 1870s due to the work of a Dutch evangelist who cleared the forest for a new settlement. But in the second town of East Java, Malang, a missionary settled and started a proper Javanese congregation only in 1923. The first church that organised services in

¹⁶⁶ Snouck Hurgronje 1959:806–807.

Javanese opened only in 1930 in Surabaya, the major town of the region. Until the 1950s the towns were mostly places for European and Chinese people, who were served by ministers from the *Indische Kerk* or by Chinese preachers.

The process towards independent congregations that started in Mojowarno resulted in the *Gereja Kristen Jawi Wetan* (GKJW, East Java Christian Church), a church that held its first Synod on 10–11 December 1931 in Mojowarno. After the independent Batak Church HKBP in 1930, the GKJW was the second in a row of churches gaining independence. Later in the 1930s the churches of Minahasa and the Moluccas followed, while the Protestants of Timor only obtained independence in the later 1940s. But until 1942 the GKJW was still led by Dutch missionaries of the NZG. The latter also retained a strong formal position in the church order of 1931: they chaired the presbyteries (*classis*) and the general synod. Their official title, however, became *guru kadiwasan*, teachers who should lead towards adulthood. Hendrik Kraemer served the Protestant mission in Indonesia between 1922 and 1935. He was the great promoter of this move towards ecclesiastical independence. In the official recognition of the Colonial Government, dated 27 June 1932, this church was called *Oost-Javaansche Kerk*, but the Javanese name became the common one. It was never changed for an Indonesian one, although Indonesian became more and more used after independence. The link of this Protestant church GKJW with the Reformed Church of the Netherlands remained strong and some even considered themselves as an Indonesian or East Javanese branch of that Dutch church.

Although Jellesma had already opened a simple Bible school in Mojowarno in 1851, it took a long time before proper theological training developed. The teachers' training in Mojowarno was often interrupted and in the period around 1900 most promising youngsters were sent to Depok for training. The first minister, Mas Dryo Mestoko, was ordained only during the process of independence for Mojowarno in 1926. In 1928 *Bale Wiyoto*, 'House of Faith' was established as a proper theological school under the leadership of Dr. Barend M. Schuurman who was a good scholar and great admirer of Javanese language and culture. He directed the school to become a place of open dialogue with that great tradition. In 1931 a grand church was built in Malang in the traditional Javanese style of a *pendopo*, an open structure with a great roof, but no closed walls. In fact this remained the only Protestant church in Java to be built in this accommodated style, that later was used in a much braver architecture in the island of Bali. In Malang, the most important urban centre of the GKJW, besides some prestigious schools a great hospital also was built in the 1930s as a sign of the dynamics of Protestantism in East Java.

Also in the 1930s this East Javanese church sent the first indigenous Protestant missionaries to Bali, after the hot debates related to the work of the CAMA evangelist Tsang Kam Fuk between 1929 and 1933 (see p. 734).

After independence in 1945, it took many years before the scattered congregations, separated through many actions of the allied and Dutch forces against revolutionary guerrilla fighters, could build their church structures again. Anti-Dutch feelings in these regions were so strong that it was only in 1951 that a Dutch lecturer was invited for *Bale Wiyoto* after it reopened in 1949. In its further development this school sought help from the much larger *Duta Wacana* theological school of Yogyakarta.

East Java was in the period 1965–1966 perhaps the most violent region of Indonesia, besides Bali. In the aftermath of the turmoil related to the collapse of the Soekarno government and Soeharto's raise to power, it was the Islamic youth movement of *Ansor*, a branch of the *Nahdlatul Ulama* (NU), the organisation of the rural Muslim leaders, with its centre in East Java that joined the army in a bloody cleansing of the region from communists. Many former communists sought a religious shelter. There was a revival of Hinduism in the region, but many more turned to Christianity. This not only increased the number of Roman Catholics and GKJW Protestants, but also the Chinese Protestant church GKI (see chapter nineteen). It also resulted in a much stronger presence of Evangelical and Pentecostal churches in the region. The town of Batu, a mountain resort close to Malang, became a concentration of many Bible schools. Once a tourist book even noted that, "God has provided a nice place for those who love Him" (1 Cor. 2:9) with reference to the many foreign missionaries in Batu in the 1980s and 1990s. With 153,000 members in 2000, the GKJW is smaller than the Roman Catholic community, who counted 266,596 for East Java in that year. Together these two mainstream churches counted for about 40% of the small minority of Christian in this region (see above, 2.3%, only slightly higher than the percentage for West Java).

The fragmentation of Christianity in this region became quite visible in the series of violent events that started on 9 June 1996 in Surabaya and were followed by similar but even more serious incidents in Situbondo on 10 October 1996. In Surabaya a mob of some three thousand people made a devastating tour in the northern suburb of Sidotopo. Two Bethel churches, a Gospel Tabernacle Church, two Pentecostal Churches, a Pentecostal Tabernacle Church, a church of the Assemblies of God, a GKJW and a HKBP Batak Church, besides an office of the GPIB, the successor to the mainstream Protestant Church of West Indonesia, were severely damaged and in some cases totally destroyed. Many of the churches were small structures, some even simple garages that were in a clandestine way (against formal Indonesian law) used as a room for Christian services. Initially there were also comments that the many small new churches among a predominant Muslim population had caused envy and irritation. Another analysis stipulated that it was an orchestrated answer to attacks on a mosque in Dili, East Timor, in early 1996. This case in Dili was a protest against the Indonesian presence in the

former Portuguese colony. For this reason also a Protestant church, used by Indonesian migrants, had been destroyed on that occasion. A third reason for the series of attacks was given as a chain of small facts like someone who had urinated against a mosque, a dog urinating within a mosque and Muslim children who were invited to attend Sunday school.

Four months after the Surabaya attacks a similar series of incidents occurred in another East Javanese town, Situbondo. There was an odd start to this series in which the Court of Justice of Situbondo, a number of Protestant and Catholic schools and 23 churches in Situbondo and surrounding places were seriously damaged or even totally ruined. In one of the churches that were set on fire the minister, his wife and three children died. The antecedent of the Situbondo riots was extremely strange. A simple-minded Muslim, known only by the name of Saleh (Sholeh), according to some reports even a lunatic, had stated "God was a creature, *makhluk*, that the Prophet Muhammad was not God's messenger and the Qur'an was conceived by man."¹⁶⁷ This Saleh was a student at one of the minor Muslim boarding schools, *pesantren*, in this area, known as the 'Athos of Indonesia' for its many and very large Muslim boarding schools. Saleh was brought to court and was sentenced to five years' prison. Numerous youngsters did not agree with this 'light sentence' and asked for the death penalty. They attacked the building of the court, Chinese shops, Christian churches, not only in the town of Situbondo itself, but at other places as well, up to a distance of 40 kilometres, going to these places on trucks that were made available. Only after about five hours the army intervened.

Immediately after this tragic event there were rumours about the real causes. Some serious sources mentioned the growing political tension preceding "Soeharto's End-Game." The old general, born in 1921, would be elected again as the result of the 1997 general elections, to become confirmed by the new parliament in March 1998. Soeharto's beloved wife died in April 1996, and since then the aging President looked like someone who was no longer in power. Therefore, army generals and others who played their game in politics were looking for power. A general situation of insecurity could only give more power to these persons. Moreover, East Java, known as a very strong Muslim area, the cradle of the traditionalist movement of the *Nahdlatul Ulama*, could only be controlled when the Muslim leaders could be controlled. Blaming them for disorder would be a very strategic step towards stricter control. The *Nahdlatul Ulama* leader Abdurrahman Wahid later accused some opponents (sectarian Muslim leaders in cooperation with some members of the military who provided the trucks to bring hired youngsters to the place of the riots) that "they had received some US\$ 100,000 and used it to buy shares in the

¹⁶⁷ Report in the national weekly *Forum Keadilan*, 4 November 1996:97.

Jakarta Stock Exchanges.”¹⁶⁸ Some more general comments called attention to the growing gap between rich and poor in Indonesia, especially in one of the poorest provinces of the country, East Java, where in all major towns trade and commerce were dominated by a Chinese minority, who could become rich thanks to a coalition with corrupt Javanese/Indonesian government officials. Some commentators also called attention to the growing influence of a-political evangelicalism in Protestant churches in Indonesia, where individualistic ethics, especially amongst first generation Chinese converts to Christianity, showed a combination of individual piety with social shrewdness.¹⁶⁹

Catholics in East Java

Between 1808 and 1927 East Java was part of the Batavia Prefecture Apostolic (1807–1842) and Vicariate Apostolic (1842–1927). In this period the few priests who lived in the town of Surabaya concentrated on pastoral work with the Europeans and Eurasians in the town and on some plantations.

In 1895 a rich planter donated money for a proper Catholic church building in Malang. Thereupon the Jesuit priest G. Jonckbloet took up this post, which became a sign for the existence of the Catholics in the area. His work, however, was mostly for the plantation area for which Malang was an important administrative and financial center. Besides, it was a town where planters could enjoy entertainment and social interaction in western style.

What about the native Catholics? The first Javanese Catholics were noted in the Baptism Book (*Libri Paroeciales*) of the Parish of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, Malang, years later. They were a woman born in Salatiga (baptised in 1910), a woman from Kediri and another one from Jombang (1917). In other words, at the turn of the twentieth century, the Church of Malang started a new phase in its history with a new parish of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in the center of the city. At this time, a new policy of the Dutch colonial government, known as the ethical policy was promulgated in 1901. The policy, which was supposed to help the natives due to the ‘debt of honour’ (*eereschuld*) of the colonial government, was theoretically a part of the Christian motivation to empower the people to live a better life.¹⁷⁰ There was a cry for ‘*kemajuan*’ (progress) and for better living conditions; and so a real need for Western education. The implementation of the policy ironically strengthened and perpetuated the superiority of the Colonial Government and worsened the life of the natives.¹⁷¹

¹⁶⁸ In the newspapers *Jawa Pos* and *Surya*, 11 June 1997, quoted in Tahalele 1997:8.

¹⁶⁹ Steenbrink 1998; Aritonang 2004:463–469.

¹⁷⁰ Sudhiarsa 2001:108–113.

¹⁷¹ Dhakidae 2003:88–90.

Regarding the Catholic mission, the people of Surabaya had become acquainted with Catholicism when the Society of Brothers of St. Aloysius (CSA) from Oudenbosch opened a school and boarding house in 1862. A year later (1863) the Ursulin Sisters (OSU) started a school in the city. These brothers and sisters taught in Dutch and their boarding schools were very popular with the planters and colonial officials who lived in small places, often outside Java. Because of this half of their pupils were not Catholics but Protestants.

Half a century later the Holy Spirit Sisters (SSpS) came to Surabaya and took over the Hospital (St. Vincent de Paul Hospital) in 1925. All this mission work was directed to the Europeans, and to the natives as well. Regarding the Christian message, the Church tried hard to reach the Javanese too, but it seemed a good result needed much more time. Progress was too slow. Only few local people embraced Christianity.

In the early decades of the twentieth century parishes were opened in other cities such as Jombang, Mojokerto, Probolinggo.¹⁷² The foundation of the Church of Mary in Surabaya, completed in 1900, was an evident sign of the existence of a Catholic congregation there. Later on, in 1920 in the southern part of the city, the church of the Sacred Heart of Jesus (the present Cathedral of Surabaya) was built.

In 1922 the Sacred Congregation of the Propagation of Faith decided to transfer the mission in East Java from the Jesuits to the Lazarists and the Carmelites. The Lazarists took over the mission in the western part of East Java including the districts of Rembang and Blora of the Central Java Province (now the Diocese of Surabaya). The Carmelites were entrusted with the mission in the eastern part including the island of Madura (now the Diocese of Malang).

Five Lazarist priests of the Dutch Province came to Surabaya on 30 June 1923, following the footsteps of the saint-missionary, John Gabriel Perboyre and his confreres who visited the city in mid-1835 on their way to China. The five missionaries were Dr. Th. de Backere (the mission superior), Cornelius Klamer, J.H. Wolters, Th. Heuvelmans, and E. Sarneel.¹⁷³ They took over the mission in the western part of East Java, the residencies of Surabaya, Rembang, and Kediri, and started their pastoral work from their Surabaya headquarters. The eastern part of East Java (the residencies of Malang, Besuki and Madura) was offered to the Dutch Carmelites. The three first priests who came to Malang were Clemens van der Pas, Paschalis Breukel, and Linus Henckens. They received a hearty welcome from L. Sondaal SJ when they arrived in Malang on 6 July 1923. When they took over the mission from the Jesuits, there were three Catholic congregations with their own church, namely

¹⁷² Boonekamp 1974:952-953.

¹⁷³ A. Riyanto 2003.

St. Anthony of Pasuruan (1895), the Sacred Heart of Jesus of Malang (1906), and the Immaculate Virgin Mary of Lawang (1916). Since 1923 the priests concentrated their mission more seriously on the Javanese and the Chinese. The Catholic Church developed its ministry in the field of education, health care and social services. A convert from Central Java, Raden Simon Soedarmo, one of the small numbers of committed lay persons, is still remembered for his important role in education.

Surabaya was a unique metropolitan and multi-ethnic city by that time. The Javanese, Madurese, Chinese, Japanese, British-Indians, and Arabs mixed together with a very small number of native Catholics, less than a hundred people. Even less were the native Catholics in the interior. In his letter of 11 November 1926 mission superior Th. de Backere mentioned some difficulties for evangelisation that he had to cope with, such as the lack of personnel (priests or religious brothers and sisters), the suspicion of the Muslims, a lack of financial support and the challenge from the mission activities of the Methodists and Freemasonry.¹⁷⁴

On 27 April 1927 the Prefecture Apostolic of Malang was founded and on 15 May 1928 the Prefecture Apostolic of Surabaya was founded where the Lazarist De Backere served until 1937. From the very beginning De Backere had a vision that the Church should take root in the Javanese culture. It was in line with this strategy that at Christmas 1927 for the first time the Catholic congregation of Blitar celebrated Mass accompanied by Javanese songs. Cl. Sindoeperwata, a passionate Javanese teacher in Blitar, had made the translations from Dutch hymns.¹⁷⁵

De Backere himself never became acquainted with the Javanese language and culture. As head of the mission in Surabaya he was very much involved with the European and Eurasian population of that city. In 1933 De Backere created a very serious crisis amongst the Catholic leadership of the colony by preparing a pastoral letter for Easter, urging his flock to stay united in a single Catholic Party. In fact the national Catholic Party, IKP, *Indische Katholieke Partij*, was at that time controlled by newly arrived white Europeans, so-called *totok*. In Surabaya the majority of the Eurasians had become members of a religiously neutral political party of Indo-Europeans. In order to restore the unity of all Catholics, De Backere wanted to issue a pastoral letter against this *Indo-Europeesche Vereeniging* (IEV, Eurasian Union). Those Catholic Eurasians who continued their membership of IEV would automatically be excommunicated. There was quite a reaction of panic among the other Catholic leaders of Java. The bishops and prefects tried to convince De Backere that this was an impossible measure that would only chase away many nominal Catholics from

¹⁷⁴ Riyanto 2003:52–57.

¹⁷⁵ J. Hadiwikarta, 2001:341.

the church. They sent a telegram to the papal nuncio in Sydney and finally they sought the mediation of a high government official, Attorney General and staunch Catholic R. Verheijen. The latter persuaded De Backere that he could not take such a drastic decision against the majority of the Apostolic Prefects and Vicars of Java. Finally, De Backere surrendered and blocked the distribution of this decree.¹⁷⁶

In contrast to the situation in West Java, De Backere was quite keen on the creation of Javanese-language primary schools, and by 1931 he had already opened 59 schools. Many of these schools were concentrated in the Blitar-Kediri region, which was somewhat over-optimistically called the counterpart of the Muntilan-Mendut region of Central Java. The great hope was not fulfilled. In 1939 there were only some 1,200 Javanese Catholics in the triangle of Blitar, Kediri and Madiun. Quite a few of these were from a plantation near Kediri where the Lazarist priest J.H. Wolters had established a school. The architect Henri Maclaine-Pont who also worked for the Trowulan museum, the site of the thirteenth century Majapahit Empire, built a beautiful compound in this region. Situated on the slope of Mount Wilis around 10 km from Kediri, Pohsarang (1936) was and still is a prominent example of the contextualisation of Catholic doctrine within the Javanese culture.¹⁷⁷ It is also a well-known site for pilgrimage and a Marian shrine in East Java. The holy site expresses the encounter between the symbols of Christian faith and the geniality of Javanese architecture.

In the Malang region there were a few plantations with Catholic administrators who promoted Catholicism among their personnel (as was the case with the Schmutzer plantation of Ganjuran in Central Java). The best example was Balearjosari, close to the town of Malang. Since 1911 A.W.C. Blijdenstein had been the administrator of a rubber plantation that was owned by a Chinese family, the San Lien Kongsj. Blijdenstein was a graduate of a teacher training college in Maastricht, the Netherlands, where also some agricultural science was taught. He started in the plantation of Balearjosari a Catholic community that at his departure in early 1933 counted some 700 Catholic Javanese.¹⁷⁸ There were still 582 Javanese Catholics here in 1939, about a quarter of all Javanese Catholics in this region at that time. After leaving the plantation the unmarried Blijdenstein went to the Netherlands, where he studied theology to become a priest. He was ordained to the priesthood in 1938 and became the parish priest of Jember.

Another small Javanese parish existed in Soekarno, the result of the migration of Catholics from Central Java to the less populated regions of East Java, where people could earn a living in the booming business of the plantation.

¹⁷⁶ More details in: Steenbrink 2007–II:57–59.

¹⁷⁷ Muskens 1974–IIIb:969–971; Tondowidjojo 2001–IIIId:6–7.

¹⁷⁸ A biography and report in *De Koerier*, 16 and 17 February 1933.

Another congregation of Javanese started in Watesbelung, close to Tumpang, where 380 Javanese Catholics were counted in 1939.

Theofilus de Backere also longed for the presence of native clergy in his Prefecture. His idea of establishing a formation for native clergy was supported by his confreres.¹⁷⁹ When he left Surabaya for the Netherlands on 24 December 1936 there were 8 Javanese seminarians for the diocesan priesthood, who studied in Yogyakarta. After a long process, finally a minor seminary was founded in Garum, Blitar, in 1959. Later on, in 1962, a major seminary for Lazarists, which was originally set up in Rembang (1953–1955), was moved to Kediri. In this place the seminarians could study philosophy and theology before they moved to Malang in 1971.¹⁸⁰ Prior to this, the seminarians had been sent to complete their study for the priesthood abroad, in the Netherlands, in the USA, in Italy, and in Australia.¹⁸¹

The Church suffered a lot during the Japanese occupation (1942–1945) following the war that broke out in Europe and Asia. The still very modest progress of the mission over the previous three decades came to a sudden halt. The property of the church, of the Chinese and of the Europeans was robbed and destroyed.¹⁸² All European missionaries were interned and badly treated. What about Catholic faith instruction? The ministry was taken over by the laity. In Blitar, for instance, the role of the laity was extremely important. Let us mention just a few of these brave people: T.S. Wirjoatmodjo, A. Gunawan Wibisono, R.M.S. Brosoedirdjo, and Ismail Harjono.

After the declaration of independence in 1945 the situation in the plantation region remained insecure for a very long time. Shortly after the Dutch recognised independence, a new conflict arose that caused that all Dutch planters to be expelled from the country (1956). Also Dutch missionaries were no longer granted new visas, although the residing clergy could stay in their mission. During the Second Vatican Council Bishop J. Klooster of Surabaya (1911–1990) asked the Lazarists of the Italian Province to work in his diocese. On 9 September 1961 J. Klooster pronounced his oath as an Indonesian citizen and was installed the same day as bishop of the diocese of Surabaya. He served this church until he retired in April 1982.

A.J. Dibjekarjana (1917–2002) was consecrated as his successor on 16 December 1982. He was the first diocesan priest of Surabaya, ordained in 1945. It was hard for him to accept this appointment and for some time he received treatment for his fragile health. He took up the ministry of the diocese with the confidence that he did not work by himself but always in

¹⁷⁹ Cf. Tondowidjojo 1995a:36.

¹⁸⁰ Muskens 1974–IIIb:998.

¹⁸¹ In 1971 the formation house for the Lazarists moved to Malang. In collaboration with the Carmelites the two Congregations founded the *Sekolah Tinggi Filsafat Teologi* 'Widya Sasana' (School of Philosophy and Theology 'Centre for Knowledge') in that same year.

¹⁸² A. Riyanto 2003:104.

collaboration with the laity, priests and religious men and women. His motto was “May all be one.”

During the pastoral symposium held in Pacet (1993) the priests of the diocese agreed to renew their pastoral work. They defined two priorities, proclamation (*kerygma*) and communion (*koinonia*). The fundamental reason for first priority (*kerygma*) is the urgent need to build a Christian community that is faithful to the Apostolic Creed, so that their knowledge and comprehension of their faith becomes wider, profound and missionary. The fundamental reason for the second priority (*koinonia*) is to build a community of the people of God centred on Jesus Christ, the head of the Church. Bishop Y. Hadiwikarta (1944–2003; bishop 1994–2003), consecrated on 25 July 1994 as the head of the diocese of Surabaya, supported the new mission thrust and encouraged the faithful in this line with his motto *Pastor Bonus* (John 10:11–14).

A similar vision of mission has been promoted in the diocese of Malang. Bishop A.E.Y. Albers, O.Carm. (1904–1980), the leader of the diocese, took care for this region from 1935 and it was developed by his successors. Nevertheless, the Catholics are still a small minority, only 82,785 or about 0.5% of total population (1999 statistics). Albers went into retirement on 12 April 1973 and was replaced by F.X. Hadisumarta, O.Carm, (1932–2003) consecrated on 16 July 1973. Hadisumarta served the diocese of Malang until 1988, before he moved to become bishop of Sorong, Papua. H.J.S. Pandoyoputro O.Carm., took over the diocese on 3 September 1989. Ever since the time of bishop Hadisumarta the diocese of Malang has promoted the mission of communion for the people, as the Second Vatican Council defines the church as the community of the faithful. The last synod of the diocese (2002) also put ‘community of the faithful’ as the vision of the diocese of Malang.

Missionary perspectives during the last decades, 1970–2000

According to demographic data, the Catholics are a small and scattered minority both in the urban and the rural areas. For years the dissemination of the Christian faith was viewed as a threat to the Muslim majority. Prior to the Second Vatican Council there was not a good relationship between the Catholics and the Protestants. They were rivals to each other as J.D. Wolterbeek mentioned.¹⁸³ The relationship, however, has been improving ever since Vatican II.

In the light of this context, the question arises, then, as to how the Church regards this multi-religious society as the context for doing mission and for theologising. As a matter of fact, inter-religious dialogue and ecumenical

¹⁸³ J.D. Wolterbeek 1939:259.

endeavours have increasingly become the real way of living the Christian life in this province. Many are aware of this ecumenical context, although they could not go further than simply being neighbours. In other words, the Church still needs a new theological thrust in being a participant in developing the society of East Java and in being the salt for the world as a whole.

Since the 'Situbondo tragedy' (10 October 1996), the Church has tirelessly promoted an inclusive paradigm of mission. Leaders of the religious traditions have worked shoulder to shoulder in developing a so-called *persaudaraan sejati* (true brotherhood). An intense relationship has become increasingly important not only for a better understanding of one another, but also in building up a new way of being brothers and sisters among people of various religious affiliations. The *Forum Persaudaraan Sejati* (Forum for True Brotherhood) was founded after the 'Situbondo tragedy' of 1996. The goal of this *Forum* is, primarily, to share experience and knowledge among the participants of all religious groups, to build a so-called 'true brotherhood'. Despite the destruction caused by the '10 October tragedy', many realise it was a blessing in disguise for the whole society. The Catholic Church has been made aware that God has opened the hearts of the people to finally promote an inclusive and plural society. Up to the tragedy it seemed that their hearts were closed within an exclusive communion.

A new theological perspective has emerged. A paradigm shift from an ecclesiocentric (church-centred) view of the plan of God for the world to a regnocentric (Kongdom-centred) view has been discussed ever since. God, the Word made flesh and the Spirit are active in the world, leading it to the fullness of the Reign of God. The religions too are elements of this cosmic covenant and the church has the privilege to participate in this mystery of salvation. The question how to find roots in a local context and to open up to the whole world, in a word how to build a contextualising church, has become the main concern of the church. In this case, the *Widya Sasana* School of Philosophy and Theology (1971) and the Pastoral Institute of Indonesia both in Malang, have engaged themselves to be agents of these cross-cultural and theological enterprises.¹⁸⁴ Through seminars and workshops the schools try to serve the needs of the people.

The *Widya Sasana* School of Philosophy and Theology was founded to fulfil the needs of the Carmelites and the Lazarists in maintaining their mission work, in particular to meet the need of mission in the two dioceses of Surabaya and Malang. Later on the school was opened for members of other congregations (priests, brothers and sisters), candidates for diocesan priesthood and the laity.

¹⁸⁴ IPI 1967.

Moreover, mission priority is focused on pastoral care for the youth, family ministry, and contextual catechism. The Church realises the need to provide a continuous ministry for the youth since they are the future of the church. It is also very urgent to empower Catholic families with Christian values. In the same way, the so-called ‘catechism for all’—not only for those to be baptised in the future and integrated to the contemporary issues—has been promoted. To meet these needs, for instance, Catholic associations such as *Komisi Remaja Katolik* (Catholic Youth Commission), *Keluarga Mahasiswa Katolik* (Catholic Student Family), Marriage Encounter, Choice, *Komunitas Keluarga Kudus* (Holy Family Community), *Pastoral Pendampingan Buruh Keuskupan Surabaya* (Pastoral Ministry for Workers of the Surabaya Diocese) have been founded. Besides all these efforts, many people realise that the local Church of East Java is still in the making.

Koernia Atje Soejana (West Java), Budi Subanar SJ (Catholics, Central Java), Alle G. Hoekema (Protestants, Central Java) Raymundus I Made Sudhiarsa SVD (East Java), Karel A. Steenbrink (Catholics, and general editing)

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CHAPTER FIFTEEN

A SMALL CHRISTIAN FLOCK IN BALI

Among the great cultural and religious varieties of Indonesia, the island Bali shows one of the most spectacular examples. For reasons that are not clear until today, the island did not accept Islam in the fourteenth-eighteenth centuries, while all surrounding islands turned towards that new religion. Java on its western, Lombok and Sumbawa on its eastern side, Sulawesi as well as southern Kalimantan embraced Islam in that period, but the island of Bali remained devoted to its own variety of Hinduism. On the margin of Balinese society some trade with outsiders, especially the Dutch, took place, in the harbours only. In the nineteenth century, slowly, colonial society could gain some influence in Balinese society. Since the 1850s the Dutch government had already established a strong presence on North Bali with Singaraja as its centre. But only in 1908 was the whole island truly conquered in a bloody battle in South Bali. Since then the colonial administrators remained very cautious and did not like to trouble Balinese society too much. In order to prevent disturbances, foreign missionaries were not allowed to work in the island.

The ban on missionary work, which lasted until the mid-1930s, was also based on the tragic outcome of the first Christian propaganda in the 1860s. In 1864 three missionaries of the Utrecht Mission Society (UZV) arrived in Buleleng. They started language training, and with much trouble they were able to establish a small school where never more than seven pupils attended classes. In 1873 the first and only baptism in this period took place. The convert, I Gusti Karangasem, a migrant from East Bali, disappeared shortly after embracing the new religion. Only in June 1881 was there renewed contact between the only remaining missionary, J. de Vroom, and this first Balinese Christian. Apparently the convert, embarrassed by his condition as an isolated Christian, had sought support from the missionary but he received only a severe scrutinizing about his orthodoxy. Thereupon he asked several Muslim friends to kill the missionary. I Gusti Karangasem was executed together with his associates who had killed the missionary.

In this period there was an offer to the Catholic mission by language researcher for the Bible Society Herman Neubronner van der Tuuk, working from 1849 until 1857 in Batakland, and after a period in Lampung, South Sumatera, from 1870 until his death in 1894 in Bali. Van der Tuuk was an outspoken agnostic who was glad that from 1873 his salary was no longer was paid by the Bible Society but by the colonial government. He deemed the

Protestant mission as 'absolutely inappropriate' to work in Bali. The Catholics with their processions, statues and paintings of saints, richly decorated churches and ceremonies, would probably be more successful in this island. According to this linguistic scholar lower caste Balinese would be happy to embrace Catholicism in order to escape the inequalities of the feudal social system. Van der Tuuk was willing to give the Catholic missionaries courses in Balinese. In the 1870s there were no Catholic missionaries available for the new mission. A formal permission to start the mission was given to the Catholics in 1891 after repeated requests and Van der Tuuk's suggestion was renewed, but again there was a shortage of missionaries.¹

After the effective conquest of Bali in 1908 no missionary activity was allowed although there were repeated requests from the Protestant and Catholic missionary organisations. Only in September 1920 was permission was given to the Catholics to start a Dutch language school in Denpasar or Gianyar. However, due to the death of Prefect Noyen (of Flores) during a trip to Europe, on 24 February 1921, the implementation of the plan was postponed. Noyen's successor, Arnold Verstraelen, had to renew the request for an HIS, now to be opened in Bangli. Verstraelen sent his formal letter on 11 June 1924. On 24 June of that year Volksraad member Tjok Gede Raka Soekawati gave a passionate speech against the influence of any Christian mission in Bali, "Western influence of any kind is welcomed by us, but not the Christian religion."² This was the beginning of a long debate that has been described by Dutch missionary Hendrik Kraemer (1933) in a book as "The Missionary Battle for Bali." In 1924 a private HIS with a Hindu-Balinese background was established in Klungkung and the missionary proposals were rejected.

While classical missionary organisations were still active lobbying for a permit to start work in Bali, all of a sudden in 1930 a Chinese evangelist, hired by CAMA, *Christian and Missionary Alliance*, started preaching in Bali with the permission of the colonial administration, to serve the small group of Chinese Christians in Bali. This man, Tsang Kam Fuk (later also called Tsang To Hang, a recent arrival from China with no good command of Malay, speaking only Chinese) started work among Chinese migrants in Bali, mostly small shopkeepers who in many cases were married to Balinese women. Through these connections a group of Balinese in the region of Mengwi were attracted to hear about the new religion.

There were rumours that this group too were poor lower caste and illiterate people who wanted to escape the heavy burden of the many obligations of Balinese social and religious life with its many and expensive ceremonies and

¹ Steenbrink 2003:66–67; 392–394.

² Quoted in: Muskens 1974–IIIb:1408.

forced labour for building and restoration of temples. But there are also indications that the first Balinese converts in the Mengwi region were followers of a Javanese primary school teacher and mystical leader, Raden Atmadjakoesoema working already in Bali since 1908. This man had preached about an eschatological event in the near future related to a religious person in white cloth. Atmadjakoesoema was sent into exile after the communist uprisings in Java and Sumatra of 1926, but apparently a group of people saw in the coming of the Chinese preacher a fulfilment of his announcements.³ Several of these first converts were sent to Makassar to attend the Bible school of CAMA. In June 1931 Rev. R. Jaffray baptised four Balinese through immersion, and in November 1932 there were 113 more baptisms.

The Balinese villages of the Mengwi region reacted in a quite drastic way. All new Christians were expelled from the villages and declared excommunicated and dead. Quite a few returned to Balinese tradition and religion, but many remained loyal to their new faith. However, their rice-fields no longer received water for irrigation and their rice plants were destroyed. It was widely spread among Balinese that evangelist Tsang had said that food offerings should be given to dogs rather than presented in the temples and at other places for offerings. In October 1934 again 125 Balinese were baptised by a young Balinese, I Made Glendung, who had followed the Bible school in Makassar between 1931 and 1933 and had become the first Balinese preacher.⁴

The colonial administration was not happy with the upheaval caused by the preaching of Christianity and the vehement Balinese reactions. In August 1933 permission for work in Bali was withdrawn for foreign workers and evangelist Tsang and Dr. Jaffray were no longer allowed to spread Christianity. In consultation with the delegate for the Protestant Mission (*Zendingsconsul*) in Batavia and Hendrik Kraemer in Malang, it was decided that East Javanese ministers would assist the small flock of Balinese Christians. After strong protests the CAMA leadership agreed to withdraw from Bali and to end the training of Balinese in the Bible School in Makassar.⁵ CAMA people, feeling themselves in rivalry with the Dutch missionary organisations, only consented to this step under threat of a total ban from the Dutch colony. The colonial government had to choose between the freedom of religion it wanted to defend and the beginning of democracy. Not only in the Volksraad, but also in the councils

³ Swellengrebel 1948:68.

⁴ Sources differ about the number of baptisms and the exact locations: numbers from Catholic and government reports are lower than CAMA information. See Rai Sudhiarsa 2001:134–135, based on local sources; also Kersten 1940:208. Swellengrebel 1948:73 mentions October 1934 for the first mass-baptism of 123 candidates; so also Lewis 1995:247. Müller-Krüger 1968:239 mentions for this November 1932 baptism the number of 113. A detailed discussion of sources in Nyoman Wijaya 2003:31–44.

⁵ Jongeling 1966:203.

of Balinese village chiefs there were strong protests against the creeping in of Christianity. The East Javanese assistant-ministers were native Indonesians and they needed no special permit for working as pastors to Christians in Bali.

Less attention has been given to an even somewhat earlier start of missionary work in North Bali in 1929 by a Javanese recent convert to Christianity from Kediri. Police officer Salam Watias was baptised in December 1926 and thereupon excluded from his family. He arrived in 1929 in Singaraja as a *colporteur*, selling tracts and the (bad) Balinese translation of the Gospel of Luke by the Dutch representative of the British Bible Society, P. Penninga, working together with a Balinese teacher in Bogor. This translation was the result of the more intensive contact with Bali after the army expedition to Lombok in 1894 and some later initiatives. It was first printed in 1910. With Singaraja as centre Salam was quite successful in spreading copies of the Gospel. He came in contact with people, but he could do little more than giving explanation. Baptism courses were banned for the time being. This contact, however, probably was the start of the more intense cooperation of East Javanese Christians in mission work in Bali after 1932.⁶

At the request of Hendrik Kraemer, in May 1932 an East Javanese teacher, Tartib Eprayim, paid a visit to Bali and he reported to the Synod of the East Javanese Church about the developments. Thereupon he was sent to Bali together with Mas Darmoadi. They started work in Singaraja in January 1933. Mas Darmoadi had been born in 1904 in Sambirejo, close to Pare, East Java. He had followed the teachers' training school of Mojowarno and the theological school of Malang. Soon after his arrival he concentrated on the translation of catechetical material into Balinese. Tartib became known as a good storyteller who could present the Christian message through the traditional shadow play in Javanese. The first converts of these East Javanese evangelists were baptised in Malang, because baptism in Bali was not allowed. This soon changed: GKJW evangelists baptised 38 Balinese on 29 November 1933 in Bubunan, on the north coast, west of Singaraja.

In order to post a Dutch ordained minister in Bali, Rev. Th. Gramberg was, in 1937, nominated as resident minister of Denpasar, in charge of the *Indische Kerk*, theoretically for the European Christians, but in fact also as a supervisor for the growth of Protestant Christianity in Bali that in 1937 counted already some 1,000 baptised members. Bible translator Dr. Swellengrebel arrived at the same time. The CAMA did not fully withdraw from the region and in 1939 opened a preparatory class for a Bible School in Lombok, hoping for a return to Bali that could only be realised in the 1950s.

Notwithstanding the difficulties with Hindu-Balinese people in their surroundings, the Balinese Christians survived in the 1930s most often in their original villages. But rather soon missionaries and government officials decided

⁶ Suyaga Ayub 1999:28–29.

that a strategy similar to that in many areas of Java should be taken: the foundation of a distinct and quite separated Protestant village. The location, a still virgin area in the extreme northwest region of Bali (considered as an unlucky and polluted area) was selected by the government. This choice was made at a moment when in West and East Java more and more Christians moved to the bigger towns and the idea of special Christians villages was more or less left behind. On 30 November 1939 the first male Christians started work for the development of Blimbingsari, the Protestant village located at the utmost western (and negative, bad) side of Bali. It was soon followed, from 1940 on, by the development of its neighbour Palasari as a segregated Catholic village. Because of the continuing problems of Balinese Christians who wanted to work on their own rice fields in their villages of origin, in the 1950s and later many more Christian Balinese moved to other islands than the average for common Hindu Balinese. It has been estimated that even more Balinese Christians are living outside Bali (especially in Kalimantan and Sulawesi) than in the island of Bali itself, but precise figures are difficult to obtain.

In 1938 for the first time the Lord's Supper was celebrated in Bubunan. Christians from the higher castes, however, only ate the bread, because they were not prepared to drink from the same cup as the outcaste Christians. After some deliberations it was decided that for this celebration the wine should be distributed on small individual cups, in order to prevent people having to drink from cups from which others (read: outcaste people) had also drunk.

As in so many other areas of Indonesia, the Catholics were somewhat later than the Protestants, but also developed evangelisation. In September 1935 Father J. Kersten SVD settled as a resident priest in Denpasar, formally also for the pastoral care of the European Catholics or for Catholic migrants from other regions of the archipelago. Soon after his arrival I Made Bronong and I Wajan Dibeloeq two former evangelists of Jaffray who had refused to join the Reformed Christians of East Java, visited him. One of them originated from the village of Tuka, south of Mengwi, the other from Gumbrih, in the Jembrana region, more to the west. They joined with their families and converted to the Catholic tradition of Christianity. This Bronong-Dibeloeq group had already translated hymns into Balinese and used them in the weekly service on Sundays. Father Kersten allowed them to continue this practice. About this first period he wrote:

At Sunday meetings they sang their hymns in Balinese. One after another the leaders would stand up to pray with bowed head from the fullness of their heart for all the needs of their brothers, while others would remain seated. Although we barely could understand their words, we were deeply touched by the religious seriousness of these men and all the faithful.⁷

⁷ Kersten 1940:212.

In 1936 the creative and inventive artisan priest Simon Buis (maker of three films on Flores) joined the Bali mission. In 1937 the two priests left Denpasar in order to stay in a new parish house in Tuka where also the first Catholic church of Bali was built. It would remain a small community. In 1939 there were about 250 baptised Balinese Catholics and some hundred catechumens. A quite exceptional convert was the linguist and historian Roelof Goris, acknowledged as a great scholar of Bali, who became a Catholic in June 1939. From the beginning much attention was paid to a style of Catholicism with full attention for Balinese culture.⁸ Jan Kersten wrote a grammar of Balinese (published in Dutch and Indonesian) and a dictionary (published in Indonesian only).

In 1943 during the Japanese occupation, I Made Rungu was ordained as the first Balinese Reformed minister. The ceremony took place in Mojowarno and was led by some Javanese colleagues. He was also the chairman of the first independent Synod of a Balinese Protestant Church in January 1948. The village of Blimbingsari was already sufficiently developed to host this first Synod of the GKPB, *Gereja Kristen Protestan Bali*.

Balinese Protestantism between strict orthodoxy, vivid inculturation and flamboyant Pentecostalism; 1945–2005

The ‘Protestant village’ of Blimbingsari that had started in the late 1930s as a refuge for baptised from other regions of Bali, developed slowly, solidly and finally prosperously. Rev. Made Ayub, ordained in 1949 by a Dutch minister, became in that same year the second chairman of the synod in a church that was organised in a rather bottom-up Presbyterian style. In 1984 the church order was revised and more power was given to the newly instituted bishop.

Until 1972 there was a continuing debate about policies within the young church: should it remain close to the Netherlands Reformed Church (provider of most of the finances) or behave more independently, far away from Balinese tradition or more close to the rich Balinese cultural and religious heritage? Until 1972 the older generation was dominant. They completely rejected all Balinese music, dance, architecture and habits. The later bishop, I Wayan Mastra, compared this period to Bonsai cultivation where tipping and topping is a necessary evil, to obtain a beautiful and ideally trimmed plant. About this period Paul Webb wrote:

In Blimbingsari the church was of local stone and wood, but reflecting little of the indigenous artistry and design. It appears to have been simply a place in

⁸ See the two examples of the woodcarving for the altar in Tuka and a stone carving of the Last Supper in Kersten 1940: between 224–225; see also in chapter twenty.

which to meet for the Sunday morning worship. The efforts of the Protestant Balinese in the middle sixties appear to have been concentrated on building a dam, called *Ora et Labora* [Latin for Pray and Work].⁹

Later I Wayan Mastra called it “a garage with small and few windows and it was very hot inside.”¹⁰ During the Japanese occupation some kind of “gentle Balinisation” had started in the village of Blimbingsari. In this period the new Christians started again to use traditional decorations from palm-leaf, coconuts and bamboo, in the style of the decorations and offerings made to the many Balinese deities and sacred places. But there were no further steps towards a truly Balinese face of the Christian congregation during the next decades until 1972 when all of a sudden a drastic change was started within the GKPB.

I Wayan Mastra, the architect of this change, was also the dominating figure for the next three decades. He was born in 1931 as the oldest son in a low caste (*sudra*) Hindu family, like most Balinese. After the first three years of primary school he was sent to a “senior primary school” in Karangasem, a daily walk of twice 11 km. For high school he went first to Klungkung, staying with relatives, and finally for a teachers’ training college to Surabaya in Java. In a difficult situation he found financial support with some Christians, took catechism lessons and was baptised in 1952. Between 1953–1955 he was a teacher at a secondary school in Denpasar and then studied theology in Jakarta (1955–1960). In 1961 he was nominated a minister in the largest town of Northern Bali, Singaraja. He served here during the dramatic period of the eruption of Mt Gunung Agung in 1963. He established five new small mission stations in this period, baptising 350 converts in this period of growing interest and openness for Christianity in Bali. From 1965 until 1970 Mastra undertook doctoral studies in the USA, at Dubuque Seminary. He experienced a quick process towards a radical appraisal of Western missionaries, writing a doctoral dissertation on “The Salvation of Non-Believers. A Missiological Critique to Hendrik Kraemer and the Need for a New Alternative” in 1970. Mastra began his study in the USA only 13 years after conversion to Christianity, but he became soon a quite radical reformer in his small church. In his *Catechism*, written in the 1980s, he criticised again the cultural strategy of the Protestant mission:

Untal-Untal was a village where 95% of the people became Christians. They sold their only set of *gamelan* orchestral instruments that they inherited for generations through the encouragement of the Christians. The Christians did not like their children to learn Balinese arts and music which belonged to the demons

⁹ Webb 1986:114.

¹⁰ Sudhiarsa 2001:156.

because they were related to the worship of ancestral spirits. They looked to western arts and music as Christian.¹¹

As the only Balinese Protestant with a doctoral degree in theology, Mastra was asked to chair the GKPB Synod in Abianbase in 1972, where he also was elected as its chairman for the next five years. He continued to work in this position until the year 2000, with the exception of the five-year period 1988–1992. During the 1972 Synod decisions were taken as to a far-reaching inculturation and openness for Balinese culture. Balinese-style painting, wooden and limestone statues became fashionable for decoration of the churches. The *gamelan*, the traditional orchestra with percussion instruments, even some sacred dancing was introduced in the worship. When in 1976 the church of the major Protestant village Blimbingsari was destroyed during an earthquake, a totally different church building replaced the western-style first church: a compound of several small buildings within a lovely garden with streaming water, an elaborate entrance in pure Balinese style and a semi-open church building in the traditional *pendopo*-style became the trade mark of the new GKPB. In his *Catechism* Mastra has a long section (46–58) on this church. Just one quotation:

Our Mother Temple is a sermon in stone. It has so much to teach us. It sits beneath the mountain. As we walk up to the temple we see that the roof of the church is also like a mountain, which in Bali is the place of the gods. It tells us that we are coming to the source of life for our life on earth. The mountain is a place of fire, water and air. Because we need warmth for our bodies, water to drink and air to breathe. So we are coming to meet God, the source of our life. . . . Notice that the roof does not end in a point. It is cut off at the top and flat. The reason is that many religions are man's effort to find God. They are like the tower of Babel trying to reach God. But God did not like the tower of Babel. He knew that man could never reach Him by his own efforts. So the roof of the church is flat. The point is cut off to show that in Christianity God comes to us himself by his grace. (46).

While returning from the USA in 1970 Mastra was able to buy a piece of land in Kuta, at that time still a quiet village of fishermen, but soon developing into the booming tourist centre of Bali. He built a hotel and in this way he could remain financially independent from the GKPB.

The later 1960s and the 1970s were not only the period of beginning inculturation, it was also the epoch of the beginning of development aid by European states. Especially in the first two decades it was the churches that orchestrated and managed many of the bilateral programmes. For the GKPB a quite peculiar project was designed: Dhyana Pura, a training centre for

¹¹ Mastra, no date:12.

the church but also a tourist hotel that should generate a financial basis for the small churches with many poor members. It was built on 3.6 hectares of land in the heart of the major tourist resort of Kuta. Building started in 1976 and Made Kertiyasa, who designed the church of Blimbingsari, was also the architect for Dhyana Pura. It has been built in the style of traditional palaces like a human body with the restaurant on the place of the belly, the rooms for meeting and presentations in the head, the theatre in the heart. The exit to the beach has been constructed as a place of mission.¹²

The whole enterprise did not develop without problems. In the early 1990s there was mismanagement that caused much trouble and a Javanese Catholic Fransiskus Xaverius Hartadi became the manager. Finally the hotel was so full with students who came for training that a separate Hotel School was developed from this initiative. Many Japanese tourists came to the place for its multi-religious Saint Michael's wedding chapel. Finally the Place of the Spirit (*Dhyana Pura*) became so busy that in 2001 a new meditation centre in the mountains near the old shrine of Bedugul had to be built, Wisma Nangung Kerti.

In Kapal, 10 km north of the capital Denpasar, a centre for agricultural development was opened. Here the Maha Bhoga Marga (MBM) Foundation was started in 1980. While traditionally most Balinese are rice farmers, this centre promoted extra income through projects of animal husbandry (raising goats, pigs, rabbits, chickens), citrus fruits, and small scale trading.

Starting in the 1960s quite a few Balinese Christians migrated to less densely populated islands like Sulawesi and Kalimantan. Paul Webb¹³ estimated that in 1988 some 12,000 members of the GPKB lived outside Bali while only 6,000 were still in Bali. Beyer gives, for a decade later, even the number of 20,000 migrants.¹⁴ In this way Balinese Protestant Christianity has created a number of small congregations outside Bali. From the other side, the fragmentation of Protestant Christianity took place also in Bali. After the bombings in Bali in October 2002, the police reported 28 churches to be supervised in the capital of Denpasar. Several were Pentecostal, there was a church established by the GPIB, mostly Moluccans living outside their region. Also the Adventists have built a church in Denpasar.

¹² Beyer 1998:49–51.

¹³ Paul Webb 1990:3.

¹⁴ Beyer 1998:102.

Bible translation

Bible translation is a quite complicated matter in Bali. For traditional Balinese people the sacred scripture is in Old Javanese. Manuscripts are still written on the classical material of palm-leaves (*lontar*). Which language should be chosen for a bible translation? The classical religious language of Bali was dropped, because it was just a sacred language of manuscripts and some rituals. The great scholar of Balinese, Herman Neubronner van der Tuuk only worked on the grammar and a dictionary. The Penninga translation of the 1910s was basically worked out by Goesti Djelantik, a Balinese teacher and member of the nobility in Bogor, from a Malay translation.¹⁵ Between 1935 and 1942 the Javanese teacher Darmoadi translated major sections of the New Testament. Only the Gospel of John and Acts were printed. In 1937 J.L. Swellengrebel, a well-trained linguistic scholar, started his study of Balinese. During World War II he was imprisoned and he could only continue his work in 1947, but had to leave the island in 1950. In the Netherlands he continued work on some of the gospels. He translated into a quite colloquial Balinese, because court Balinese is a very formalised and rather indirect way of expression. In the 1960s many educated Balinese Christians, however, found his style of Balinese too simple and too close to everyday expression.

As in other parts of Indonesia, also in Bali it was in Bible translation that ecumenical cooperation was most effective and continuing. In 1973 the GKPB and the Catholics joined forces for a Balinese translation. This joint body completed a translation of the New Testament in 1976 and the Old Testament in 1981. A revised and final text of the whole Bible was published in 1990. Quite delicate problems had to be solved for the use of Balinese religious terminology in Christianity. The name for God, the Absolute Transcendental Reality, as *Ida Sang Hyang Widhi Wasa*, was also used for the more cosmic and abstract Brahman in Hindu thinking. Several Hindus protested against the use of this and other terminology by Christians. They consider this as a violation of their exclusive rights to these specifically Hindu-Balinese words. This is only one element of the broader exclusion of Christians from Balinese society. After 75 years of small Christian groups in Bali, “the existence of Christian institutions is suspected as dangerous for this ‘sacred land’ with potential to ‘pollute’ the Balinese cosmos.”¹⁶

Balinese Hinduism was and is very strongly organised according to geographic unities, the traditional feudal kingdoms, but even more strongly in

¹⁵ Swellengrebel 1978-II:231 gives a number of quite nonsensical translations. In Luke 2:37 the ‘widow’ is replaced with a ‘bone’ (*balu* turned into *balung*) and Anna says that she was “a bone of 84 years old.”

¹⁶ Survey in Sudhiarsa 2001:184–190; 256.

the villages or sections of larger towns, that are social, cultural and religious unit as well. Besides the organisation of Christian villages like Blimbingsari (Protestant) and Palasari (Catholic) the idea arose in the 1990s of using the concept of BCC, the Basic Christian Community from Latin America as a social and also religious unit. Modern mobility, migration, the fragmentation of the Protestants into various churches, made this development not really easy. The modern Christians have no deep sentiments about their ancestors and therefore the traditional basis for this local congregation is not strong enough. Balinese Christians never tended to adopt the complex and very expensive burial rituals of the Balinese-Hindus that keep the family ties strong and foster respect for the ancestors.

Catholics in Bali

After 1950 nearly all-major Protestant leaders were of Balinese descent. Dutch missionary Henk Visch was, between 1948 and 1971, working as a Protestant minister, but he held no key position in the GKPB (apart from finances). This was different for the Catholics. For most of this period it was SVD priests from Flores or Timor who were nominated to lead the Apostolic Vicariate, which became a regular diocese in 1961. It was again a Dutch bishop, A.Thijssen who, between 1973 and 1981 led the flock of the diocese of Denpasar that also served the islands of Lombok and Sumbawa. They stimulated the use of the rich Balinese culture, but also dreamt of the growth of Catholicism.

Already in 1947 a great church was built in Denpasar, the St. Joseph's Church, with exuberant and very elaborate Balinese sculptures, paintings and ornaments. Different from the new Protestant Church of Blimbingsari, a compound of many small typical Balinese buildings, in nearby Palasari the Catholics built in the 1950s a grand cathedral, basically in neo-gothic architecture but with so many Balinese decorations and additions that it is considered a splendid mixture of the two styles. Besides one Dutch architect (SVD Brother Ignatius de Vrieze) it was two Balinese Hindu architects, Ida Bagus Tugur and Gusti Made Rai who designed the structure and the artistic details for the Sacred Heart Church of Palasari that was consecrated in 1958. (See also chapter twenty.)

Lay people, specialists in music, language, dance or crafts, took most of the initiatives in the artistic field because until the 1990s there were very few Balinese clergy. Because of the cost in money and time, real Balinese Christian festivals are reduced to days like Palm Sunday, Easter, Christmas, and priestly ordinations. Training and rehearsals for the gamelan orchestra and the dances take too much time to be performed weekly.

In the whole debate on inculturation in Bali, there is an always-recurring argument about the close relationship between Balinese culture (art, dance,

artistic expressions, sculptures, music) and Hinduism as a religion. The most common argument in favour of the use of Balinese elements within Christian expressions is that the artistic and cultural Balinese elements can be separated from Hinduism as a religion. The lack of knowledge of Balinese language and its classical heritage on the part of many of the Catholic leaders also may have influenced a rather superficial accommodation to elements of Balinese art, evading a direct confrontation with the real essence of Balinese religion and spirituality.

A complicating factor, certainly in the Catholic community, was the tendency to promote the Catholics as true Indonesians. For several decades since the 1950s the Catholics were more strongly in favour of an Indonesian style for a Catholic identity than of promoting regional Balinese culture.¹⁷

A quite peculiar development can be seen in the person of Norbert Anthony Shadeg, born in 1921 in Farming, USA. He arrived in Bali in 1950 and founded the minor seminary in the village of Tangeb. In 1956 the seminary moved to Tuka, west of Denpasar, where Shadeg more and more became the scholar-theologian, collecting in the foundation Widya Wahana one of the largest libraries of things Balinese. The library, starting in 1981, was also called the 'Bali Mission Library' and 'The Simon Buis Memorial' after the SVD priest who initiated the grand cathedral of Palasari. Shadeg published a Balinese-English dictionary (after Van der Tuuk, and missionaries Van Eck, Kersten, and Swellengrebel had published other dictionaries). He received, in January 2005, the K. Nadha Anugra Award for his contribution to the preservation of Balinese culture.

In the late 1980s the *Rumah Khalwat Tegaljaya* was established in a suburb of Denpasar as a retreat centre for Christian, but also non-Christian groups. Like its Protestant counterpart *Dhyana Pura*, this well-built place in Balinese style is open for international tourists who spend their holidays in the island.

The partial reception of Christianity among Balinese Hindu intellectuals

Christianity has much more impact on Balinese society than can be shown through formal membership of Balinese who embraced the new religion since 1930. After 1950 Balinese religion and culture experienced a drastic change due to the new religious and political conditions in independent Indonesia. The proclamation of Pancasila, with its important first pillar of the confession of the One and Supreme Divinity, has brought Balinese religion much closer to Islam and Christianity than it was before. Hinduism was recognised as one of the five official religions but under condition that it should behave

¹⁷ Sudhiarsa 2001:173.

like an international religion. Therefore part of the classical Hindu scripture was translated from Sanskrit into Indonesian (not Balinese!) by command of the Ministry of Religion. Monotheism also became a much more prominent aspect of Balinese religion than it ever was before.

To give an example of this kind of influence we want to mention a prominent modern Balinese Hindu intellectual, Mrs. Gedong Bagoes Oka. Mrs Gedong was born in 1921 in the elite of the petty kingdom of Karangasem, East Bali. After the village school in Bali she continued the prestigious Dutch language HIS schooling and teachers' training college in Yogyakarta and Jakarta, after her father received the guarantee that she would be safe in the house of a *pedanda* or religious person. In fact she stayed in Yogyakarta in the house of Dr. J.H. Bavinck, Protestant minister and lecturer at the Protestant Theological School (now Duta Wacana). Also in Batavia she found lodging with a pious Protestant family. In both places she regularly joined the church service, but finally she did not convert to Christianity as her brother, physician Wajan Makes did. Besides working as a teacher, she organised courses on the spiritual heritage of Mahatma Gandhi. She started workshops and in 1976 she established an *ashram* where she founded a community that could live according to the principles of Gandhi and Vinoba Bhave. In the line of Gandhi she saw the essence of Christianity in the Sermon on the Mount and accepted Jesus as an *avatar* or incarnation of the supreme divinity. For Gedong the Buddha, Jesus and Muhammad were all three preachers of a non-violent way of life who basically preached the same doctrine. For Balinese people, however, Christianity was in her thinking a rather boring religion, with few festivals, rituals and processions and therefore Christianity would not find much acceptance on the island.¹⁸

After 1945 Balinese religiosity underwent drastic changes. Scripture was no longer the privilege of the religious elite, the caste of Brahmans. Religious activities were also no longer bound to special hours. In public schools Hindu Holy Scripture was taught to all social classes, to boys and girls, and texts were read in original Sanskrit and in Indonesian translation by all students during their school period. The academic institute for Balinese religion, the *Institut Hindu Dharma*, also was open for male and female students from all sections of society. These and many other changes in Balinese religion were executed under influence of the national Muslim majority and also in line with the practice of the other monotheist religion, Christianity. On this revolutionary change Sudhiarsa wrote:

In former time it was taboo to teach religion or the mystery of *Niskala* [essential religion] to the non-priestly group, like 'throwing pearls to swine' (Mt 7:6). For

¹⁸ Bakker 1993:210–221.

centuries this *ajawera* [taboo] was being practised, hence to keep the common people religiously illiterate and away from the centre of their life. Therefore it was 'subversive' when Christianity started its mission works among those in the periphery, in the rural area, among the underprivileged, away from the 'centres of the society', which were the *puris* (palaces) and the *grias* (priestly houses).¹⁹

Further elements that have been taken over in some Balinese Hindu temples from Christian ways of church worship are the singing of hymns, reading of scripture, often in the Sanskrit original with translation into Indonesian, and the sermon, that now is called *Upanishad* in a quite peculiar transformation of the original meaning of the word. In order to accommodate to Muslim and Christian practice and the Western calendar, quite a few Hindu-Balinese temples now organise communal prayers on Thursday evening, following the modern week rather than the full and new moon of the traditional Balinese calendar. Friday is in this schedule reserved for Muslims, Saturday and Sunday for Christians, while the new institutions of a weekly service in several temples has started on the Thursday evening.

Outside Bali tribal or traditional religions in various parts of the archipelago, especially the Kaharingan of Kalimantan and the Parmalim of Sumatra, could survive as traditional religion under the umbrella of formal acceptance of Hinduism. Both traditional religions were already subject to large-scale conversion to Christianity and Islam. This trend of conversion has been halted since the 1980s. Also in Toraja and in Java (Tengger area) traditional religion could find a safe shelter under the formal umbrella of Hinduism. In this way Balinese Hinduism is still a major player on the religious map of Indonesia, not only confined to the island of Bali itself, but also found in some other islands. Details of this development are discussed in chapters twelve and thirteen.

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PART THREE

ISSUES OF NATIONAL CONCERN

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

THEOLOGICAL THINKING BY INDONESIAN CHRISTIANS 1850–2000

In this chapter we map historical developments in the field of theology, as conceived and put in writing by Indonesian Christians. As has been shown in earlier chapters of this volume, the spread and successive development of Christianity took place during different periods in this vast archipelago, partly depending upon the colonial process, partly upon the respective religious situation. In general the churches in Eastern Indonesia (East Nusa Tenggara and the Moluccas) are older than the ones in Java, Sumatra, Kalimantan and South Sulawesi. Despite a Christian presence for some hundreds of years, missionary and ecclesial structures did not always support the development of indigenous theologising. Thought patterns brought by European missionaries or by the western church were considered normative. Missionaries were often afraid of heterodox thinking by indigenous believers and suppressed their ideas. Extant churches, both the Protestant Church (*Protestantsche Kerk*) and the Roman Catholic Church, did not allow Indonesians to participate in ecclesial offices until the last decades of the nineteenth century or even later. That factor, too, determines the *terminus a quo* of Indonesian theology in the respective areas.

We have very limited access to reports about earlier, oral forms of theological reflection such as sermons, early hymns, prayers and rituals though survivals are suggestive. In oral cultures faith is also handed down in story, song, legend, myth and proverb. Faith has been expressed in graphic art, music, dance, drama, ritual and symbolic action. For instance lay-led, popular Catholicism in East and Central Flores continued to enact religious processions down the centuries since the arrival of the Portuguese Dominicans in the sixteenth century.¹ Contemporary Holy Week processions in East Flores show a remarkable synthesis between local adat and Christian ritual.

However enticing these survivals may be, we shall commence our survey at around 1850. From that time onwards we find valuable traces of autonomous reflection by Indonesian believers. During the nineteenth century competition and confrontation between Catholics and Protestants occurred more often than cooperation. Nevertheless, it is appropriate to use an ecumenical approach in this chapter. The birth and development of theology took place along parallel

¹ Steenbrink 2003–I:76–84.

lines. During the twentieth century, especially after the independence of the country (1945/1949), we see many similarities, common themes and forms of collaboration.

I. *The nineteenth century*

Preparing the ground

We start by mentioning several early areas of encounter between church and culture in which indigenous people, Christians as well as others, have been involved. One such encounter was the translation of the bible into vernacular languages. The earliest translation of the whole bible into Malay was the work of one man, Melchior Leijdecker (1645–1701). His translation was used in Protestant circles for almost two centuries, especially in eastern Indonesia. In 1814 the *Nederlands Bijbelgenootschap* was founded in Amsterdam, which soon began to consider translating and distributing the bible in various Indonesian languages. Its first translator, J.F.C. Gericke (1799–1857) was sent to Java in 1826. His New Testament in Javanese appeared in 1848. Not long before his death he finished a translation of the Old Testament. Gericke used several Javanese language assistants. One of them even composed several prayers inspired by and patterned upon the psalms.² Other translators, such as the missionary Pieter Jansz (1820–1904), who worked on behalf of the British and Foreign Bible Society, also had assistants. However, they were not often Christian and unfortunately not much is known about their linguistic influence. Catholics translated the annual cycle of scripture texts then used in the Sunday liturgy, circulated in the form of typed or mimeographed sheets for use by the local priest or village catechist. During the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries they were invariably in the local language.

Another field where missionaries were active during the nineteenth century was ethnography and anthropology. The *Mededeelingen van het Nederlandsch Zendelinggenootschap* (MNZG) even had separate sections in which all kinds of (local) anthropological reports were published. Often missionaries asked their indigenous helpers to make notes or write down their findings. Some of these were subsequently translated and published. In Eastern Indonesia the teacher H. Picauly, assistant of missionary B.N. Roskott, gave an account of customs and (religious) traditions in Ambon and on Buru Island.³ We should also mention the names of Richard Tampenawas and Hendrik Pesik, both guru (teachers) from Minahasa (North Sulawesi) who followed missionary

² Swellengrebel 1974–I:68.

³ Picauly 1859:195–214.

H.C. Kruyt to North Sumatra in 1891. Their reports and keen observations about Karo Batak customs can be regarded as a preparation for evangelism. They realized that they needed to know and understand local culture and its religious system before the gospel could bear fruit. Their stories can be found in MNZG (1894, 1895) as well as in *Tjahaja Sijang* (1868–1927), a monthly periodical published in Minahasa. In a similar way Raja Jacob Lumbantobing can be called a *perintis* (precursor). He described the rules of adat law within Batak society extensively. The *American Mission Press* in Singapore understood the importance of his work and published his writings in two volumes in 1898 and 1899.

Catholic priests had been banned from the Dutch Indies since 1602. From 1808 until 1850 they were allowed to work in the cities among expatriate Catholics such as soldiers, officials and merchants and their families. In the second half of the nineteenth century they were allowed to work in areas where there already were baptised members. The quarterly *Claverbond* (1889–1960) published stories about culture and mission. Early reports by missionaries to superiors in the Netherlands are replete with information on local customs.⁴ Nonetheless, significant Catholic linguistic and ethnographic work began in earnest only in the twentieth century.

Finally we should point out the role of missionaries in the field of education. Many nineteenth century missionaries were in one way or another involved in the founding of modest schools for the local people at a time when the colonial authorities still hesitated to educate the indigenous population. Catholics opened schools as soon as they were permitted, staffing key establishments with religious sisters and brothers. These schools were an effective tool in preparing the people for a new era. At the same time schooling was inherently ambivalent: on the one hand opening students up to a wider and more critical world, while on the other its ideological purpose was to domesticate the populous to the aims of the colonial state and to the ideal of the male-led nuclear family. We have to admit, also, that there have been tensions among the missionaries themselves and between the missionaries and the government about the primary aim: education or evangelisation. Often these missionaries selected gifted young men to become their teaching assistants. In Protestant churches the function of guru became the first step towards ecclesial office, initially as *pembantu pendeta* (assistant pastor) or *guru injil* (evangelist), later as *pendeta*. In the geographically large Catholic parishes, the guru, *guru agama* (village catechist) and *jaga agama* (lay congregational leader) were the primary evangelists and led Sunday worship while ordained (expatriate) pastors instructed them and celebrated the sacraments. In a literal sense many of

⁴ Steenbrink 2003–I:xvi.

these guru received their lessons sitting at the feet of the missionaries who had come with a new kind of wisdom. In Ambon and Minahasa as well as in Java and North Sumatra, the first generation of those who reflected autonomously about their faith consisted mainly of such teachers. Sometimes they were sent to other parts of the country, at other times they were entrusted with additional responsibilities, which widened their horizon. We will find a number of them as students in the early preacher training schools and theological seminaries of the Protestant Church.

The first generation of proto-theologians

Some of the persons we mentioned in the previous paragraph can be called proto-theologians, as T.B. Simatupang has identified them.⁵ That is, indigenous Christians who reflected in their own creative way about the faith without trying to systematize it or to transfer it into abstract categories. In this paragraph we add some other important proto-theologians of the 19th century.

Paulus Tosari (1813–1882) first received instruction from a Muslim *kiai* in East Java, but was soon attracted by the new wisdom teachings of Christians like C.L. Coolen (1775–1873) in Ngoro, East Java, and J.E. Jellesma (1816–58), missionary in Mojowarno from 1851 until his death. In the latter place he became an important leader of the mission-based Christian community until his death, being a vivid preacher with a large knowledge of the bible. He is the author of three writings in *tembang* form (Javanese poetry, recited in a melodious way), the most important being *Rasa Sejati* (which can be translated as “genuine deepest feelings/sense”). This tract, which was written around 1872, served as material for religious education. It is a moralistic-didactic poem, which shows parallels with the extant Javanese wisdom literature of the time. The real *rasa*, which comes from God, is Christian love. In this tract much attention is given to the discipleship of Jesus through love, patience, and humility. Christ is depicted as “the perfect human being” who is one with God in an almost mystical way:

The perfect human being
 That is, the Son of the All-Holy One,
 Because one in the kernel of feeling (*rasa*),
 Originating from the All-Holy One,
 The feeling of our Lord,
 Yes, the feeling of the High-elevated One,
 The person who is close to the Son
 Is already close to the Holy Father (*Rama Suci*),
 The Son of Man becomes one with the Father.

⁵ T.B. Simatupang 1982:20–29.

Tosari's writings show a deep wisdom. Nevertheless, in the eyes of the missionaries his thinking was not complete because it did not focus upon the suffering, death and resurrection of Christ. Hand-written copies of *Rasa Sejati* must have soon circulated. However, it was fifty years before Hendrik Kraemer (1888–1965) edited and published an anthology of Tosari's work (1925, most recent reprint 1953). Unfortunately the fact that these and other tracts were written in Javanese became an impediment after independence: Javanese language and literature were seen as something of the past, not of the present or future.

We have only a few examples of similar writings. In Semarang, Central Java, Asa Kiman (d. 1892) wrote several tracts. The most important one is called *Panggugah* (stimulation, appeal). Asa Kiman was a co-worker of missionary W. Hoesoo. Compared with Paulus Tosari's work, his writings are rather flat and bookish. Nevertheless the name of Asa Kiman also deserves to be remembered. His tracts and recited sermons prove that he was able to contextualise the gospel into the world of his own people. His work is mainly anthropocentric; Christianity is seen as the moral completion of all religions.

Independent seekers of wisdom

Besides these associates of western missionaries, two other important proto-theologians should be named: Ibrahim Tunggul Wulung (ca. 1800–1885) and Sadrach Surapranata (1835–1924). These were independent 'seekers of wisdom' in Central Java. The first half of the nineteenth century was a turbulent time for the population of Central and East Java. The Diponegoro war (1830) brought about the end of the independent rule of the sultanates (*kraton*) of Yogyakarta and Surakarta and confirmed the definitive hegemony of the Dutch colonial regime. It must be added that this war also led to the beginning of the spiritual importance of the *kraton*. Years of serious drought and crop disease caused starvation and forced large groups of the population to migrate to other parts of Java. All in all, it was a time of great social and political upheaval. Unsurprisingly, many people put their hopes in old dreams and prophecies such as the *Jayabaya* predictions, or looked for new, strong teachings such as that brought by western Christianity. In this context Ibrahim Tunggul Wulung became a spiritual leader for hundreds of people in the northern part of Central Java. He gathered some of them into separate villages in the uncleared woods near the town of Jepara, where the Mennonite missionary Pieter Jansz established a small congregation. In a way Tunggul Wulung was a syncretist who combined old prophecies, Islamic folk religion and basic Christian elements. He tried to be a loyal pupil of the missionaries and time and again contacted them to absorb parts of their new teaching. Nonetheless he always aroused their suspicion and therefore eventually travelled on his own path. He became a tireless and restless itinerant evangelist in

his own right travelling back and forth between East Java and Batavia (Jakarta). Unfortunately no written legacy has been found, except for a few prayers and liturgical formula, which he apparently used.

One of his disciples was Sadrach Surapranata. Sadrach became well known as he was the founder of a number of congregations of so-called 'free Christians' (*wong Kristen kang Mardika*). He operated in a district where the *Gereformeerd* Dutch mission was active in the southern parts of Central Java (see chapter fourteen). He had to suffer bitter conflicts with several missionaries, pastors of the *Protestantsche Kerk* and local authorities. Some of them accused Sadrach of identifying himself with the eschatological *Ratu Adil* (righteous king) and therefore with Christ himself. Fortunately some other missionaries, especially Jacob Wilhelm (1854–1892), trusted him completely. After Wilhelm's death (1892), when the mission board and the remaining missionaries continued to charge Sadrach with heresy and make life difficult for him, Sadrach broke off all relations. Influenced by F.L. Anthing (1820–1883), a judge who maintained cordial relationships with several independent Javanese Christians, he joined the Apostolic Church and in 1899 was appointed an apostle in that church.

Sadrach had been educated in a *pesantren* (residential school for Muslim education) and was further influenced by Hindu-Buddhist Javanese tradition and by the pietism of the missionaries. He thus had a keen eye for practical ways of conceptualising the faith and church structures. Again, no written record of his thinking survives. Yet he and his community has been the subject of several thorough studies.⁶ From these we learn that he had his own Javanese way of organizing his congregations, with regular meetings for the elders and big annual meetings (*kumpulan gedhe*). He had his own kind of church order and of celebrating the sacraments. His theology can be reconstructed in part. His Christology, for instance, emphasized Jesus as a blameless guru (teacher), *panutan* (guide and mediator), and *ratu adil* (righteous king). Jesus taught a certain *ngelmu* (wisdom) for human salvation.⁷ Moral discipline was the evidence of the real Christian. Therefore the Ten Commandments, the Apostolic Creed and the Lord's Prayer were important. Some prayers from his community have been preserved even though most traces of Tunggul Wulung's influence have been wiped out. During the last two decades of the twentieth century there was a renewed interest in Sadrach and his community within the churches of Central Java. Part of the present debate is about the question whether Sadrach was simply a typical representative of the nineteenth century, or a charismatic leader whose vision and organization is still useful for the church today, especially in regard to Muslim-Christian relations.

⁶ Guillot 1981; Partonadi 1990; Sumartana 1994.

⁷ Partonadi 1990:217–219.

II. *The first forty years of the twentieth century*

A. *Catechetical institutes and teacher-preacher seminaries*

Teacher schools in Eastern Indonesia

The first generation of Christian leaders was, as has been stated above, educated sitting at the feet of the missionaries. Soon, however, it became clear that this was inadequate. Also, society at large was fast changing in the last decades of the nineteenth century, and even faster after the introduction of the so-called ethical policy at the beginning of the twentieth century. And so, schools were founded which at first served a double goal: to educate teachers on behalf of (subsidized) Christian elementary schools, who at the same time would serve as evangelists or assistant pastors. The colonial government subsidized such teacher training colleges. As a consequence most of them ceased to exist in that form after the government withdrew its financial support in the 1930s due to the economic recession.

In eastern Indonesia several so-called STOVILs were established after the NZG had handed over its mission fields to the *Protestantsche Kerk* in 1867. STOVIL means: School for Education of Indigenous Teachers. Such schools came into being in Ambon (the Moluccas, 1885), Tomohon (North Sulawesi, 1886) and Kupang (West Timor, 1902). The *Protestantsche Kerk* was an instrument of the colonial government, which in 1870 decreed the office of Indigenous Teacher (*Inlandsche Leeraar*) within that church. Therefore the state determined the syllabus, which was rather limited theologically. The Old Testament was hardly taught at all. Recent, contextual mission and church history were not regarded as necessary. Also absent was any attention to catechisms and confessional statements. The *Protestantsche Kerk* wanted to be open for members of all Protestant churches and regarded itself neutral as to specific confessions! So, we can hardly maintain that these schools provided a 'theological education.' Nevertheless, they can be seen as a beginning, and in the course of time they would become a tool of the independent regional churches of eastern Indonesia. In the 1930s A.Z.R. Wenas (Tomohon) and W.H. Tutuarima (Ambon) became the first Indonesian principals.

The Jesuits at Muntilan, Central Java, opened the first Catholic teachers' training school in 1904 as an upgrading of a catechist course run previously in Semarang. Subsequently village schools were established in a big way from 1907 onwards. Muntilan educated the first generation of Catholic moderate nationalists such as Ignatius Joseph Kasimo (1900–1986) and church leaders such as the first Indonesian Catholic bishop (and Soekarno confidant) Albertus Soegijapranata of Semarang (1896–1963) as well as a host of regular schoolteachers and catechists. For the majority of Catholics, these teachers were the leaders of the congregation who gave religious instruction and led

Sunday worship. Muntilan also produced the first candidates for the priesthood. Between 1916 and 1920 ten students were sent to the Netherlands for seminary training.

The first teachers from Flores went to the Catholic teachers' training school in Tomohon, North Sulawesi. In the 1920s teachers in the Maumere district of Flores gathered in Koting each Saturday for instruction, those from Ende gathered in Ndonga and the guru *agama* from Ngada met in Todabelu. A *Schakelschool* was opened in Ndao, near Ende, in 1925 from which some of the alumni continued their studies at Muntilan before Ndao was allowed to upgrade. By 1940 there were 1,800 village catechists in Flores. With the *Flores-Timor-Soemba Regeling* (contract) of 1913 schooling in West Timor and Sumba was entrusted to the Protestant Church in Timor (GMIT) and Sumba (GKS) while schooling in Flores was handed over to the Catholic Church. While there were around 2,000 pupils in Flores in 1914, the number had risen to 5,000 by 1920 and a decade later to 24,000.

Mission-based seminaries

In the meantime, missionary societies on Java and Sumatra started their own training schools. The very first one can be found in Paraosurat, North Sumatra, in the mission field of the *Rheinische Mission*. There a two-year education for catechists was started in 1868. Ten years later, in 1879, a four-year course was started in Pansur Napitu, headed by missionary Peter Heinrich Johannsen (1839–1898). From 1883 onwards students of this school could follow an additional two-year curriculum to become indigenous pastors (*pandita Batak*). This school emphasized biblical insight next to practical theological skills as well as knowledge of church history, catechism and apologetics. Dogmatics received only a minor place. Johannsen himself wrote several of the textbooks. The school moved to Sipoholon, and from there, to Pematang Siantar.

On Java the earliest teachers' training school was an ecumenical experiment in Depok, south of present-day Jakarta. From 1878 until 1926 this seminary functioned well. It recruited its students from all parts of Indonesia, including Papua (Nieuw Guinea), though the Batak church sent the largest group. The mixed intake certainly broadened the horizon of the students and deepened their sense of ecumenism. Like other schools, this one too emphasized general subjects. Nevertheless in the 1896 curriculum 23 hours a week were set aside for theological instruction. The Depok seminary used Malay because it served as the *lingua franca* for the whole archipelago. Yet, this very fact impeded many students from expressing their feelings and thoughts in their own regional languages. The language dilemma (*lingua franca* vs. ethnic or regional languages) has not been solved entirely satisfactorily until today. This is the case even though after 1945 *Bahasa Indonesia* was made the national language and is now known by virtually every citizen. It is also the language

of all schooling and the language in which novelists and scientists express themselves, but not the idiom of the family, the adat, or the heart. The Depok Seminary closed its doors in 1926.

In a way the *Hoogere Theologische School*, which was founded in Bogor in 1934 and moved two years later to Jakarta (in 1954 the school was called *Sekolah Tinggi Theologia, STT*), can be seen as the inter-denominational successor to the Depok Seminary at a higher level. By that time young people were able to study at university level in the fields of law, medicine and engineering; therefore theology could no longer lag behind! For several decades the STT in Jakarta was a seedbed for ecumenical renewal. The HTS started with 18 students from eight *bangsa* (cultural/language groups). Many of the alumni of the first classes became important and respected church leaders. During the 1960s and 1970s many of its professors also took a leading role within the DGI (later PGI), the EACC (later CCA) and even the WCC. Some of them became members of parliament or other public bodies. Students came from all over Indonesia. Only during the last twenty years of the twentieth century did the STT lose its undisputed position among Protestant theological colleges.

Before the HTS (STT) opened, both the *Hervormde* Mission in East Java and the *Gereformeerde* Mission in Central Java established theological schools though not as yet at an academic level. In Yogyakarta, the cradle of the *kraton* (court of the sultan) culture, a school was opened in 1925 for educated young men to study Hinduism, animism, Islam and even theosophy, and discuss these matters with Javanese intellectuals. In Malang, East Java, the *Bale Wijata* (Hall of Learning) was started in 1927. Here we should mention the name of Barend Schuurman (1889–1945) who genuinely tried to emphasize the Javanese context in his lessons and publications. At the beginning relationships between both churches in the Netherlands, and therefore between their missions in Indonesia, were rather cool. The Indonesian Christians themselves experienced a growing awareness of unity, which was further enhanced by rising nationalism in general. Nevertheless, closer cooperation between theological schools had to wait until independence.

Catholic seminaries

The first Catholic major seminary to open in Indonesia was that in Central Java in 1925 (now at Kentungan near Yogyakarta), which began with six alumni from the Muntilan teachers' school. In East Nusa Tenggara a minor seminary (secondary school) was opened in Sikka in 1926 with seven students (moved to Mataloko in 1929) and the Major Seminary of Ledalero was opened in 1937 with 10 seminarians. Until the 1950s lectures were in Dutch and both the philosophy and theology basically neo-Thomistic. Kentungan, now the Wedabhakti faculty of Universitas Sanata Dharma, and Ledalero remain the largest Catholic seminaries in Indonesia today; Ledalero alone has over 600

students. However, they were not seedbeds of contextual theology until after the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965).

Continuing discussions about a contextual curriculum

In the beginning each missionary decided individually which subjects his pupils had to study. Often it was a kind of informal, tutorial instruction. J.E. Jellesma (1816–1858), for instance, did not define the borders between the respective subjects clearly in the informal seminary in Mojowarno (East Java), which he started in 1850. However, he classified the material into thirteen parts: knowledge of the bible; history of the Old Testament; history of the New Testament; (early) church history, doctrinal and ethical matters; biblical chronology; reading and writing in Javanese; singing, counting; reading and writing in Latin script; and biblical geography. The bible was his only textbook!⁸

When the teacher-evangelist schools received an official character, a formal curriculum became necessary with a clear definition of, and balance between, general subjects and theological or religious subjects. Often the government would not subsidize the latter, whereas general subjects had to comply with the rules of the Department of Education in Batavia. Still, each school was free to arrange the religious part of the curriculum. Before World War II there was hardly any contact between the respective mission boards about this matter.

Unsurprisingly, the curriculum of the new *Hoogere Theologische School* (1934) was derivative of the curriculum of Dutch theological faculties although the founders of the HTS aimed at *theologia in loco*. Greek, Hebrew and modern western languages were a standard part of the six-year curriculum and all lessons were given in Dutch rather than Malay. Th. Müller-Krüger, the first dean of the HTS, defended that choice by stating that Malay is unable to become the foundation of “clear, independent theological thinking.”⁹ His verdict shows that missionary circles at that time still cherished a certain bias and western arrogance, though practical reasons also played a role in making this choice. Catholic village catechists related bible stories (graphically) and taught ‘the catechism’ in the local language.

B. *Periodicals and publishing houses*

Nineteenth-century missionaries often published small tracts, containing either portions of their bible translations or brief statements of faith. The colonial government had the right to censor publications printed in the Dutch Indies out of concern for religious and social agitation. In 1860 the Mennonite missionary Pieter Jansz (1820–1904) even lost his license to evangelise because

⁸ Boone 1997:91.

⁹ Müller-Krüger 1937:317–334.

of a small tract in Javanese, which in fact was nothing more than a brief sermon on Mark 1:15. Nevertheless he continued his work undisturbed until his death.

Early periodicals

As we saw above nineteenth and early twentieth century indigenous Christians were able to publish reports in the MNZG. Besides in North Sulawesi *Tjahaja Sijang* appeared as a monthly (later bi-weekly) paper between 1868 and 1927. In 1890 the Batak mission launched the publication of the periodical *Immanuel*, still published today. During the following decades many new periodicals were brought out, some in Dutch, others in Malay or in vernaculars such as Javanese and a few Batak languages. Sometimes western missionaries functioned as editors, as was the case, for instance, with *Bentara Hindia* (1900–1925). Later, however, Indonesian Christians edited their own publications such as *Siadji Panoetoeri* (bi-weekly, 1919–1940), *Zaman Baroe* (1926–1931), *Sinalsal* (1931–1942) and *Doeta* (1935–1942). Some of these periodicals served mainly inner-church purposes, others were a means of discussing national politics from a Christian perspective. *Zaman Baroe*, edited by T.S.G. Moelia, is a good example of the latter. Until 1942 there were over a hundred titles of such periodicals; however, only a few became influential. Nevertheless all of them served as channels through which notions of ecclesial and political independence, renewal of liturgy and Christian education reached a wider public. For the first time real debate could occur among Indonesian Christians themselves.

The alumni of the teachers' training school at Muntilan formed an association in 1913 called *Katolika Wandwa*. In January the following year it launched a monthly magazine, *Djawi Sraya*; by the end of the year it had 500 subscriptions, mostly non-Catholics. With the social and political situation becoming increasingly turbulent *Swara Tama* replaced this magazine in 1920, which was the main Catholic magazine of Central Java until the Japanese occupation. Meanwhile from Surabaya, East Java, *De Katholieke Gids* was published as a weekly newspaper from 1928 until 1942. Though not theological in nature, it outlined Catholic principles that ought to be applied to the confused social and political developments. Both *Swara Tama* (in Javanese) and *De Katholieke Gids* (in Dutch) strived to remain 'neutral' in regard to nationalism.

The flourishing Catholic mission in East Nusa Tenggara published two journals during this period. The monthly *Bintang Timoer* was published from Ende, Flores, between 1925 and 1937. This was a 16-page general magazine in Malay with features on farming, education and both regional and international news. *Bintang Timoer* also had regular articles that reflected the viewpoint of the expatriate missionaries about the adat. In Maumere *Kristus Ratu Itang* (Christ the King) was published in Sikkaneese for teachers in the Maumere district. In 1946 *Pandu Pendidikan* in *Bahasa Indonesia* replaced it

for the whole of East Nusa Tenggara. *Pastoralia* was launched in 1937 as a bi-monthly journal and a forum to exchange views between expatriate missionaries on practical theological issues in the field. Lecturers at Ledalero seminary edited *Pastoralia*. Key issues revolved around the apparent non-compatibility of marriage adat with Catholic Church law as well as problems of schooling. Discontinued during the Japanese occupation of East Nusa Tenggara (1942–1945), *Pastoralia* re-emerged during the 1950s and from the mid-1960s onwards became a book series under Indonesian editorship. Though it espoused a policy of accommodating the indigenous Indonesians of Nusa Tenggara to the pre-Vatican II Church, knowledge of the adat by both field missionaries and missionary ethnographers cautioned patience and understanding. The expatriate missionaries did not apparently possess a theology sufficiently flexible to connect with their sympathetic appreciation of the adat. Practice was often ahead of theory.

Until World War II theological or devotional books were rarely printed on behalf of the indigenous churches whether Protestant or Catholic. Around 1924 Hendrik Kraemer initiated a reading committee of the *Nederlandsch-Indische Zendingsbond* (NIZB), whose purpose was to publish simple literature. However, there was not a big enough market for such works, and only a few missionaries found time to write larger pamphlets and books. Therefore, this committee did not meet its goals, the majority of its publications being translations, hymnals and devotional material. In the Catholic Church, *Kanisius* in Yogyakarta (since 1922) and *Arnoldus-Nusa Indah* in Flores (since 1926) printed schoolbooks and catechisms, but also the occasional hymnal and volume of prayers and devotions. Before independence *Kanisius* published in both Javanese and Indonesian; *Arnoldus*, apart from schoolbooks, invariably published translations or adaptations of European originals in the local languages such as a small catechism in Sikkhanese (1928).

C. *Theology in the first half of the twentieth century*

The first sign of serious cracks in the dominance of Western colonisation in Asia at the turn of the century was the victory of Japan over Russia in 1904–1905. This victory of an Asian nation over a European one had a tremendous impact on the rise of nationalism in several Asian countries including Indonesia. In 1908 *Boedi Oetomo* was founded, followed in 1912 by *Sarekat Islam*. The latter at first aimed at uniting the forces of Javanese traders against Chinese *kongsi*'s, but later became an Islamic emancipation movement. Besides, Islamic reform movements such as *Muhammadiyah* (Yogyakarta, 1912) started to attack the colonial government, which, in their opinion, favoured Christians. Indeed, it cannot be denied that Christians benefited from the so-called ethical policy, which was applied both in the mother country and in the Indies from 1901

onwards. “The Netherlands has to fulfil a moral obligation towards the people of the Indies,” according to a government policy statement in 1901. That should logically have led to self-government and independence, which, however, was continually postponed. Several coalition Cabinets in which Christian parties participated interpreted this “moral obligation” in a Christian way during the following decades. Christian hospitals and schools, and in an indirect way the churches, were privileged. Between 1909 and 1913 the number of subsidized Christian schools increased by 40%.

From 1925 onwards nationalism became a major issue in the Dutch Indies. Soekarno’s *Partai Nasional Indonesia* (PNI) was founded in 1927. However, in spite of important events such as the *Sumpah Pemuda* (Youth Oath) in 1928, which birthed the slogan “one people, one nation, one language” (and one flag), not everybody was in favour of a pan-Indonesian nationalism. Often regional and ethnic feelings prevailed, at least among Christians. This was the case in Sumatra, Java, Ambon, Minahasa and elsewhere. Nusa Tenggara, Sulawesi, the Moluccas and Kalimantan strongly supported a federated state (*Indonesia Serikat*) as proposed by the Dutch during the Malino Conference of 1946. Not many missionaries had opened their eyes to Indonesia’s nationalist aspirations. Hendrik Kraemer and C.L. van Doorn (leader of Christian student ministry on Java) were notable exceptions in this respect.

While Java, Sumatra and Bali were seething with nationalist movements, the mass baptism of Flores was quietly progressing (1920–1960). Despite Soekarno’s exile and house arrest in Flores (1934–1938) where he was inspired both to re-examine Islam¹⁰ and formulate the *Pancasila*, Flores made no significant contact with the independence movement until the withdrawal of the Japanese in 1945.¹¹

National and ecumenical unity

It is against this background that church leaders and lay theologians developed their thinking during the decades leading up to World War II. Some of them involved themselves in the nationalist movement. The first name to mention here is Jerobeam Mattheus (ca. 1885–1944) in East Java. He had candid conversations with prominent leaders of the Sarekat Islam such as H.O.S. Tjokroaminoto and for some time was even an editor of the SI periodical *Bintang Soerabaja*. “Mattheus’s experience among Javanese Muslim groups gave rise to the possibility of the Christian community absorbing experiences broader than what their rural life had previously allowed.”¹² Earlier than others, Mattheus tried to arouse the interest of his fellow Christians into issues like

¹⁰ Soekarno 1936; Noer 1980:299–301.

¹¹ Muskens 1973–IV:270–274; Webb 1986:70.

¹² Sumartana 1993:121.

‘nation and religion.’ As a consequence of that attitude, he pleaded strongly for unity between Christians, for indigenous (church) leadership and for cooperation between adherents of respective religions.

Mattheus’ voice was heard in East Java only. Todoeng Soetan Goenoeng Moelia (1896–1966) from North Sumatra, however, was known nationally. He can be seen as the first intellectual among Indonesian Christians. Moelia studied pedagogy, law and anthropology, not only in Indonesia but also in the Netherlands. Besides he had a good knowledge of missiology and theology as well as other fields of science. This made him the appropriate person to become editor of Indonesia’s first encyclopaedia. Though he continued to play a role after independence (as a professor at the Universitas Indonesia, briefly as a cabinet minister and especially as chairman of the DGI from 1950 onwards), his main strength and influence is to be found in the years before 1942. Moelia attended the world missionary conference in Jerusalem in 1928 as the only indigenous Indonesian. He was a member, later vice-president, of the *Volksraad*, 1921–1929 and 1935–1941. There he proved to be a moderate nationalist, whose opinions and visions went beyond the direct interest of Christians. He was an adherent of the ethical policy, though he dissociated himself from the Christelijk Staatkundige Partij (CSP) when this party increasingly became a mouthpiece of Dutch interests. In his dissertation about *Primitive Thinking within Modern Science* (Leiden, 1933) he states that basically primitive thinking does not differ from (western) cultural thinking. The primitive mind, too, knows causality and logic (for instance in its languages) and will be able to achieve the same intellectual results as modern people given sufficient opportunities to increase knowledge and experience. Here his vision collided with that of many missionaries at the time. Even Kraemer defended the position that western peoples had more talents in the field of the creative transfer of knowledge and science than, for instance, had the Javanese. In spite of such differences of opinion, Moelia was a loyal and cooperative church leader who, both after 1928 (Jerusalem conference) and 1938 (the Tambaram conference) urged the foundation of a National Christian Council. Several times he advocated the development of indigenous leadership among the Christians of his country. He blamed both the stern colonial regime and the missions for neglecting the capacities of the younger indigenous generation:

It can be stated that taking care of the educated ones [in the Indies] not only came late, but too late. The missions should have known that 25–30 years ago there were many indigenous Christians among the students of several vocational schools (Stovia, Osvia, teacher-seminaries, technical schools etcetera), mostly from Ambon and Minahasa, later also from Batak areas. These students have been deprived of any spiritual care. One can say that for the major part this generation, that is, Christian intellectuals aged between 35–50 years, have been lost for the mission and for active Christianity in general... It is a sad experience of the younger generation that these older ones cannot be enthused for the sake

of Christ in these countries. They do not cooperate in any way, are neutral or have stronger feelings for nationalist or even Islamic movements.¹³

At least two other names of young, ecumenically inspired persons need to be mentioned besides Moelia, namely Johannes Leimena (1905–1977) and Augustine (Tine) Fransz (1907–1995). The former was a medical doctor and later a cabinet minister, the latter a lawyer and secretary of the DGI. Influenced by C.J. van Doorn, Hendrik Kraemer and Willem Visser 't Hooft, and by the WSCE, the question of unity, *ut omnes unum sint*, both in society and the church, was the main driving force of their lives. Even though they did not write many articles, their influence was tremendous, though mainly after 1945.

Naturally there have been others who pleaded for the unity of Christians, though hardly any of them participated in the nationalist movement or was involved in politics. J. Wirjotenojo (Central Java) and Mardjo Sir (East Java) were significant regional church leaders who were keen observers of the ecclesial situation. M.H. Manullang in North Sumatra was more a popular political champion than a church leader; he advocated regional independence for the Batak people.

Brief mention should be made of Amir Sjarifoeddin (1907–1948) the controversial Protestant Batak thinker, nationalist and briefly twice Prime Minister in the 1940s. Fluent in eight languages, he was an outstanding leader who combined fervent nationalism, romantic socialism and prophetic Christianity. His sparse extant writings are redolent with biblical quotes. His faith was a source of personal empowerment, which equipped him with a future-oriented social solidarity well beyond his Batak ethnic roots and personal Christian commitment. Amir can be described as a prophetic liberationist decades before the advent of liberation theology.¹⁴ Perhaps only Josef Widyatmadja can be said to have continued this radical approach some three decades later (see below).

The moderate leader of the Catholic Party, Ignatius J. Kasimo, was no theologian; his theological mentor was Archbishop Soegijapranata (1896–1963). Soegia was an ardent nationalist who urged the church in Java to leave the sacristy and serve the country.¹⁵ Mangunwijaya quotes the archbishop as frequently telling the congregation, “Your job is not to baptise, that is the Holy Spirit’s business! Your job is to build up an Indonesia that is good in the eyes of God and humanity!”¹⁶ Soegia’s vision was of a church that opted for the poor and fully engaged itself in national development where Catholic youth

¹³ Moelia 1935:261–265.

¹⁴ Simatupang 1967; Klinken 2003:115–150, 188–206.

¹⁵ Klinken 2003:175–187; Subanar 2001.

¹⁶ Mangunwijaya 1990:180.

movements were not confined to the parish but worked with their Muslim and nationalist counterparts. To Javanese the church he sent priests to study architecture and culture.

Regional culture and independence

Of course concern for regional cultural matters, including adat problems, was a continuing issue, especially among the Bataks in North Sumatra, and among the Torajas in Sulawesi. But it was also a concern among the Javanese where the *wayang* puppet plays were often evaluated negatively by biased missionaries during the first quarter of the twentieth century. N. Adriani (1865–1926), an outstanding linguist and missionary among the Torajas, made an outspoken plea in 1912 not to change or even abolish the total adat. He was very cautious. Fifteen years later Kraemer wrote in a positive way about *wayang*. However, many other missionaries were negative and opposed the local adat. To them, this was not a cultural issue, but a dangerously religious one.

Little by little indigenous Christians started to express their concern in these matters, sometimes more by action than by words. Earlier we mentioned Jacob Lumbantobing who published two small volumes on adat jurisdiction in North Sumatra. Apparently his line of reasoning was: with the arrival of Christianity adat is going to change, and somebody has to commit it to paper before it is lost. E.St. Harahap, who worked in West Java but had his roots in the Batak area, wrote in a booklet, which commemorated 75 years of evangelisation among the Bataks (1936), that it was unfortunate that the missionaries proscribed many pre-Christian expressions of religion and culture. “Now the Batak people are like a bird whose wings have been clipped. They may grow again, but the clipping will severely hurt us until the wings are fully-grown again.”¹⁷ The adat continued to become a major issue both in the Batak lands and in Sulawesi; after independence many scholarly studies would be devoted to these areas. In a different way, the same is valid for West Papua, Ambon, East Nusa Tenggara and Bali.

The Catholic missionary-linguist Pieter Drabbe arrived in the Moluccan islands (Tanimbar) in 1915. After returning to the Netherlands for studies in ethnology he wrote an ethnology of Tanimbar before moving to the south coast of Papua. Between 1935 and 1947 he studied 22 languages publishing his results in a variety of journals and books. His confrere Jan Boelaars compared some 14 of these languages for his doctoral dissertation and continued with ethnographic work until the mid-1980s. It must be admitted that there was no real sustained follow-through on Drabbe-Boelaars’ work, let alone theological reflection. The language range of Melanesian Indonesia is appar-

¹⁷ E.St. Harahap n.d.: 62.

ently too thick and rich for most missionaries and scholars to sort through. There has been no felt-need to understand the local language, much less the worldview associated with it. The deep structure of logic, value and judgment patterns has evaded most missionaries and the mission agenda. Muskens (later Catholic bishop of Breda, the Netherlands) has a 35-page bibliography at the end of the Indonesian edition of his thesis; most of these titles refer to ethnographic and anthropological studies by Catholic missionaries including some 16 studies by Drabbe.¹⁸

The adat was the central thread through the 1922 mission conference held in Ndona, Flores, which set the pattern for evangelisation by the Catholic Church throughout East Nusa Tenggara for the following two decades. In the late 1920s, a decade before adat issues were discussed in the pages of *Pastoralia*, Simon Buis (1892–1960) shot two ethnographic films at the end of the 1920s, one on forced marriages—*Ria Rago*—the other on development—*Ana Woda*. These are among the first films ever made in Indonesia. Paul Arndt (1886–1962), who worked on Flores from 1923 until his death, published ten ethnographic books including three grammars (Sikka 1931, Ngadha 1933, Lamaholot 1937) and two comprehensive dictionaries of Florenese languages (Lionese-German 1933, Ngadha-German 1957). He also penned 16 articles in international journals on ethnographic topics (from 1924 until 1963) apart from 20 articles in the pages of *Pastoralia* (1937–63). A further five missiological articles appeared between 1929 and 1956.¹⁹ Jilis Verheijen (1908–1997) made linguistic studies in West Flores, researching before the Japanese occupation while publishing over 20 ethnographic monographs from the late 1940s onwards. His Manggarai-Indonesian dictionary was published in 1967 and 1970. Verheijen also translated the gospels into Manggarai; some parishes continue to use these translations though most use *Bahasa Indonesia*. Once again there is little link between such extensive cultural research and theologising.

Often such cultural, linguistic and ethnological matters were the most important issues in the pursuit of regional independence, also, for Protestants, in an ecclesiological sense during the nineteen thirties. Language is a primary marker of a people's dignity and identity. It also indicates a tension between the striving for national independence and regional aims. On Java ideas about being one nation were livelier than elsewhere and similarly ideas about the need to form a single church. Generally speaking Christians elsewhere in the archipelago presupposed the existence of a number of peoples in the Dutch Indies instead of one nation. In any case several of their leaders emphasized only the position and needs of their own people. Notwithstanding that

¹⁸ Muskens 1973.

¹⁹ Arndt 2002:223–226.

limitation, the work of several of these leaders can be hailed as necessary, and sometimes daring in their situation!

Relations with other religions

The hopeful mood which came into being with the rise of movements like *Boedi Oetomo* and *Sarekat Islam*, also had an effect on the interest of Christians in other religions. At least until around 1920 several indigenous authors published articles and booklets about Islam. Though some were apologetic, others tried to see positive aspects and provide information about Islam as such. A few Christian periodicals, such as *Tjahaja Sijang* and *Bentara Hindia* even accepted and printed short articles by Muslim writers during this period. We mentioned already J. Mattheus' personal contacts with Muslim leaders in East Java and can add G.S.S.J. (Sam) Ratulangie (1890–1949) of Minahasa who wrote a pamphlet in which he defended the *Sarekat Islam* against the colonial government, which according to him did not understand the signs of the time.²⁰

No less than three Javanese Christians wrote about religious aspects of Islam. Soeseno wrote a series of articles in *Bentara Hindia* (1911) in which seven themes were discussed in a quiet, dialogical style. He compares Islam and Christianity regarding, among others things, the trinity, the position of angels, the fall of humankind and salvation. We need not be surprised that Christianity 'scores' better in his opinion, though Soeseno apologizes for his own shortcomings as an author: he acknowledges that he is still at the stage of a pupil. A few years later Kartawidjaja wrote a booklet in Dutch *From Qur'an to Bible* (1914). Boland and Farjon²¹ call it a fairly simple account of Islamic religious education. Kartawidjaja had been a *santri* himself, and wished to prove in a much more categorical way than Soeseno, the mistakes and failures of the Qur'an. Finally, in a monthly magazine for and by Christian teachers (*Oedyana Among Siswa*, 1913) Kalam Djanoeli asks frank questions about certain ideas within the Javanese Islamic mystical tradition. His remarks could have become a discussion not at the level of Qur'an texts, but of the *tasawuf*, the mystical teachings of Islam. Unfortunately, we do not know anything about a sequel.

There are several reasons why this openness towards Islam did not continue during the following decades. First, several Islamic movements started to emphasize their religious identity instead of a nationalistic one. Second, the policy of the colonial government made many Muslims suspicious. And finally, most missionaries still had serious hesitations about Islam. As has been

²⁰ Ratulangie 1913.

²¹ Boland and Farjon 1983:43.

stated by Th. Sumartana (1944–2003) in his dissertation (1993), even Hendrik Kraemer was not free from prejudice and his book *Agama Islam* (1928–1933) received hostile critiques from prominent Muslim leaders. Islam became a ‘missiological problem’ instead of a religion worth studying and discussing in an open way.²²

During the years before the Japanese occupation (1942–1945), hardly any contributions by indigenous Christians can be found on the topic of relations with tribal religions and with Hinduism. However, one source has until now not been investigated. In 1933 the Synod of the Christian Church of East Java sent three indigenous missionaries to Bali. They emphasized Javanese and Balinese culture in their teaching, using for instance Balinese *wayang* epics, the well-known biblical metaphor of living water (which reminded the people of Pandu’s second son Bima who went to the heart of the sea to find the water of life), and also Paulus Tosari’s booklet *Rasa Sedjati*. Especially about Tartib Eprajim it is said, that he “was not afraid to look for a point of contact between the noble forms of the Balinese-Javanese culture and the gospel. Anything, however alien to the gospel, was used in his preaching, in the conviction that the gospel would be strong enough to survive and bear fruit.”²³ Unfortunately, the extensive correspondence (in Javanese) between these three missionaries and Hendrik Kraemer has not yet become a subject of research. It might reveal significant details about the contextual approach of Balinese Hinduism by Tartib Eprajim and his colleagues during 1933–1936. Meanwhile in his doctoral thesis the Balinese church leader, I Wayan Mastra, takes up a very critical stance towards Kraemer’s doctrine of salvation.²⁴

We have yet to uncover extant sermon and catechetical notes made by indigenous teachers throughout the archipelago from which we might be able to grasp how the congregational leaders closest to the people rooted their faith in local culture. Many such manuscripts may well still be with families, though termites, the climate and lack of interest will have taken their toll.

Church life

Between 1910 and 1940 indigenous Protestant communities started to become (relatively) independent. Of course, they were influenced by the Indonesian nationalist movement, but also by developments in churches elsewhere in Asia. A visit by John Mott, secretary of the WSCF, in 1926, aroused much discussion. Also, reports from major conferences in Jerusalem (1928) and Tambaram (1938) made clear that Indonesian Christians were lagging behind! Therefore, we find a relatively large amount of material about church (and

²² Boland and Farjon 1983:37.

²³ Akkeren 1970:158.

²⁴ Dubuque 1970; Sudhiarsa 2001.

mission) history, about the position of indigenous pastors, church order, and confessions of faith during these years.

Several popular pamphlets and articles appeared in the field of local and regional church history. None of them can be called original. E.St. Harahap wrote about the origins of the congregation in Depok (south of Jakarta), about the way the gospel arrived on the island of Nias, and about the history of the church in North Sumatra. A. Latumahina, representative of a conservative, traditional stream in the churches of eastern Indonesia, published in 1926 a respectful biography of his teacher, missionary C.Ch.J. Schröder. The list could be completed with other examples.²⁵

From Sikka on the south coast of Central Flores, we find a mythic history in adat couplets, which includes the story of the coming of the church to the area 300 years previously.²⁶ This poetic-mythic history was written down in the late 1940s as the world of the local rajadom was about to be absorbed into newly independent Indonesia. Here we find not just the elements of a 'theological history' but the role religion plays in society—as interpreted by adat elders all of whom were also Catholic. It may well be that such poetic histories have also been recorded by people in other areas.

The question of church leadership was important; many indigenous assistant pastors felt frustrated because both the mission boards and the leadership of the *Protestantsche Kerk* were reluctant to give them full ministerial authority. Though early discussion at this point was carried out mainly by missionaries in Dutch language periodicals, later some Indonesians like R. Soedono Nimpoeno and Alex Wenas, both having worked and studied in the Netherlands, raised their voices as well. T.S.G. Moelia in particular was able to bring the discussion to a higher level.

The drawing up of rules and regulations for local Protestant congregations and churches took much time. This had mostly been the work of missionaries, though in East and Central Java Indonesian Christians such as Drija Mestaka exerted influence on the process. In eastern Indonesia the situation was different. Here the Protestant (State) Church had to become an independent indigenous church. During the nineteen thirties Wenas, W.H. Tutuarima and others played an important role in the discussion on this point. One of the urgent issues was the question whether each *bangsa* (people, linguistic group) needed its own church in order to guarantee its ethnic-cultural identity. One can see a shift in their thinking. First they pleaded on behalf of regional nationalist churches, yet later they admitted that the church could never be restricted ethnically. Nevertheless, this issue remained important, also after Indonesia's independence.

²⁵ Hoekema 1997; Latumahina 1926.

²⁶ Lewis 1993, 1996a, 1996b, 2004; also Pareira 1992.

From the mid-1940s until 1965 the Catholic Church consolidated and expanded with renewed waves of cross-cultural missionaries arriving from overseas and a steady stream of Indonesian personnel from local seminaries and institutes—ordained pastors together with male and female religious. There was little time or inclination to do theology or listen to the theologising of the local people before the rupture of the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965).

III. *Theology in Independent Indonesia*

In 1940 all contact with the Netherlands was broken off due to the German occupation of that country. As a consequence, the mission conferences and churches in Indonesia had abruptly to stand on their own feet. German nationals in Indonesia, including pastors, were interned and several of them lost their lives when the vessel *Van Imhoff*, which was taking them as prisoners to India (early 1942), was bombed. The years 1940–1942 thus brought an increasing independence to most churches. In so far as Protestant theologising continued, it concentrated mainly on problems of church structures, rules and regulations. Then when the Japanese occupied the Indies in 1942 almost all remaining western missionaries and pastors were interned. From that moment on the churches in Indonesia were completely on their own. Like all Indonesians they suffered severe hardship. Sometimes indigenous Christians were seen as identifiable enemies because of their ties with the Dutch. Out of sheer necessity, some church leaders collaborated with the Japanese while others showed a fighting spirit. Perhaps the collaborationist attitude among some also stemmed from adherence to “the doctrine of the two realms” which many Protestant missionaries had defended with their questionable interpretation of Romans 13. Except for a few short articles, very little written theological reflection survives from this time. “Yet, the experience of the churches during those years contributed much to their theological maturity,” according to T.B. Simatupang.²⁷ Ecumenical awareness was one of the fields where this theological maturity became visible. The Japanese occupiers forced the churches to collaborate. Some Japanese army chaplains, both Protestant and Catholic, brought to Indonesia by the occupiers, took a leading ‘bridging’ role. In spite of this, an ecumenical outlook was to continue after independence, though, unfortunately, efforts towards local and regional unity between Protestants and Catholics did not survive.

Whereas the period until 1940 showed the development of lay theology, soon after independence the first generation of professional Protestant theologians took centre stage. They graduated from the *Hoogere Theologische*

²⁷ Anderson 1976:99.

School in wartime and had immediately to take over leading positions in their churches and in theological education. Simon Marantika and Willem Johannes Rumambi (both members of the 1934 class) became outstanding ecumenical leaders. Pouw Boen Giok (also 1934), Johannes Abineno, Peter Latuihamallo and Andar Lumbantobing (all three from the 1939 class) were to become important theologians in Jakarta and North Sumatra, to mention just a few. Besides these, however, the necessary element of lay theology continued to broaden the horizon of Indonesian Christians, at least until the 1980s. In the Catholic Church lay politicians and a lay intelligentsia kept issues of society, culture change and justice on the church's agenda, although professional theology has been, until very recently, very much a clerical preserve.

A. *Theological education after 1945*

After the Japanese occupation the STOVIL schools in Tomohon, Ambon and Kupang continued as regular theological schools; in recent decades they have expanded to become universities. A theological school was opened in 1948 for the whole region of Eastern Indonesia, first in SoE (West Timor), then from 1954 in Makassar (South Sulawesi). This was meant to be the leading school in the region. However, several churches opened their own schools, which inadvertently led to an unhealthy rivalry at the cost of quality.

Relationships between the (Javanese speaking) churches in Central and East Java became increasingly cordial. After the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (*Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland*) joined the World Council of Churches, the Protestant school in Yogyakarta, Central Java, fused in 1961 with the *Bale Wiyata* in Malang to become *Sekolah Tinggi Theologia Duta Wacana* (Messenger of the Word). This is now one of the leading Protestant theological colleges in the country. But the *Bale Wiyata* continued as a lay training institute with an emphasis on local theological developments.

Many more theological institutes have opened their doors since then. A national survey carried out by the member churches of the DGI mentions 39 schools, which in one way or another educate church workers.²⁸ However, at the time of the survey only six of them offered a full academic curriculum. Some schools turned to the education of religious teachers in (government) high schools, while in recent decades other mid-level schools have raised their standards.

When evangelical Christians in Indonesia started to walk their own path in the 1960s even more schools were founded, most of them not linked to one or more particular church. Several of these evangelical institutions are

²⁸ Ukur and Cooley 1979.

large and function satisfactorily; they are well organized and are endorsed by many supporters in Indonesia and the western world. One of the first was the *Institut Injil Indonesia* in Batu near Malang. Most evangelical and Pentecostal training institutes are to be found on Java (Jakarta, Yogyakarta, Semarang, Surabaya, Malang), but they are also located elsewhere (Sumatra, South Sulawesi). By 2000 the total number of Protestant theological and bible institutes had increased to over two hundred.

The two major Catholic seminaries founded in the 1930s, namely Kentungan (Java) and Ledalero (Flores), have since been supplemented by seven more at Pematang Siantar (North Sumatra), Jakarta, Bandung, and Malang (Java), Pineleng (North Sulawesi), Kupang (West Timor), and Abepura (West Papua). All have recognised degree courses and most have post-graduate programmes.

The theological college *Fajar Timur* at Abepura opened its doors in 1967. It remains the only Catholic seminary in Indonesia training both ordained and lay pastors together, although the others are open to lay students. From the 1960s to the 1990s the curriculum was centred upon bible study and cultural anthropology rather than the traditional curriculum of (western) philosophy and theology.²⁹ Originally 60% of the curriculum for the degree stream was academic with 40% practical. However, mass migration to Papua from Java, the Moluccas and from the Catholic areas of Nusa Tenggara, has led to migrants and their descendants now forming around 60% of the population of Papua. Unsurprisingly, the Indonesianisation of diocesan leadership, the academic staff and the student body has led to *Fajar Timur* becoming more of a conventional seminary. During its creative period it produced many grassroots congregational leaders who did theology with their fellow Papuans, though there has been little written record of note.

Apart from *Fajar Timur*, Catholic catechists and other pastoral agents are educated at separate academies. In East Java Paul H. Janssen established a catechetical academy in Madiun in 1959, which in 1968 moved to Malang as *Institut Pastoral Indonesia*. Also in 1959 Jan van Roosmalen opened St. Paul's Catechetical Academy in Ruteng, Flores. In 1960 a catechetical centre and academy were set up in Yogyakarta, Central Java, with a national mandate from the Bishops' Conference. More recently catechetical academies or faculties have been established throughout the country. These institutes have produced thousands of schoolteachers, government administrators and lay pastors with first or second degrees. Though the content of their practical theology is conventional, their see-judge-act method of doing catechesis and

²⁹ Mercado 1989:21–32.

bible sharing with small groups has enabled Catholic communities to articulate their faith in the context of life issues. A grassroots theology is there, waiting to be recorded.

The seminary at Kentungan is now the Wedabhakti Theology Faculty of Sanata Dharma University, Yogyakarta. Since the 1970s the syllabus has been progressively updated. 'Theological projects' are undertaken whereby students immerse themselves in a social situation for three days a week during eight weeks while reflecting upon it theologically in an inter-disciplinary way. The process leads staff and students to rethink ecclesial praxis.³⁰ The faculty is productive and still contains many of the more prominent Catholic Indonesian theologians.

Founded in 1967, and moving from Yogyakarta to Jakarta the following year, the Driyarkara School of Philosophy undertakes fundamental reflections on humanity with a particular emphasis upon moral and political philosophy. Some 15% of its students are Muslim, many active in Muslim student organisations. From its beginnings Driyarkara has been an active partner in the public discourse of the country. The school has triggered more contextual theological thinking than the conventional seminaries.³¹ The largest seminary, that at Ledalero, is basically conventional, though with a substantial academic staff it now has some creative thinkers. Since the turn of the century its post-graduate programme has been contextualised. Meanwhile the much newer and smaller seminary at Pontianak, West Kalimantan, has embarked upon a pastoral approach whereby teachers and students do theology close to the Dayaks, Chinese, Malays and migrants of Kalimantan. The rector, William Chang, is a productive moral theologian and a regular contributor to Jakarta's largest circulation daily newspaper, *Kompas*.

It has to be said that only a few of the theological colleges/faculties whether Catholic, Protestant, or Pentecostal make a major contribution to an ongoing renewal of theological thinking. Creative theological thinking is found only at the more prominent schools. "If scholarly thinking has to be accepted as a main criterion, we have to admit that this terrific growth is not in balance with the limited growth of reflection and of important theological writings."³²

In most places, unfortunately, contact between ecumenically oriented and evangelical colleges is not intensive. At the beginning of the third millennium the position of Christians in Indonesian society has been weakened and therefore such contacts would seem to be opportune. Cooperation is increasing between several Catholic and Protestant theological institutions such as in Jakarta, Yogyakarta and Abepura.

³⁰ Banawiratma & Jacobs 1989:51–72.

³¹ Prior in Kwang-sun Suh 2004:288–303.

³² Aritonang in Suleman 1999:279.

Persetia and Atesea

The *Dewan Gereja-Gereja di Indonesia* (DGI, Council of Churches in Indonesia) organised several consultations on theology (the first in 1952). As a result of the third consultation in 1961 the *Persekutuan Sekolah-Sekolah Theologia* (Persethia, later *Persetia*) was founded. In 2000 *Persetia* had 33 members. Over the years this network of theological colleges brought together colleagues from the respective academic disciplines to discuss curriculum matters and theological developments. Many such study-institutes have taken place (Contextual Exegesis 1980; Islamology 1982; Dogmatics 1983; Spiritual Direction 1984 & 83; Ecclesiology 1988; Teaching-Learning Workshop 1989 & 1993; Pastoral 1990; Communication 1991; Missiology 1992; Church History 1993). They have led to good and inspiring contacts between colleagues in different faculties/colleges and to a certain harmonisation of teaching material and a common basic curriculum. The government has recognised the undergraduate (1997) and post-graduate syllabi (2000) that *Persetia* drew up. It has published *Setia*, its house journal, since 1971 and numerous books written by its members. Nevertheless, until now most theological schools still follow their own pattern. As not many students move from one college to another, this remains feasible. However, one goal that has been achieved is the uniformity of academic titles. Also, *Persetia* has proved helpful in obtaining official government recognition for several theological schools and universities.

Another organisation, which has become a stimulus, is ATESEA, the *Association for Theological Education in Southeast Asia*, of which 19 Indonesian institutions are members. Founded in the 1960s, and first based in Singapore but now (2008) in Manila, this association has organised several international conferences and workshops. ATESEA has also encouraged its member schools to maintain certain minimum standards, to improve their libraries and to emphasize the Asian context of theologising. Most important it founded *The Southeast Asia Graduate School of Theology*, which enables young scholars to obtain Master's degrees and doctorates in a number of disciplines. To many Indonesian theologians SEAGST is an excellent means to do research in an Asian setting. Several dozen of them, male and female, have obtained their doctorates through this international graduate school. Unfortunately the Indonesian government has refused to recognize its Ph.D. degrees.

Catholic networks and ecumenical collaboration

Catholic biblical theologians have met biannually since the 1980s under the aegis of the *Lembaga Biblica Indonesia* (LBI), which body also coordinates grassroots practitioners of the biblical apostolate. Catholic philosophers and ethical thinkers also meet regularly. The Episcopal Commission for Seminaries has arranged occasional conferences for various academic fields. However, it was only in the early 1990s that a Theological Commission was established

by the Catholic Bishops' Conference (KWI) to assist the bishops in their theological reflection on current issues. The Commission, together with the Commission for Seminaries, launched an association of Catholic theologians which met for the first time in 1998, but has since apparently disappeared from the scene.

An ecumenical consultation on contextualising the theological curriculum was held in 2002 with participants from eight Protestant and Catholic faculties and college networks.³³ Fruit of this very first consultation between Protestant and Catholic faculties that have been attempting a more contextualised syllabus was brought to an Asian-wide consultation the following December.³⁴

B. *Publishing channels after independence*

In 1945 the *Lectuurcommissie* of the NIZB (*Nederlandsch-Indische Zendingsbond*) was not brought to life again. Instead, the *Badan Penerbit Kristen* (later called *BPK Gunung Mulia* after the first chairperson of the DGI, Sutan Todung Gunung Mulia) was founded in 1950. BPK planned to publish seventeen categories of books and booklets in *Bahasa Indonesia*. Among them are bible commentaries, books on doctrinal and ethical matters, church history, homiletics, hymnals and material by and about the World Council of Churches. Until he returned to the Netherlands to become secretary of the Netherlands Missionary Council in 1963, the noted missiologist Johannes Verkuyll was a tireless motor behind this venture.³⁵ He himself and J.L.Ch. Abineno were the most productive authors between 1950 and 1990. Of course many others could be mentioned as well. The 2003 catalogue of BPK mentions almost thirty titles by Abineno, and Verkuyll's general introduction to a series of studies in the field of ethics, which he wrote in Bahasa Indonesia, is still sold—in its fifteenth edition! BPK Gunung Mulia still serves as the unofficial publishing house of the PGI (Communion of Churches in Indonesia). From the start BPK Gunung Mulia cooperated with publishing efforts of the more evangelical *Overseas Missionary Fellowship* (OMF) in order to prevent wasting energy. Nevertheless, since the 1970s several evangelical publishing houses have appeared on the stage.

In the course of time BPK Gunung Mulia has also felt competition from other Protestant publishers like *Pustaka Sinar Harapan*, *Duta Wacana University Press* and *Interfidei* as well as several Catholic publishing houses such as *Kanisius*, *Nusa Indah* and *Gramedia*. Nowadays they often publish more challenging titles than BPK. One quite popular kind of book is that

³³ Souisa and Prior 2002.

³⁴ Kwang-sun Suh 2004.

³⁵ Aritonang 1996.

of the *Festschriften* and collections of papers from consultations. To many theologians, who are busy with their day-to-day teaching and ecclesial duties, writing an essay is more feasible than writing a monograph. Seldom do such collections of the reflections of many authors provide an accurate picture of important contemporary themes in church, society and theology.

The two Catholic printing presses in Java (*Kanisius* 1922)³⁶ and Flores (*Arnoldus-Nusa Indah* 1926) developed into professional publishers in the early 1970s. Both publish general books (linguistics, literature, farming, school books) as well as books of devotion and theology. While there is still a considerable amount of translated work published, there is also an increasing number of original works in the fields of biblical theology, ethics and missiology. *Kompas*, the Jakarta daily newspaper, has grown into a vast multi-media empire, which includes its own book imprint, *Kompas* and the educational imprint *Gramedia*. The latter is a major publisher of schoolbooks and popular literature. It also publishes works of philosophy and Christian theology in language accessible to the Muslim majority. Since the 1970s *Dioma* from Malang has published devotional and practical theology books. After the collapse of the Soeharto regime (1998) a host of new Catholic publishers has emerged, some the publishing arm of their respective theological faculty or college. Thus *Penerbit Ledalero* publishes around a dozen titles a year, about half original works from the seminary staff with a concentration in the fields of practical and political theology and human rights.

Periodicals and general newspapers

Hardly any of the old periodicals were resurrected after independence, the most notable exception being *Immanuel* (HKBP church of North Sumatra), which is a church paper for the general public. From 1952 onwards *Berita D.G.I.* (after 1972 called *Berita Oikoumene*) provided a forum for discussion and dialogue between the churches in which many prominent theologians participated. Especially during its first decades *Berita Oikoumene* reflected an optimistic vision of the world with an equal concern for the ecumenical unity of all Christians nationally. Many local and regional church papers followed with greater or lesser success. In this field of mass communication the Catholic Church has been far ahead of the Protestants.

A seedbed of national humanist culture is the bi-monthly journal *Basis*. Launched in 1951 by the Jesuits in Yogyakarta, its long-time editor was Dick Hartoko (mid-1950s to 1990s). Many of Indonesia's finest writers and poets got national attention through their early writings in its pages. Its editor since the mid-1990s has been Sindhunata, himself a writer of religious popular culture

³⁶ Y.B. Priyanahadi (ed.) 2003.

through a human rights and political lens (1988, 2000). Not strictly theological, *Basis* is excellent for reflections on cultural and ethical values.

Jakarta's largest circulation daily newspaper is *Kompas*, a name proposed by President Soekarno who gave permission for its launch in 1965. Catholics founded *Kompas* although the majority of its journalists are now Muslim. Many of the original journalists came from the Catholic weekly *Penabur* (1946–1969) such as Marcel Beding, a Florenese, who headed the foreign desk from the beginning until his retirement in 1994. A quality paper, *Kompas* gave critical support to Soeharto's New Order over the years (1967–1998) and since then to the more conservative elements of the Reformation Era. Frequently, theologians, Protestant as well as Catholic, make use of its famous 'page 4 comment.' Here Christian theology is written in terms understandable to the Muslim majority in the context of current social, cultural and political concerns. A number of the collections of Mangunwijaya began as page 4 comments (1978) and as essays in other general newspapers (1994), just as some of Eka Darmaputera's began as columns in *Sinar Harapan* (1982). Working among inter-faith literati and on public issues, these theologians are not tied to any narrow Christian vocabulary and reach a wide public of a mainly Muslim readership. Quite often Muslim scholars join in the discussions as well. Religion continues to be an important factor in Indonesian society.

Specifically theological journals appeared from the Protestant side in the 1950s. The theological school in Makassar published a monthly in 1952, which however closed the following year. An important initiative was *Penjadar*, a popular theological monthly in Central Java. Among others Harun Hadiwijono, later a systematic theologian at *Duta Wacana*, wrote several contributions over the years. *Penjadar* appeared between 1954 and 1965. The STT in Jakarta had its own magazine until 1968. *Setia*, published by Persetia, started publication shortly afterwards. And in 1974 the Research Department of the DGI set off to bring out *Peninjau* to stimulate research in the fields of religion, society and culture as the foreword in the first issue explains. *Peninjau* appeared for many years as an authoritative periodical before becoming somewhat more tame and timid. *Peninjau* was soon followed by other journals such as *Gema Duta Wacana* (1975), a periodical of the *Duta Wacana* theological school in Yogyakarta, which was a forum for both staff and students. In its later years GDW often had theme-oriented issues, such as those on narrative exegesis, church music, tradition and modernity within the churches, violence and democracy. More recent periodicals include *Forum Biblika* (1993), published by the Indonesian Bible Society (*Lembaga Alkitab Indonesia*), *Jurnal STT Intim Makasar* (1996–1999 and again from 2001 onward), *Stulos Theological Journal* (by the Calvinistic Bandung Theological Seminary, from ca 1992 on), *Proklamasi!* (a new periodical of the STT in Jakarta, since 2000) and *Penuntun* (1994) of the Church in West Java. The latter periodical also publishes special

issues about, for instance, gospel and culture, the church and the big city, the religious dimension of the conflict between Israel and the Arab world, and feminism. Finally, in 2000 and with much energy an enthusiast group of feminist theologians founded their own periodical *Sophia*, which goes some way to see that gender issues in church and theology receive more scholarly attention.

On the Catholic side *Rohani* has been published from Yogyakarta since 1954. It is a monthly of spiritual theology edited by the Jesuits, mainly for fellow religious. *Rohani* links the spiritual life with issues of culture and public ethics. *Rohani* celebrated its golden jubilee with the publication of a 495-page volume *Berenang di Arus Zaman*—swimming in the tide of the times: challenges to religious life in Indonesia today.³⁷ The Catechetical Centre in Yogyakarta has published *Umat Baru* since 1967 as a bi-monthly of practical theology. On a more academic level *Orientasi*, beginning as a theological journal in 1969, became an annual in 1987 and was re-baptised *Orientasi Baru*. Most editions are thematic with creative contributions from across the range of theological disciplines. Since 1984 the faculty of philosophy of Parahyangan University, Bandung, has published articles in philosophy and theology by the staff in its journal *Melintas*. With the end of the Soeharto regime a spate of new journals has appeared. *Discursus* is a bi-annual journal from the Driyarkara Academy in Jakarta since 2001 and focuses upon issues of public ethics and cultural values with articles in both Indonesian and English. The same year *Jurnal Ledalero* was launched from the seminary of the same name in Flores. Themes treated so far include the renewal of religion and the empowerment of the people; democracy; conflict and reconciliation, and land. *Pustaka Missionalia* from Candraditya Research Centre in Maumere, Flores, has published two volumes on the contextualising of the theological curriculum³⁸ and on the re-orientation needed by the Catholic Church in East Nusa Tenggara as it faces changing and uncertain times.³⁹

The greatest challenge to all theological periodicals is that of maintaining quality and continuity. Editors have to carry out their task on top of an already heavy working load. Unsurprisingly, publications can easily stagnate. In addition, the marketing and financing of these periodicals is fraught with difficulties.

Sanggar Prathivi, founded in 1966 in Jakarta, has produced films for television, video and more recently VCD/DVD. Many programmes are general, yet all have a Christian ethical slant. *Studio Audio-Visual* of the Jesuit-run catechetical centre in Yogyakarta (since moved to Kaliurang) has produced

³⁷ Sudiarja & Laksana 2003.

³⁸ Souisa and Prior 2002, 2003.

³⁹ Prior and Woi 2003; Embu and Woi 2004.

slides, videos and CDs with Indonesian motifs. It has invited young artists to produce a series of one hundred pictures on biblical themes, as well as artistic comments on contemporary issues in public life. It is involved in street dramas. Here is living inter-faith and human rights theology in artistic and dramatic form (more detail at the end of the chapter).

Indonesian theologians have shown a certain hesitancy to publish in international and western books and periodicals. Perhaps language difficulties play a role in this. However it has to be said that they published articles in Dutch periodicals, such as *De Opwekker* and *Eltheto* (both till 1942), as well as in *Wending*, *Nederlands Theologisch Tijdschrift* and *De Heerbaan*, continued as *Wereld en Zending* (after WW II). Also, the English-speaking *IRM*, *SEAJTh* and later *AJT* have served as platforms for their thinking. Banawiratma is perhaps the best-known Catholic contextual theologian through his occasional articles in *Voices from the Third World* (Bangalore) and *East Asian Pastoral Review* (Manila). On the Protestant side Gerrit Singgih quite often contributes to scholarly English language periodicals. We have to admit that apart from a number of doctoral dissertations and some articles in *Festschriften* and similar volumes, and contributions in the proceedings of international symposia, their international contributions have been rather scarce. Apparently the Indonesian context itself requires their full energy.

Finally, as noted above, since the time of independence, theological discourse in Indonesia has taken place not only through consultations and in theological periodicals and books, but also in general newspapers such as the leading Catholic daily *Kompas*, the Protestant *Sinar Harapan* (now *Suara Pembaruan*) and others.

C. *The cultural and political contexts of theology in Indonesia*

Introduction: political developments

The political situation of Indonesia has always been complicated. After prolonged and heated discussion the preamble of the provisional constitution of 1945 safeguarded the rights of adherents of the five approved religions: Islam, Protestantism, Roman-Catholicism, Hinduism and Buddhism without speaking of majority and minorities. Nevertheless, efforts to establish an Islamic State and a separate South Moluccan State destabilized the nation during the 1950s. Time and again discussion about the *Pancasila* has re-emerged. The Soekarno era faced difficult years of restricted ('guided') democracy from 1959 on (efforts to agree upon a definite constitution failed in that year) and collapsed in 1965/66 with a failed coup-d'état (unexplained satisfactorily until now). The coup was followed by one of the worst massacres of the twentieth century, in which the communists were the main losers and victims, the army the chief beneficiary. Soekarno's successor, General Soeharto, ruled the country with an

iron fist until 1998, when he was forced to step aside amidst a monetary crisis and widespread unrest. The first decade of Soeharto's government showed a certain degree of openness and encouragement of religious dialogue that led to cultural renewal. Until the mid-1980s his cabinets always contained a number of Christians in key economic and security posts. His politics soon embraced a *de facto* one party system; he himself set up and controlled the only three recognised political parties. His Golkar had supreme power and this led to all kinds of restrictions for non-governmental associations, including religious organizations. Limitations on freedom of speech and writing impacted upon Christians, though in general they continued to support Soeharto's regime until the end because at first the army held Islamic forces in check. From the mid-1980s, Soeharto courted Muslims and distanced himself from his Christian backers.

During the time-span covered here, the most important constant national value has been the *Pancasila*. Not only did this state symbol of unity influence theological thinking as to state-religion or state-church relations, but it had also an impact upon the attitude of Christians toward culture. Thinking about religious plurality has been determined heavily by the ideal of harmony, which seemed to be guaranteed by the *Pancasila*. However, Soeharto's efforts to use *Pancasila* as a civil religion (marked by Law No. 8 in 1985) dampened sympathy from both Christian (Protestant and Catholic alike) and Muslim organisations. In 1991 Soeharto established a Muslim think-tank, ICMI (*Ikatan Cendekiawan Muslim Indonesia*) under his protégé Habibie, to counteract the long-established 'Christian' social and economic think-tank CSIS (the 'Berkeley mafia'). Increasing religious and political unrest marked his last years. After his fall a time of political instability arose, which continues. While it is true that instability has allowed the growth of intellectual freedom, it has also spawned serious bloody upheavals in the Moluccas and Central Sulawesi where Muslims and Christians have fought each other. Struggles for independence have erupted in Aceh (the Northern tip of Sumatra) and Papua. Both the openness and the upheavals of post Soeharto times—the *zaman reformasi* (era of reformation)—have influenced theological reflection (see below). The final outcome of political social, religious and political debate in Indonesia is unpredictable. The army, ensconced in power for over 30 years under Soeharto, is already reasserting itself on the political stage. The first-ever direct Presidential election in 2004 saw the election of Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, a retired army general, while other retired generals are active in the top echelons of both major secular political parties, Golkar and PDIP. The re-emergence of the army in politics may preface a return to more central control rather than greater regional autonomy as demanded by the forces of 'reformation' in 1998–1999.

The role of the DGI/PGI in theology

During the first decades after 1945 there was a great sense of cooperation between theological colleges, especially the STT in Jakarta, and the National Council of Churches (DGI). Almost all lecturers and professors at STT Jakarta played a role within DGI. This nurtured a valuable cross-fertilization. DGI profited from the input of individual theologians while theological education was greatly influenced by ideas and trends from within the DGI, the CCA and the WCC. Though there is still a strong common ground between the ecumenical movement and theological colleges, in the course of time the voices of individual theologians became more articulate.

Nevertheless DGI, later renamed PGI, has played an important, stimulating and uniting role here. This it did in several ways. First of all by organising and facilitating seminars and conferences; secondly by establishing an Institute for Research and Church Development (*Lembaga Penelitian dan Studi* or LPS, later renamed *Lembaga Penelitian dan Pengembangan* or LITBANG) and other committees and working groups such as the *Institut Oikumene Indonesia*; and finally by a number of public statements, often together with the Catholic Bishops' Conference, MAWI (later renamed KWI). It is not possible to mention here all the areas where DGI/PGI was active in this respect, but below we give a few examples which are partly derived from a commemorative volume in which 50 years of service by the PGI has been evaluated.⁴⁰ The sub-title, "Reconciliation on behalf of Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation" is a clear reference to themes, which have been important within circles of the World Council of Churches in recent decades. Often DGI/PGI felt enriched and stimulated by the work of the WCC. The themes of the assemblies of DGI/PGI clearly indicate this, but also, for instance, those of several big conferences about church and society. The first of these latter conferences was held in Sukabumi in 1962; its theme was *Tugas Kristen dalam Revolusi* (The role of Christians in the revolution). Here a strong plea was given to adopt an ecumenical attitude towards the Indonesian revolution. Several parallels were seen between this revolution and the revolution which Jesus had initiated, and therefore Christians were urged to give a positive contribution to nation building during this revolutionary age. T.B. Simatupang, who was surely the brains and main incubator of these ideas, used the words "constructive, creative, realistic and critical" which four words (*tetra kata*) later became an often quoted, widely approved and famous ecumenical formula within DGI. Simatupang was a former army chief-of-staff who in 1959, at the age of 39, was removed from his duties by President Soekarno. Since then Simatupang dedicated his life to church, ecumenism and society. Christian theology is most

⁴⁰ Aritonang (ed.) 2000.

realistic about power, according to Simatupang, because Christianity has a deep knowledge of the serious effects of the misuse of power. He was perhaps the most authoritative Protestant leader until his death in 1990. He was an eloquent mediator between PGI and political leaders, as well as an important member of the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches.

Mission and unity, of course, were important fields, which in the beginning aroused much enthusiasm within DGI. Whereas ‘mission’ lost its basic impetus during the 1970s (‘dialogue’ became the keyword within ecumenical circles, whereas ‘mission’ was seen as the property of the increasing group of evangelical churches), ‘unity’ remained a most urgent issue, partly because of outside pressure (renaissance of Islam), partly because Indonesian churches always tended towards harmony and never made their confessional identity exclusive and absolute. Therefore, it was accepted as necessary that all Christians unite in order to give a clear and strong signal towards people of other living faiths. The DGI/PGI invested much energy in taking successive steps towards a ‘visible’, or at least an organisational unity. Ecumenical theology in many theological schools still carries this hallmark.

Below we will meet more fields where the DGI/PGI discussions left its traces: *Pancasila*, culture, human rights and other religions. Here we want to mention only the basic document, or confession, of DGI/PGI. On behalf of the DGI Assembly of Makassar (1967) a first concept of the common understanding of the faith of the member churches (*Pemahaman Iman Bersama*) was discussed. This confession has 12 articles including items on ministry, discipleship, Christian hope (resurrection) and the civil authorities. However, the assembly did not achieve a consensus on the text. The Tenth Assembly of the PGI in Ambon, 1984, accepted a second, quite different version, where the change was made from *Dewan* (Council) to *Persekutuan Gereja-Gereja* (Communion of Churches). The Tenth Assembly also accepted five documents on the unity of the church (*Lima Dokumen Keesaan Gereja* or LDKG) (PGI, 1985), one of them being the *Pemahaman Bersama Iman Kristen*. In seven articles this document provides a systematic overview: God, creation, humankind, redemption, church, the Kingdom of God and new life, and finally the bible. In this confession relations to human powers, tradition (*adat*), culture, science and technology are mentioned in the paragraph on redemption, “In expectation of the realisation of God’s salvific plan, the faithful are called to pray and be concerned that all forms of power [...] which influence the life of society, are used for the well-being of everyone and are accountable to God, the source of all power...”⁴¹ In this statement there is no direct reference to the *Pancasila*. Yet, after a lengthy discussion, the principles of the connection

⁴¹ Van den End 1986:148.

between the church and the *Pancasila* were laid down in the *Tata Dasar* (Rules and By-laws) where a subtle differentiation was made: the PGI *berdasarkan pada Yesus Kristus...* (the PGI is *founded* upon Jesus Christ, Lord and Saviour, according to God's Word in the bible... Chapter II, paragraph 3), and the PGI *mengamalkan dan melestarikan Pancasila sebagai satu-satunya asas* (the PGI practises and preserves the *Pancasila* as its sole principle in the social, national and political life of Indonesia, Chapter III, paragraph 5). The Catholic Bishops' Conference made a similar distinction stating that it accepted the *Pancasila* as its sole principle "in our societal and national life (only)" (*bermasyarakat dan bernegara*). This distinction mollified Christian feelings but achieved the aim of the Soeharto government: the churches now formally accepted the government's interpretation and implementation of the *Pancasila*.

In times of crisis, and on occasions like Christmas and Easter, it has been felt important to publish a public statement. Joint Christmas statements with MAWI/KWI have been made since 1973. Earlier statements, resolutions and appeals show a broad range of topics: freedom of religion (1953 and again 1978); participation in general elections; the political and military confrontation with Malaysia (1964); the attempted coup-d'état of 1st October 1965; the draft of the new marriage laws (together with MAWI, 1973). During the last years of Soeharto's regime we also find appeals concerning the violation of human rights in East Timor (and again, on the independence of Timor Leste in 1999), and Papua (such as the Timika incident in 1995). After Soeharto's forced resignation there were statements about the mass rape of Indonesian women of Chinese descent (1998) and the bombing of the Istiqlal mosque in Jakarta (1999), and several appeals concerning the ethnic/religious tragedy in the Moluccas, Halmahera and Central Sulawesi (1999, 2000). Such statements do not always show a clear theological position. Sometimes DGI/PGI seemed overzealous in taking the government's position or choosing the side of the Christian minority. Here and elsewhere we see that the context co-shapes the theological and ecclesiological position of PGI.

MAWI/KWI and theological reflection in the public sphere

Not a great deal of the theological thinking of the Catholic Bishops' Conference (MAWI/ KWI) is worthy of note and the role of the conference in public life has been somewhat chequered. The bishops first met in 1924 but since then only sporadically until 1960 when they made their first public statement. Only in 1970 was it decided to meet annually. When Joop Beek SJ ran the lay apostolate office of MAWI during and immediately after the events of 1st October 1965 (*Gestok*), he galvanised church organisations and movements to topple Soekarno and then gave unreserved support to General Soeharto, working closely all the time with Ali Murtopo and the newly-reconstituted Golkar. For the Jesuit Beek, and many other Christians, the army would save

the country from communism. No statements were made by MAWI on the nation-wide massacre (October 1965–March 1966) either due to moral cowardice or perhaps because this use of violence was seen as legitimate, or even a good thing, as claimed by Joop Beek at the time. Later that year MAWI backed the government's socio-economic development programme (October 1966). Even the 'courageous' note on birth control published by MAWI in October 1968 on the encyclical *Humanae vitae* can be read as a siding with government policy rather than as a rejection of a more strict interpretation of papal teaching. Despite rumblings from certain theologians, pastors and elements in the Catholic intelligentsia, the statements of MAWI/KWI remained fairly innocuous until 1997. See for instance, "Mengenai Beberapa Masalah Penting di Tanah Air," "Tentang Problema Minoritas," and "Pernyataan Dewap Pleno tentang Tapol" (1969); also statements on the general elections of 1971, 1977, 1981 and 1987 and on the Santa Cruz massacre in Dili (14 and 28 November 1991). Most theological considerations during this period were concerned with inner-church affairs such as ongoing catechetical and liturgical renewal (see below).

Since 1971 KWI has published its activities, reports and official statements, including theological reflections on current issues, in its quarterly journal *Spektrum*. The first issue consists of *Pedoman Kerja Umat Katolik Indonesia*, a comprehensive guide to the role of Catholics in development drafted by Jan Riberu (afterwards published as a separate booklet). The document accepts the social-political and economic frame of Soeharto's New Order. An updated and greatly expanded version was drawn up by Bernhard Mardiatmadja and Piet Go and was launched during the Jubilee assembly of bishops and people in Bogor in 2000. Other statements on social engagement were published in 1977 and 1992.

The theological advisor to MAWI/KWI from 1965 to 1999 was Robert Hardawiryana. Also on the Theological Advisory Commission of the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences (FABC), Hardawiryana introduced the Indonesian Conference to FABC's see-judge-act methodology and to the central concerns of the Asian Bishops' Federation: a new way of being church through the threefold dialogue with other faith traditions, local cultures, and with the poor. After over 30 years with MAWI/KWI Hardawiryana was replaced by Piet Go O.Carm. in 1999.

As Soeharto distanced himself from his former Christian backers, corruption became systemic and the national debt unsupportable, KWI finally took up a modestly prophetic role. In its 1997 pastoral letter *Keprihatinan dan Harapan* (Concern and Hope) for the first time the Conference analysed the growing corruption in public life. Mangunwijaya and Franz Magnis-Suseno were among the drafters of this letter. KWI was the first prominent public body to make such a public analysis. The largest Islamic mass movement,

Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), printed and distributed thousands of copies among its members. When Soeharto fell the following year and the uncertain, transitory period—*era reformasi*—showed a dramatic increase in corruption, KWI published a series of letters and pastoral notes. These brief documents follow the flow of the ‘pastoral cycle’ describing the situation that has to be faced which is then analysed first with the help of the social sciences and then in the light of faith, and finally concluding with practical recommendations.

Two Easter pastoral letters were entitled *Bangkit dan Tegak dalam Harapan* (“Arise and Stand Erect in Hope,” 1999) and *Tekun dan Bertahan dalam Harapan* (“Diligent and Holding Out in Hope,” 2001). Here is a theology of hope in the face of a deteriorating national situation. Then two years running the bishops published a *Nota Pastoral*—“Social Justice for All” (2003) and “Public Civility: Towards a New National Habitus” (2004). While the 2003 note analysed the situation through the prism of political ethics, the 2004 note made a cultural-ethical analysis. With this lens it examined issues of corruption, violence and ecological devastation. It described the state, economic society and civil society as *tiga poros kekuatan*, three axes of society. KWI acknowledged its own complicity over the years in the deteriorating situation, without however stating what its complicity was. It continued, “One of our strengths is the Jesus of the Beatitudes... The culture of ‘the strongest always wins’ must be countered with ‘the small, the weak, the poor and the marginalised come first’... The culture of worshiping money must be countered with announcing the God of solidarity, love and compassion... The culture of the end justifies the means must be countered by raising awareness within the church itself of the culture of peace (dialogue, collaboration, deliberation, mutual respect), a participatory church which urges the people to be pro-active in the humanist dialogue in order to achieve community which can survive tribulation.” With these statements of 1997–2004, and after decades of de facto cooption by the regime, KWI seems to be taking up its responsibility to participate in a national discourse on the roots of the national crisis.

Christian theologians on the state

During Soekarno’s presidency many Christians joined Christian political parties such as *Parkindo* (Protestant) and the *Partai Katolik*. Others preferred secular socialist or nationalist parties. Several church leaders and theologians played major roles in national politics such as Archbishop Soegijapranata on the Catholic side and Moelia, Johannes Leimena, A.M. Tambunan and Peter Latuihamallo from the Protestant Church. In general an optimistic mood dominated theological reflection. It was a time of transition for Christians, though perhaps not many were aware of this. They still had an historic lead in education and opportunity over most Muslims and were over-represented in parliament, government, government agencies and cultural institutions as

well as in business firms. The theological debate on church and society often ran parallel to discussions in society at large. No wonder that Leimena, physician, church leader, and minister in several cabinets under Soekarno, could state in an opening address to the *Sidang Raya DGI* (the General Assembly of the DGI) in 1964, that “the aims of the churches in fact are parallel to the aims of the state and the country.”⁴² Maybe Leimena was influenced by Karl Barth’s ideas about *Christengemeinde und Bürgergemeinde*. In any case, at the inaugural meeting of DGI in 1950, Leimena had also given an address on *Gereja dan Negara* (church and state). At that time the unity of the nation was menaced by the proclamation of the *Republik Maluku Selatan*.⁴³ In 1964 tensions between nationalists, communists and Islamic parties endangered the state. The church aimed at (ecumenical) unity while in a parallel way the nation had aimed at unity since 1928, unity in diversity: *bhinneka tunggal ika*. Though the amiable and tactful Leimena certainly aimed at harmony, his 1964 speech roused some discussion at that time: were his words to be interpreted in a social-political sense and was he speaking as a government official, or was he making a theological-ecumenical statement by a lay theologian?

Fifteen years later Latuihamallo, who for many years taught ethics at the STT in Jakarta, and who had been a member of parliament himself, acknowledged that the churches during the 1960s had no clear ecumenical vision as to the relationship between church and state. However, in his opinion Leimena’s words had to be understood as a critique against the old State Church idea (the *Partai Kristen*), which was still alive among many Christians! Therefore, at the end of the first period of Soeharto’s regime, when a relative openness existed, Latuihamallo saw the role of the church as one of critical solidarity with the state in Indonesia. “...the church is a dynamic and creative partner of the state, a partner who feels responsible in renewing the nation, the society and the world. Therefore, in order to improve the situation of society and guarantee a future, the church is obliged to participate in the building of the nation and the state.”⁴⁴ “Nation-building” was one of the most frequently used notions in Protestant theology during that time. In the article quoted above, Latuihamallo uses the above mentioned and often quoted key words by T.B. Simatupang.

Between 1950 and 1980 the central ideology to which Christians clung was the above mentioned *Pancasila*, the five pillars of the national identity, the most influential being the first pillar: Indonesia is built upon “Ketuhanan yang Maha Esa.” That term has been translated in many ways, like “Divine

⁴² Quoted by P.D. Latuihamallo 1980:216–223.

⁴³ See *Notulen Pembentukan DGI* and Sumartana in: Wahono 1984:235–260.

⁴⁴ Latuihamallo 1980:221.

Omnipotence”⁴⁵ or “The One Lordship.”⁴⁶ A strictly theological discussion about the interpretation of “Ketuhanan Yang Maha Esa” has been evaded by Indonesian theologians, and many would agree that it is an astute political formula rather than a religious formulation. Also, their hesitancy to debate this first pillar may have to do with their reluctance at that time to define the theological value of other religions. To develop a *theologia religionum* while being in a minority position could make Christians vulnerable, no matter what the outcome of such an effort might be! So, it is better not to use an ‘either—or’ approach here. However, many Christians used the *Pancasila* in a practical sense, to defend the *status quo* in which all religions have the same rights. To them the *Pancasila* stemmed the tide demanding an eventual Islamic State, and guaranteed a maximum of religious tolerance. Walter Bonar Sidjabat’s dissertation about *Religious Tolerance and the Christian Faith* (1960, published 1965) and Eka Darmaputera’s dissertation *Pancasila and the Search for Identity and Modernity in Indonesian Society* (1982, English publication 1988) both agree on this point. The strong preference for the *Pancasila* by many others such as T.B. Simatupang (1984) and John Titaley (1991) also had a similar practical aim. According to Darmaputera, the *Pancasila* is mainly an “operating ideology. It is operating because it reflects, or, to be more exact, embodies the cultural values orientation of the Indonesian people.”⁴⁷

Catholic concerns revolved around issues of freedom of religion and the moral basis of society. Unsurprisingly these issues are first found in the writings of a philosopher such as Nicolaus Driyarkara, (1913–1967) before being taken up by a moral theologian. Indeed, Driyarkara laid the groundwork for the later growth of contextual theologies in the Indonesian Catholic Church. His ten books concern the philosophy of the person, social ethics and the development of the *Pancasila* as a framework for living in a multi-cultural and multi-religious society. Teaching philosophy during the turbulent 1950s and 1960s, he was concerned with the ethics of power and the problem of freedom and governance.⁴⁸ Using Javanese, Greek and modern European philosophies, he argued for human responsibility and the human ability to arrange and humanise the system of power in order to live as *homo homini socius*.⁴⁹ At a time when slogans defined public truth, Driyarkara’s social ethics gave the lie to the ideologisation of power that justifies ‘false truths.’⁵⁰ When politics was promoting unthinking loyalty, he spoke of the dignity of human persons as conscious actors in their own development. When schooling was becoming

⁴⁵ Sidjabat 1965.

⁴⁶ Darmaputera 1982.

⁴⁷ Darmaputera 1988:191.

⁴⁸ Driyarkara 1980a.

⁴⁹ Driyarkara 1980b.

⁵⁰ Driyarkara 1980c.

increasingly ideological, he developed a philosophy of education as a process of humanisation.⁵¹ A deep, serene thinker Driyarkara allowed himself to be appointed to public bodies and in the last years of his life became a quiet but nimble supporter of the student movement of 1965–1966.

However, in the 1980s the Soeharto administration began to expand the role of *Pancasila* to become a sort of *civil religion* with weekly ceremonies for all government employees, compulsory courses on *Pancasila* ethics in all schools, and the obligation for all non-government organizations including religious bodies, to accept the *Pancasila* ideology as *asas tunggal*, their sole foundation. While both ecumenical Protestants and Catholics found formulas that avoided theological problems (see above), in practice the government of Soeharto gained even more control over institutional religious bodies.

A number of Catholic moral theologians wrote doctoral theses on the *Pancasila*. One of the more perceptive is that of William Chang (published 1997). Chang makes a comparison between the concept of human dignity in the *Pancasila*, which is embedded in the religious cultures of Indonesia and the parallel concept in papal and conciliar social doctrine. With the demise of the Soeharto regime in 1998 and the outbreak of ethnic and religious conflict, which threatened the very existence of the unitary state, Chang argued for the acknowledgement of basic moral principles and values in public life based on the dignity of the human person.⁵² He thus sees the *Pancasila* as the one bulwark against balkanisation. Chang's moral theology of the dignity of the human person has found its way into the two 'Pastoral Notes' of KWI of 2003 and 2004. The publication of these notes triggered public discussion among both Christians and Muslims (see above).

Chang is not alone in interpreting the fall of Soeharto as an opportunity to restore the *Pancasila* to its original form and its role as a firm guarantee of religious and ethnic harmony. In *Gereja dan negara: hubungan Gereja Katolik Indonesia dengan negara Pancasila* Y. Eko Budi Susilo takes a similar line (2002). However, some of these theologians and church leaders run the danger of satisfying themselves with an unstable *status quo* and of withdrawing from the crucial public debate with a resurgent Islam and revitalised local cultures. They remain introverted and prefer the fetters of a minority complex. Partly, this has to do with the increasing impact of both charismatic and evangelical theology and practice, and partly to the marginalisation of Christians from public life.

However, public discourse in the post-Soeharto period (commonly called *zaman reformasi*, the era of reformation) has gone beyond this position. Younger theologians, such as the late Th. Sumartana, Martin Lukito Sinaga and

⁵¹ Driyarkara 1980d.

⁵² Chang 2002.

Zakaria J. Ngelow, pleaded for an open discussion about the eventual effects of a possible Islamic State. "With such a minority complex it is impossible to develop a productive dialogue with other groups, especially with Muslims." According to Sumartana, one of the more eloquent advocates of an open inter-religious dialogue, the shadow of a futile and marginalized life causes the Christian community to suffer from political suspicion regarding the Muslim community as a whole.⁵³ These theologians are willing to discuss the concept of a *civil society* with outstanding Muslims like Nurcholish Madjid, whose ideal is an interpretation of civil society as *masyarakat Madani*, an open, righteous and democratic society in which Muslim values will be maintained.⁵⁴ We should note that the word Madani is sometimes linked with *madinah*, city (and with Medina), and sometimes with *madaniyah*, *peradaban*, civilization. For that reason PGI has been reluctant to use the concept of *masyarakat Madani* and prefers to speak about *masyarakat sipil* or *masyarakat warga*, direct translations of *civil society*.⁵⁵

Like other Catholic thinkers (Driyarkara, Chang), the Jesuit moral philosopher Magnis-Suseno (born 1936) is concerned with the moral values that lie behind social policy. Professor of ethics at Driyarkara Institute of Philosophy since 1969, he has for over forty years undertaken a living dialogue between the European and the *abangan* or popular Javanese ethical traditions. Without deciding which is the more legitimate, Magnis-Suseno compares the western philosophy of life (an ethics of obligation) with Javanese practical wisdom (an ethics of accommodation). In Javanese cosmic culture whoever/whatever is in their appropriate place is ethical. Human beings, and indeed everything else, need to accommodate themselves to the cosmic order, accepting their assigned place (1981/84/97). Magnis-Suseno appreciates this practical wisdom in small-scale society, but is scathing about its manipulation by the national elite, especially during the Soeharto regime (1986).

This understanding of Javanese culture and its values has informed Magnis-Suseno's political philosophy and ethical theology and his involvement in the *reformasi* of 1997–1999. He has been a key participant in ongoing discussions with Indonesia's Muslim and Christian intelligentsia. He has maintained close contacts with the leaders of both the moderate village-based *Nahdlatul Ulama* and the more exclusivist-modernist *Muhammadiyah* Islamic movements. His ethical writings can be described as both trans-denominational and trans-religious (e.g. 1981) in contrast to his contextual ethical theology, which is written in a clearly Catholic idiom (e.g. 1993). In more than 20 books and

⁵³ In Suleeman *et alii* 1999:194–207; also 2001:20–46.

⁵⁴ Ngelow 1999:27–43.

⁵⁵ PGI 2000:310.

over one hundred articles, Magnis-Suseno has both deepened and broadened the work begun by Driyarkara.

Moderate Catholic liberationists

A few major Catholic thinkers and activists have worked and written on social ethics, human rights and the liberation of the marginalised. The most prominent of these is Yusuf Bilyarta Mangunwijaya (1929–1999). Like so many of Indonesia's more creative theological thinkers Mangun was not a professional theologian. He was an architect (Aachen, 1966) whose designs combine traditional Javanese feeling with contemporary technical skills. From 1968 onwards Mangunwijaya wrote a regular column in the Jakarta daily *Kompas* and subsequently in many newspapers and journals. He was thoroughly versed in both popular and classic Javanese culture. Mangun was a mystic-poet yet also an engineer at home with technology. Throughout his active life he also quietly worked away at alternative forms of primary education. A personal friend of the poor, he was feared but consulted by both church and government officials. In 1981 he published *Burung-burung Manyar*, one of eleven novels, soon recognised as a contemporary classic. Set in revolutionary times, it analyses the 'mental war' of the protagonists who make conscious (conscience) and unconscious (cultural) choices. As with most of his novels, *Burung-burung Manyar* is an historical work of fiction where he re-reads Indonesian history from the perspective of the survivor-victim. His protagonists are often rural and usually women: the unacknowledged yet strongest members of society who hand down the deepest human values. In these ways, though clearly not in the same league, Mangun's novels parallel those of Pramoedya Ananta Toer (died 2006), Indonesia's greatest novelist. Mangun's 'trans-religious' values and inter-faith theology is written free of Christian terminology and is largely found in his 11 novels and 28 books of non-fiction. When the Soeharto regime prohibited talk of liberation theology, Mangunwijaya was perhaps the first Catholic not just to support it but develop his own version of *teologi pemerdekaan*.⁵⁶

Just four works can be called theological in a stricter sense. The first two are *Ragawidya* (the religiosity of ordinary everyday happenings, 1975) and *Panca Pramana* (a manual on collaborative lay leadership of the congregation as a communion of small communities 1982a, 2000). Then there are two books published posthumously: *Memuliakan Allah, Mengangkat Manusia* (on being rooted in religious-cultural values while open to the scientific and technological advances of the post-modern world, 1999a); and *Gereja Diaspora* (1999b). This

⁵⁶ Mangunwijaya 1982b, 1999c.

230-page work, so far the only contextual ecclesiology written by a Catholic Indonesian, was originally published as a series of articles in *Mingguan Hidup* with hardly a footnote or reference. In it Mangun outlines how and why the Indonesian Catholic Church has come to be enclosed in upon itself, busy with its own devotions (a ghetto church) rather than taking up the challenge of becoming a widely scattered network of small but prophetically-inspired ecclesial communities (a diaspora church). Here there is both theological vision and practical strategy. *Gereja Diaspora* has been used for ongoing discussion in basic communities, seminars and workshops, particularly in Central Java. It is too soon to say whether Mangun's analysis of the situation of the church in Indonesian society will be generally accepted or how far his life and writings have helped move the Catholic community into becoming a fragile yet dynamic and prophetic presence. In a way Mangun was 'owned' by a group larger than his own church, and we have to admit that he was unequalled on the Protestant side.

One of many people inspired by Mangunwijaya to become actively engaged in moderately liberationist theology is Agustina Nunuk Prasetyo Murniati (born 1943). Ibu Nunuk came late to theology (1982–1984) having studied economics and sociology and taught these subjects for 20 years previously. Her one constant has been concern for women and human rights. From 1976 onwards Ibu Nunuk no longer worked with internal church commissions but rather with non-governmental organisations and inter-faith networks. In 1995 she published a slim volume on violence towards women, including violence in the church. Feminist theology has provided a theoretical frame for her empowerment work. She maintains that before theology can liberate, the bible and church dogma have to be liberated from masculine culture and from narrow androcentric interpretations. Unlike many feminist theologians in the West, Ibu Nunuk supports both human rights and natural family planning, which she roots in indigenous spirituality, in the effectiveness of herbal contraceptives and in her opposition to the hegemony of capitalist pharmaceutical TNCs. More recently Ibu Nunuk has been involved in the Catholic network *Ecclesia of Women in Asia* (EWA) and read papers at EWA's inaugural Bangkok meeting (2002) and hosted the subsequent conference in Yogyakarta (2004). Catholic Indonesian women have not been theologically articulate to date; even the various sisterhoods have only recently sent members for further education in theological disciplines apart from catechetics. If a Catholic women's theological network is to emerge, then it would almost certainly be outside most ecclesial structures and, like Ibu Nunuk, work from non-theological academic positions and/or with NGOs.

Theology and socio-cultural contexts

Culture in Indonesia has both a national aspect and many regional facets. Between these there is a constant fertile tension, similar to the tension between national identity and politics on the one hand, and regional identities and political interests on the other. During the first decades of independence, the emphasis on national culture and identity prevailed, though regional secession movements (such as RMS and Darul Islam) caused trouble. Regional voices became stronger after Indonesia had successfully claimed Papua as an integral part of the country and after it had invaded and occupied East Timor (1975–1999).

Christian theology before the Japanese occupation had strongly emphasized regional cultures, partly because there was not yet a strong sense of a national culture (except the struggle for a unifying national language, *Bahasa Indonesia*), partly because this regional emphasis seemed to be in the interest of evangelisation, especially as efforts to bring the gospel to predominantly Muslim areas did not bring many results. Not only the culture of the Batak country of North Sumatra, but also the cultures of South and Central Sulawesi, of Central and East Java, Bali, East Nusa Tenggara, the Moluccas and Papua became the subject of serious research by mission- or church-related scholars.

However, after 1945 the first need was for a truly national identity. Hence the decision to start a publishing house for theological material in *Bahasa Indonesia*, to produce a bible translation in the national language (later approved by the Catholic Church) and to stimulate the writing and composing of church hymns in that language. Generally speaking Catholics have contributed more to the promotion of national culture than Protestants through periodicals, newspapers and the work of novelists, poets and film directors. For instance, Gregory Djaduk Ferianto (born 1964) has composed and produced multi-media theatrical productions drawing together the best in traditional and contemporary culture: orchestral accompaniment, song, poetry, declamation, dialogue, dance, acting and lighting effects. Possibly the Catholic sacramental tradition is more open to culture and contextualisation than the Protestant tradition with its focus upon the word and its compartmentalisation into regional churches.

Protestant theology, therefore, did not pay much attention to the enhancement of, and reflection on, national culture. The extensive national self-study by Protestant churches in Indonesia which has been published in 1979 under the title *Jerih dan Juang* (Effort and Struggle) has an extensive paragraph about church and culture which is almost entirely dedicated to problems with and the challenges of adat: birth, marriage, funerals etc.⁵⁷ A briefer paragraph

⁵⁷ Ukur & Cooley 1979:307–337.

deals with social and cultural changes in Indonesia, among others because of rapid urbanization, which causes a serious shaking of traditional norms and values.⁵⁸ The report admits that in general the churches “are not yet fully prepared to take upon themselves the calling in socio-cultural life. The reason is that the churches are still too busy with internal and external matters (such as the inter-church relationships), and therefore have too little time, too few experts and insufficient funds to tackle this complex problem of social and cultural change.”⁵⁹

Fortunately the period after 1980 shows a certain improvement in this field. As mentioned in the previous paragraph, Eka Darmaputera, the unrivalled champion in the field of church and culture, sees the *Pancasila* as a guarantee of a harmonious balance between the cultural layers of the modern Indonesian, specifically of Javanese population: the culture of the earliest people, a Hindu layer which arrived from India, then Muslim and finally western influences. According to Darmaputera, a Chinese-Indonesian, the situation on Java can be seen as a paradigm for the whole of Indonesia. Recently, however, this Java-centrism has been brought up for renewed discussion and new undogmatic approaches to the *Pancasila* have emerged.

A few dissertations deal with the pastoral problems of urban congregations where different norms and values have become standard. This means that the cultural and theological problems of urbanization are now being recognized. Also, in the 1980s Duta Wacana’s periodical *Gema* devoted special issues to themes such as ‘church and the social problem’, ‘business ethics’ and ‘the environment’ which show a broadening horizon. Yogyakarta is probably the place where theology is most open to culture, renewal and social involvement during the 1970s and 1980s. These lines have continued. Eka Darmaputera published a popular work on business ethics and later studies deal with environmental problems (Robert Borrong 1999, a rewrite of his dissertation at Vrije Universiteit, Amsterdam, 2005) and the global economy (Robert Setio and others).

Finally in 1993 Persetia organised a seminar for church historians on “The Encounter of the Church in Indonesia with its Changing World”⁶⁰ in which the confrontation of the churches with other religions, sciences, the socio-political realities and culture are discussed. Here is much work to be done by churches and theological institutions. Two examples of questions raised at that occasion may serve as an illustration,

⁵⁸ Ukur & Cooley 1979:338–350.

⁵⁹ Ukur & Cooley 1979:349.

⁶⁰ Hartono 1995.

Will modernization integrate or annihilate the role of religion and can a positive role of religion vis-à-vis modernization be seen, so as to accept modernization as something, which is not alien? (p. 86),

and,

Can it be said that until now the church has failed to give guidance to science, so that the sciences shatter humankind (e.g. weapons). Does this happen because science has set itself free from the church (in the West)? Is there no religious education any more in the West, which could prevent the knowledge of making mass destructive weapons? (p. 128).

At the same seminar Gerrit Singgih mentioned H. Richard Niebuhr's approaches to culture, and made a plea for Niebuhr's choice of the gospel as transforming culture, a position, which had also been taken by J. Verkuyl and others such as S.A.E. Nababan (then General Secretary of the PGI) during the 1960s and 1970s. Recently a younger theologian, Julianus Mojau, expressed doubts as to this model in which the Reign of God was seen as a transformative power within the whole of society, "Apparently the appeal for social transformation by this model, with a functional approach à la Weber's modernisation, has completely failed. Modernisation by means of propagating national development as the implementation of the *Pancasila* ideology is nothing but political rhetoric by the prevailing regime of *Orde Baru* [Soeharto's New order]." Mojau is in favour of a pluralistic, transformative, reconciling model. We must not forget, however, that he writes in a post *Orde Baru* time, the period of *Reformasi* in which the ideals of a pluralistic society have re-emerged and where religious, ethnic and political antagonists have to be reconciled.⁶¹ As referred to above, through his newspaper articles, seminar papers and monographs, later published in book form (1999a), Mangunwijaya argued for a synthesis between Javanese culture and post-modern technology. The locus of such a humanist culture is the family.

Seldom has the Asian context as such become the subject of theological research in Indonesia. There are, however, exceptions. One of them is the Old Testament scholar Gerrit Singgih. In fact his entire oeuvre so far shows a broad horizon and a remarkable scholarly spectrum. One of his first books is titled, *From Israel to Asia* (1982). There he draws attention to the fact, that the Israel of the Old Testament is itself a place that contextualised God's revelation. Therefore the leap between Israel and Asian culture is not as big as has often been thought. Several of Singgih's subsequent books and articles emphasized similar themes (1997, 1999, 2000), even his contextual exegesis of Ecclesiastes (2001) and other Old Testament themes (1999). In 2005 he

⁶¹ Mojau 2003:17. Mojau further developed this model in his SEAGST Ph.D. Thesis, defended in 2004 (so far unpublished).

presented his inaugural address as professor of Old Testament Studies in which he brought together Old Testament and later systematic views on the theme of *creatio ex nihilo*.⁶²

Another noted exception here is Andreas A. Yewangoe's study on *Theologia Crucis in Asia. Asian Christian Views on Suffering in the face of the Overwhelming Poverty and Multifaceted Religiosity in Asia* (Amsterdam, 1987). Several well-known Asian liberation theologians are discussed in this thesis. Yewangoe has been the author of several other books in *Bahasa Indonesia* (2001, 2002) including his earlier work *Pendamaian* (1983). There he states that reconciliation in the New Testament does not only mean new relations between people, or between human beings and God, but also a new relationship with nature as such. The cosmic dimension of Christ receives a strong emphasis in this work. Yewangoe does not want to "circle around in a narrow soteriological scheme where we talk only about Christ's work on the cross and how that work can provide redemption from sin. We also want to go backwards to the creation. In fact, 'creatio' and 're-creatio' are tightly interconnected."⁶³ This cosmic dimension also offers openings to a concern for environmental problems. During the 1980s several articles and pamphlets dealt with this issue. It has to be admitted that Indonesian theologians followed global trends here (as sometimes elsewhere).

A decade later Yosef Suban Hayon completed his 1000-page dissertation "Doing Christology in the Present Asian Reality: Between Inculturation, Liberation in a New Ecumenicity. A Study of the Writings of M.M. Thomas and Aloysius Pieris" (1998). This thoroughly researched dissertation explores and compares how these two prominent Protestant and Catholic theologians reflect upon inter-faith and justice issues in South Asia.

Poverty and suffering did not become central topics in Indonesian theology, though next to Yewangoe we want to mention explicitly here the names of Ihromi,⁶⁴ J.L.Ch. Abineno, Soritua Nababan, Fridolin Ukur and especially Josef Widyatmadja. The latter certainly took the most radical liberationist position. As a social activist he was working among the poor of Surakarta (Central Java) from the late 1970s onwards. He published a number of articles and pamphlets on social themes, many of them at the edge of what was allowed by government censorship.⁶⁵ His witness, if not his writing, is on a similar level to that of Mangunwijaya. At the time of writing he was working with the CCA in Hong Kong.

⁶² Singgih 2005b.

⁶³ Andreas A. Yewangoe 1983:9.

⁶⁴ Ihromi: dissertation Mainz 1972, and article in *Foie et Vie* on the question whether the poor play a role in God's plan, 1971; see also Ihromi 1980:59–65.

⁶⁵ In Oh Jae Shik 1977; Widyatmadja 1995 and 1999.

As early as 1983 we find a booklet on the matter of fundamental human rights: *Manusia dan hak-hak asasi manusia* (Human beings and fundamental human rights) by Broto Semedi Wiryotenoyo, who at that time taught ethics at *Universitas Kristen Satya Wacana* in Salatiga, Central Java. He wrote at a time when this issue was politically sensitive and human rights were being trampled on in Indonesia even though the constitution guarantees such rights. Among others the right of religious organisations was restricted by the notorious Law No. 8 of 1985 referred to above. Ten years later a group of Muslim-Christian scholars met for a discussion of this theme. The results of this meeting, which had been initiated by PGI, were published a few years later.⁶⁶

In general 'contextualisation' has been interpreted as regional or local contextualisation. Many master's theses and doctoral dissertations, especially those defended at SEAGST in recent decades, emphasize such a local or regional interest. Here we just mention some of the more important ones, which have been published. Harun Hadiwijono's dissertation *Man in the Present Javanese Mysticism* (Amsterdam, 1967) was a seminal study on a major mystical group in Central Java, Pangestu. A little later Soelarso Sopater compared the ideas of this same *kebatinan* group with Valentinian gnosis (2nd century, Rome) in his thesis *Inti Ajaran Aliran Valentinian dan Inti Ajaran Aliran Pangestu* (Jakarta, 1983). Sutarman S. Partonadi's work on *Sadrach's Community and its Contextual Roots* (Amsterdam, 1988) was referred to in an earlier paragraph. Also already mentioned is Magnis-Suseno's *Javanese Ethics and World-View: the Javanese Idea of the Good Life* (München, 1981); in the same line Stanislaus Reksosusilo compared the western idea of 'conscience' with the Javanese concept of '*rasa*' (feeling) (1979). Stanislaus Darmawijaya compared the character of the *panakawan* of Javanese wayang to the *ebed YHWH* of Isaiah (1988) and later the Javanese concept of faithfulness with that in the bible (1989). A.M. Sutrisnaatmaka examined the interrelationship between *The Slametan and the Eucharist: towards the inculturation of the Eucharistic celebration in the Javanese cultural context* (Rome, 1987). A more recent thesis is that of Andreas Yumarma, *Unity in Diversity: a philosophical and ethical study of the Javanese concept of 'keselarasan'* (Rome, 1996). Robert Preston Sellers (Southern Baptist USA, 1993) made a study of power and ministry contrasting the gospel model with that in Javanese culture: from elite to partner (the communalisation of feudal domination), from warrior to peacemaker (the radicalisation of charismatic authority) and from bureaucrat to friend (the elimination of psychological intimidation).

Another, older dissertation is the one by A.A. Sitompul who compares admonishing wisdom sayings and proverbs in Batak culture with the book of

⁶⁶ Weinata and Pattiasina 1996.

Proverbs in the Old Testament (*Weisheitliche Mahnsprüche und prophetische Mahnrede im Alten Testament auf dem Hintergrund der Mahnungen im Leben der Tobabatak auf Sumatra*. Mainz, 1967). Anicetus B. Sinaga's *The Toba Batak High God: transcendence and immanence* (Rome, 1981) reflects positively on Batak concepts and worldview in the light of classical theology. Theo Kobong wrote a thesis on *Evangelium und Tongkonan. Eine Untersuchung über die Begegnung zwischen christlicher Botschaft und die Kultur der Toraja* (Hamburg, 1989). He was followed by Andarius Kabanga' who graduated in 1996 at SEAGST with a study on *Manusia Mati Seutuhnya. Suatu Kajian Antropologi Kristen* in which he compares the biblical vision of human death (both physical and spiritual: total person) with the ideas of the Toraja culture in which the spirit of a person continues to live after death. Case studies served as basic material in dissertations on Dayak traditions by Hermogenes S. Ugang (1988) and Johanes J. Songan (1992). More recently, and in the story-telling style of the Taiwanese theologian C.S. Song, Eben Nuban Timo has turned the Timorese folk tale *Anak Matahari* (Child of the Sun) into a 100-page theological reflection on development (2004). Contextual regional studies on aspects of Christian life or church history in other areas (Bali, Moluccas, West Papua) are readily available such as Wayan Mastra's *Contextualisation of the Church in Bali: Case Study from Indonesia* (1979).

Of particular interest is the early work of J.B. Banawiratma (Bono), *Yesus Sang Guru: Pertemuan Kejawan dengan Injil* (1977). In this MA thesis Bono compares the relationship between teacher and disciple in both the elitist and popular cultural traditions of Java with that obtaining in the Gospel of John. His emphasis is not so much upon the content of the Javanese teachings as upon the cultural dynamics at work: dialogue, question-answer, riddles, sayings, parables, symbols, paradoxes, which step by step open up the heart of the disciple. "The religious experience of Java aims for the union of humans with God (*'pamoring kawula Gusti'*). That is the climax of Javanese religious experience where disciples know the source and end of life (*sangkan paraning dumadi*). Disciples are guided in this direction by a guru. The union of the person with God, according to John's gospel, takes place in God's love which teaches and which attracts people to Jesus, the one mediator between humans and God... The relationship between guru and disciples is not that of slave to master but a deep spiritual union... a mystical experience in *rasa sejati*."⁶⁷ The great themes of John are very much part of the psyche of the Javanese: light, life, water of life, darkness. Bono distinguishes between the rich spiritual tradition of Java that remains meaningful today and the ever-demanding challenge

⁶⁷ J.B. Banawiratma 1977:128.

of the gospel. According to Bono a natural symbiosis has already taken place in the lives of Javanese Christians. Christology has remained one of Bono's constant theological preoccupations. In the 1980s he looked at images of Jesus at various historical periods: in colonial times, during Soeharto's regime, in a pluralistic society (1986). Towards the end of the 1990s the gospel-culture encounter had become a multi-dimensional, critical, transforming dialogue (1999a). His turn-of-the-century Christology is a 'liberative, inter-contextual' theology beginning with the experience of the believing congregation. The marginalised poor give the perspective through which the entire Trinitarian Christology needs to be viewed. Culture is no longer simply cosmic-holistic, but also secular. Feminism deconstructs both the feudal patriarchy of local culture and of the dogmatic tradition. A two-way dialogue with the majority Muslim community translates faith in Christ into Islamic terms while inviting Muslims to enrich our Christology through their encounter with God. Banawiratma does theology as a moderate liberationist firmly rooted in his Javanese culture while open to national, regional and global contexts. He has continued to reflect upon the little tradition of criticism and the great tradition of oppression (1999b). Human dignity, the right to participate, and even the need to revolt are embedded in the cosmic-holistic culture of the powerless, while feudal patriarchy shapes the hierarchical culture of the powerful.

A younger culturally rooted thinker who works with issues of popular religiosity and human rights is Gabriel Possenti Sindhunata (Sindhu). Born in 1952 in East Java, Sindhu researched Javanese peasant messianic movements from 1850 until 1940 for his doctoral thesis (1992). Based in Yogyakarta he writes columns, articles, short stories and novels in both Indonesian and Javanese. Sindhu is actively developing the Javanese syncretistic tradition at its prophetic best giving voice to the victims of oppressive politics and rapacious economic development. His is a universal humanism, open to the Spirit, in the language of Javanese popular culture. He interweaves powerful and popular images from the culture of the oppressed with sharp humour accompanied by a devastating critique of the formal culture of the governing elite (e.g. 1995/98). In the convention of the traditional and prophetic puppet plays (*wayang*) of the villagers, Sindhu is blithely unconcerned whether his sources are Muslim, Christian or Javanese, as long as they give voice to and strengthen the cultural renewal needed to empower the marginalised of Java. His writings articulate the practical, everyday wisdom through which the poor refuse to be defeated and by which they survive (e.g. 2000). As such Sindhu writes in the tradition of Mangunwijaya. However unlike Mangun, Sindhu makes little reference to the official church and writes a considerable amount in Javanese as well as *Bahasa Indonesia*. The religious-cultural syncretism of Sindhunata is an interesting phenomenon at the turn of the century when the politicisation of

religion is drawing ever-sharper demarcations between religious institutions (e.g. 1988). Not a professional theologian, by 2001 Sindhu had published 11 books, edited a further 12 and written three-dozen articles.

Feminist critique

In 1989 Nieke Atmadja-Hadinoto was the first Indonesian woman to receive a doctorate in theology (Kampen, The Netherlands). Most women are collaborative writers working through professional and practical associations. Many of the theological thinkers are engaged in advocacy and human rights networks as well as carrying out family responsibilities. Often life witnesses rather than theological writings mirror the thinking and the impact of these women. Perhaps this is why few names have emerged in the Protestant Church and just one in the Catholic Church (see Nunuk Murniati above).

One such is Agustina Lumentut (1937–2002). Ibu Tina was the first woman from her North Sulawesi church to study theology (Makasar, 1954–1959) and when she gained her master's in Singapore she was the most highly qualified member of her church theologically. Ibu Tina immersed herself in community development bringing to the task a certain gender-sensitivity. She struggled alongside the indigenous people of Central Sulawesi in defending their land rights in the face of migrants from Java and Bali. In 1989 Ibu Tina was elected moderator of her church, the first woman to become a moderator of any church in Indonesia. Her writings are sparse, her biography a well-deserved eulogy.⁶⁸ Lumentut shows how hard-working, theologically literate women have struggled and finally won a place in the Protestant churches while working at gender issues in the wider society. In the patristic tradition, this is a living theology of active engagement rather than academic theology of the institution.

Another early theological thinker among ecumenical Protestants is Henriette Marianne Katoppo (Marianne). Born in 1943 Marianne studied theology in Jakarta (BA 1963, MA 1976) and worked or followed courses in Japan (1964–1965), London (1966–1969), Sweden (1970–1974), Switzerland (1979) and Birmingham UK (1985–1986). In Geneva Marianne wrote her one theological reflection in English *Compassionate and Free* (1979). Intelligent, independent, forthright, conversant in a dozen Asian and European languages, Marianne embodies the ambiguities and brokenness of those who do not fit into any single category—socially, culturally and religiously. Her most successful and most explicitly Christian novel is *Raumanen* (1977) where a love affair across ethnic lines tragically ends with the suicide of the protagonist. Her most clearly 'autobiographical' novel, *Dunia Tak Bermusim* (1974), is an

⁶⁸ Kirk 1997.

open-ended story. Her theological articles and WCC book (1979) originated partly from personal experience (disappointment even bitterness) and partly from social critique, taking up themes of justice (option for the poor and gender issues). She died 12 October 2007.

Due to the struggles of these first-generation feminist theological thinkers, later women have been able to follow a more conventional path although writings are not yet extensive. Sientje Merentek-Abram (born 1947) obtained her masters in theology in the USA (1980) and her doctorate at the SEAGST (1996). Like her well-known predecessors she came from Sulawesi and has been active in SEAGST becoming its dean; at the time of writing she was director of ATESEA in Manila, Philippines. Her writings have appeared in various collections (e.g. 1985, 1997). Henriette Tabita Hutabarat-Lebang also hails from Sulawesi. Born in 1952 she studied theology in Jakarta (masters 1977). Her doctorate (USA 1991) takes up the question of contextualisation and the role of metaphor. After working on the Women's Desk of the PGI in Jakarta Hutabarat moved to Hong Kong where she worked with the CCA before returning to Rante Pao to serve the Toraja church. She has been involved in programmes for women's leadership development as well for migrant workers, refugees and internally displaced communities in Asia. Her presentations encompass areas such as Asian spirituality, education for peace with justice, pluralism, women and tourism as well as bible studies (e.g. 1995, 1999). Like other women theologians her work has been developed with teams of colleagues and published jointly as the fruit of workshops. Hutabarat was probably the most influential Indonesian woman theological thinker during the last decade of the twentieth century.

Of a younger generation Septemmy Eucharistia Lakawa (Ibu Temmy), born in 1970, also hails from Sulawesi. Ibu Temmy has a master's degree from the USA (1996) and another from Jakarta (1998). The latter is entitled "A Missiology of Compassion: Missiology according to an Indonesian Christian Woman." Shaken from her conventional faith while studying feminist theology in the USA, Ibu Temmy continued her probing as lecturer at the STT Jakarta asking who and where is God and Christ in Indonesian realities? She describes her feminist theology as "brave like Hagar, honest like the Samaritan woman, risk-taking like Rahab, visionary like Mary of the Magnificat; a theology able to rest in silence like Saul's concubine Rizpah, weep bitterly like Tamar, and dance joyfully like Miriam." (1998). Orthodoxy must be questioned by orthopraxis. For Ibu Temmy theology begins with women's stories born in an "epistemology from the broken body" (1999) and develops in concert with a community of activists and scholars. General Secretary of Perwati (1998–2002) and first editor of the feminist theological journal *Sophia* (since 2000), at the time of writing Ibu Temmy is researching her doctorate (USA). When already a majority of students in many of the Christian theological faculties and seminaries

are women candidates for ordination, Septemmy is a sign that, at the turn of the century, women are winning a place beside, and in creative partnership with, male leadership and theologians.

Writings about Islam and inter-religious dialogue

As we saw in an earlier paragraph, before the Japanese occupation Islam was seen mainly as a missiological problem. The period of political and military unrest right after Independence made Christians reluctant to write about Islam. The early works of Hutagalung and Sidjabat were, as we noticed, the first signs of a changing climate. In the 1970s and 1980s, it was the government, which promoted religious dialogue. Harmony between religions was a political desideratum. Also, Indonesians took part in international dialogue meetings, which were organized by the World Council of Churches. Ihromi, Simatupang and also H.A. Mukti Ali, professor at the *Institut Agama Islam Negeri Sunan Kalijaga* in Yogyakarta and between 1971 and 1978 State Minister of Religious Affairs, were among the participants of such international meetings.

Djaka Soetapa, who teaches Islam at the *Duta Wacana* Christian University in Yogyakarta, listed no less than twenty national and ten international meetings between representatives of several religions between 1969 and 1976 (Yogyakarta, 1981). Later he wrote a Ph.D. thesis about the concept of *'ummah* as a religious, social and political community within the Qur'an (1986, published 1991). That concept is important for Christians as well. It has often been emphasised that dialogue is not between religions as such, but between the respective religious communities in the country. His starting point is to be found in Soera 2:143 where the *'ummah Muslimah* is called *'ummah wasat*, which can be translated as "a community in the centre," or "a well-balanced community." That is, Muslims (themselves a pluriform majority) can become a well-balanced community among other believers. Similarly the concept of *jihad* is interpreted in a non-violent way. One of Soetapa's students, Ahmen Mylthis Lumira, later wrote a master's thesis on Islam and (anti-) violence, related to the tragedy in and around Poso, Central Sulawesi. (UKDW Yogyakarta, 2001). Unfortunately almost nothing is said there about violence by Christians in that particular conflict.

J.W.M. Bakker (1919–1978), later known by his Indonesian name Rahmat Subagya and with over 200 publications to his name, was the most prominent Catholic phenomenologist of religion from the 1950s until his death in 1978. Known as an expert in Islam⁶⁹ and conversant in Arabic, Urdu and Turkish as well as Javanese and *Bahasa Indonesia*, Bakker read the Qu'ran ecumeni-

⁶⁹ Subagya 1978.

cally⁷⁰ but interpreted Javanese Islam through the prism of *Kejawen* as an indigenous religion.⁷¹ His claim that ‘real Muslims’ constitute no more than 40% of Indonesians (while the other 47% are nominal adherents) denied Islam a majority status in Java. This claim was widely accepted by Christians at the time but has been undermined by the reassertion of religious identity since the beginning of the twentieth century and the religionisation of politics during the last two decades.

Victor Tanja (1936–1998) wrote a dissertation during the 1979s on the Islamic Students’ Movement (*Himpunan Mahasiswa Islam*, defended in 1979, Hartford Seminary USA under the supervision of W.A. Bijlefeld, and published in *Bahasa Indonesia* in 1982). He aimed to maintain a phenomenological approach without any apologetic motive. The same is valid for Jansen Pardede’s thesis about tensions between Muslims and Christians in the Batak area. Tanja was a frequent speaker at military academies, was an advisor to Soeharto’s Golkar Party and an apologist for the New Order regime until it collapsed in 1998. Several of Tanja’s students in Jakarta followed his track with their own studies in the 1980s and 1990s such as sympathetic analyses of the *Nahdatul Ulama* by Einar Martahan Sitompul in 1988 and of the *Muhammadiyah* by Weinata Sairin (1990, but only published six years later). In both case studies the impact of the *Undang-Undang No. 8* of 1985 was analysed as well. According to these authors, both organisations loyally accepted the *Pancasila* ideology while resisting the idea of *Pancasila* as a civil religion. Tanja and his students have developed an interesting inter-faith theology, which, however, they have used to justify their close cooperation with the regime. Their understanding of Islam is not seen through the prism of the poor and marginalised.

Thomas F. Michel (born 1941) is one of the foremost participants in dialogue with Muslims in the Catholic world. Based in Yogyakarta since the 1960s and latterly dividing time between Yogyakarta and Rome, Michel has worked full-time in creating greater understanding with Muslims, not just in Indonesia but throughout Asia through the Offices of the FABC and worldwide through the Jesuit Order and the Vatican. His dissertation *A Muslim Theologian’s Response to Christianity* was a treatise on Ibn Taymiyya’s *Al-Jawab Al-Sahih* (1984). Franz Magnis-Suseno (born 1936) has taken part in Muslim-Christian dialogue both at an intellectual level and more practically with student activists for over three decades. As violent conflicts have become more frequent towards the end of the twentieth century so Magnis has called for realism, emphasising the value of an understanding of the pain and history of the other while now claiming that convergence on doctrine and practice is unfeasible (1999).

⁷⁰ Bakker 1972.

⁷¹ Subagya 1981.

Of some importance is a series of inter-religious seminars organised by the Institute of Research and Development (LITBANG) of the PGI. The islamologist Olaf Schumann, was an enthusiastic initiator of these seminars, which started in 1981 and continue until today. Also of interest is the *Festschrift* presented to Schumann at the occasion of his 60th birthday.⁷² During the Third Seminar in 1983 candid papers were read about the Islamic vision of Christianity (by K.H. Hasbullah Bakry; see also his 1990 book) and the Christian vision of Islam (by Victor I. Tanja), as well as a paper on Mysticism (*kebatinan*) and Islam in Indonesia, by Simuh who lectured at the IAIN Sunan Kalijaga in Yogyakarta. It is understandable that many Christians feel attracted to this spiritual, mystic interpretation of Islam.

At this seminar Th. Sumartana made a strong plea for dialogue as a challenge to Christianity (mimeographed 1983). This passionate call for dialogue was to become his life work in many publications, which he wrote or edited until his untimely death in 2003. It includes his dissertation *Mission at the Crossroads* (Amsterdam, 1991, Jakarta, 1993) and several volumes published by his *Institut Dialog Antar-Iman di Indonesia (DIAN/Interfidei)*. Sumartana was able to bring Christian, Muslim and Hindu/Buddhist scholars together around several existential themes: the crisis of the family in modern times; religion, democracy and justice; Confucianism in Indonesia. The churches did not always follow his line of thinking. The old tension between the aim of evangelism and that of dialogue frequently came to the surface provoked by Sumartana's straightforward position. For instance, Sumartana rightly pointed out that a real dialogue might have consequences for the Christological models which Indonesian churches currently use.⁷³ Ioanes Rakhmat, who teaches New Testament at the STT Jakarta, also makes clear in several articles that he is aware of these consequences.

During the last decade of the twentieth century and the commencement of the twenty-first, we see a multitude of books, articles, master's theses and doctoral dissertations in the area of Islam and other religions. Often enough these writings, even historical research, are related to actual developments within society. An increasingly good collaboration between authors from all religions is visible. Catholics have studied Islamic law and literary theory (Sunardi), education (Harun Yuwono) and tradition (Alex Soesilo). Studies have also been made on the reformer Muhammad Abduh; Heru Prakosa has researched on Fakhr al-Din al-Razi of the Ash'ariah school (master) and on the debate between Mu'tazila and Ash'ariah (doctorate) while Markus Solo has researched the Bismillah concept of Fakhr al-Razi. The Muslim Ansari wrote on *Mission in Christianity and Islam: A Comparative Study of the Ways the*

⁷² Balitbang PGI 1999.

⁷³ Sumartana 1997, 1998:31-44.

Huria Kristen Batak Protestan (KHBP) and Al-Washliyah spread the Mission in North Sumatra 1930–1965 (Leiden, 1998). The Catholic Islamologist, Philip Tule, working with Muslims and collaborating with Protestants (1994, 2003), has developed a socio-cultural approach to communal reconciliation based on his case study among the Kéo people of Central Flores.⁷⁴ According to Tule, the clan/house-based adat of the Kéo unites Muslims and Catholics and gives an interpretive frame for living out both Islamic and Christian doctrine. Another example is the textbook *Lima Titik Temu Agama-agama* (Five points where religions meet, Yogyakarta, 2000) that discusses the concepts of God, prayer, fasting, religious taxes (more generally, *diakonia*) and pilgrimage within existing religions in Indonesia. Initiatives mostly come from the Christian side. An annotated bibliography of 200 books on religion by Muslim authors in Indonesia (published by *DIAN/Interfidei* as a tool for religious dialogue) mentions only a few examples of books in which the bible, Christianity or religious dialogue is a major subject. As a minority Christians have a greater need than Muslims to meet the other side! This becomes clear in the broad overview of the history of Muslim-Christian encounter in Indonesia by Jan Aritonang (Jakarta 2004), with a preface by Azyumardi Azra (rector of the Islamic University, Jakarta).

D. *The internal life of the church*

Confessional statements and church order

When after the Pacific War (1942–1945) theological schools (re-)opened and churches became independent, a huge task lay ahead, to write teaching material and other popular theological contributions to be used by the churches. In fact, they had to start from scratch. At least three fields received priority in Protestant churches: the area of church order and confessional statements on behalf of young, independent churches; that of ecumenical unity between these churches and finally the vast field of practical theology. Other disciplines like church history, knowledge of other religions, ethics and systematic theology followed somewhat later. Partly these early writings became the task of the churches themselves, partly the teaching staff of theological schools carried the responsibility. Of no less importance, as we saw above, the DGI/PGI itself had an active committee on Church and Society, and later also a research department (LITBANG). At the PGI Assembly in 1984 the *Akademi Leimena* was established which functioned as a think-tank, “a means to develop faith and thought.”⁷⁵

⁷⁴ Philip Tule Canberra 2004; published Fribourg 2004.

⁷⁵ PGI 2000:122.

The drafting of church orders and confessional statements had become urgent within mainline Protestant churches already before the Japanese occupation and continued to demand attention during the first three decades after independence. Van den End and Jongeneel (1986) list nine church orders and confessional statements (often as a preamble within a church order) between 1917 and 1938, and 17 church orders from 1947 until 1984 to which eight separate confessions of faith could be added and many of them have been successively revised. Churches have accepted several more since the IIMO research. No single church had a separate confession of faith at the time of its birth, due to the reticence of the mission boards at that time.⁷⁶ Naturally enough in the beginning the partner churches in the West suggested the phrasing of such documents. Later, the Indonesian churches themselves took the initiative both as to content and phrasing. As has been concluded by J.A.B. Jongeneel⁷⁷ they do not reflect academic theology but the living and vital faith of the churches, and are in its content 'essentialistic,' that is, summarizing the essence of the Christian faith (with more or less emphasis upon classic, ecumenical symbols and upon confessions from the Reformation tradition), or 'existentialistic,' that is, emphasizing the contextual situation of a particular church. Quite often one finds a reference to the *Pancasila* and to the adat and sometimes to other religions. The Trinity is almost always an essential part of the content, and in general they prefer consensus above exclusivity. Member churches of the PGI will refer to their being part of the *Gereja Kristen Yang Esa* (The One Christian Church). Many evangelical and Pentecostal groups do not have a church order or, at most, only brief church regulations.

Not many scholarly studies have been published in the field of confessional statements and church order. *Faith and order* never had a real priority in a context where political, social and religious unrest determined the agenda. An early dissertation is the ecclesiological study by Pouw Boen-Giok on the position of the Chinese-ethnic church within a broader ethnic environment (Utrecht, 1952). Andar Lumbantobing wrote about church office within the Batak Church in his *Das Amt in der Batakirche* (Bonn, 1956). Harun Hadiwijono (1981) wrote a brief, popular explanation about the apostolic symbol; it has been reprinted many times and clearly fulfils a need, especially in Central Java.

Immediately after the Second Vatican Council Piet Maku (1932–1994) wrote his dissertation *Missionary Activities in the Present Social Situation in Flores/Indonesia: Toward religious and psycho-sociological integration of a young church* (Rome, 1967). As adat norms were loosening their hold and

⁷⁶ Van den End 1986:32.

⁷⁷ Van den End 1986:50–53.

the traditional social structure of Nusa Tenggara was being marginalised, the Catholic Church had responded with an ambitious economic development programme (Flores-Timor Plan 1963–1966). Given this transitional situation, Maku argued that concentration on economic development alone would decouple belief from social progress. He urged a more modest and focused role for the church (then 68.5% of the population of Flores) as moral witness rather than as an alternative government. The church should promote gospel values together with key cultural values and modern education. His final chapter outlining the congregational ordering of “*musjawarah/gotong-rojong* parishes,” with a core parish council of five laity to formulate and carry out church policy and with a much larger parish assembly for regular feedback and brainstorming, owes much to conversations with Hendrik Djawa (1928–1996) who later published this proposal in *Bahasa Indonesia* (1970). However by the mid-1970s the Maku-Djawa vision was already seen as too centralised and top-down; it was replaced by the vision of a parish as a network of base communities.⁷⁸ This latter vision, in theory, is the official ecclesiology of the Indonesian Catholic Church today.

Few Catholics have studied ministry in Indonesia. One exception is Henri Dori Wuwur in his thesis *Die Teilnahme der Laien beim Aufbau der Gemeinden in der katholischen Kirche von Nusa Tenggara Timur—Verwirklichung und Möglichkeiten* (1998). Earlier his colleague Georg Kirchberger researched *Neue Dienste und Gemeindestrukturen in der katholischen Kirche Indonesiens* (1985) comparing developments in Nusa Tenggara and Papua in the light of the doctrine of ministry in the documents of Vatican II.

Catechetical, practical and liturgical theology

We can be brief as to the developments within practical disciplines such as homiletics, catechetics and liturgy. Much writings in these fields are found useful, but are not really original. An exception is the work of J.L.Ch. Abineno who did his doctoral research on liturgical forms and patterns in the Protestant Church on Timor (Utrecht, 1956, supervisor J.C. Hoekendijk). Both in his thesis and in many subsequent studies and popular books in Indonesia Abineno has been an ardent advocate of the contextualisation of the liturgy of the churches in his country. “The present time, in which many of the traditional forms have become ineffective, should be a time for experiment rather than ‘restoration’.”⁷⁹ Though many churches still prefer traditional ways, renewal has come from two sides. First, ecumenical celebrations, often inspired by what happens in CCA and WCC assemblies and meetings, have been instrumental.

⁷⁸ Prior in: da Cunha 1999:193–235.

⁷⁹ Abineno 1956:138.

Secondly, the global charismatic and Pentecostal renewal has also had its effect in Indonesia and forced the mainline churches to review their liturgical patterns. Here we should also mention the name of H.A. (Harry) van Dop and Fridolin Ukur who together with others within PGI-related *Yayasan Musik Gerejawi* (Yamuger) realised the publication of a new church hymnal used by many PGI member churches. At least a quarter of the 478 hymns in this *Kidung Jemaat* (1984) has been written and/or composed by Indonesians. The renewal of church music with local instruments and melodies has been initiated during recent decades. Ukur (1930–2004) also was a gifted poet who produced many liturgical texts.

Meanwhile the Catechetical Commission of MAWI/KWI promoted a life-centred approach throughout the 1970s and 1980s in both school and congregationally based religious education, returning to a greater emphasis on Christian knowledge during the last decade of the twentieth century. In 1994 Rome published its *Catechism of the Catholic Church*; the following year the Catholic bishops of Nusa Tenggara published an Indonesian translation. Meanwhile, also in 1995, KWI published *Iman Katolik: buku informasi dan referensi* as its national catechism, the chief writer of which was Tom Jacobs. This work is patterned on four ever-narrowing circles. The first and widest circle discusses life, world views, conscience and fundamental ethical issues that have to be faced by all people of good will; the second takes up belief in God and is open to adherents of all religions, in particular Islam; the third circle expounds on faith in Jesus Christ and the work of salvation in terms pleasing to most ecumenical Christians; the final circle zooms in upon specifically Catholic issues—ecclesiology and the sacraments.

Regarding Catholic liturgical theology a certain amount has been written on inculturation,⁸⁰ and some creative liturgical texts were published in the late 1960s and early 1970s. These latter, however, have since been quietly put aside as the bishops' Liturgical Commission has concerned itself with re-translating the Latin liturgy according to more recent and increasingly restrictive Roman guidelines (literal translation of the Eucharist promulgated in 2005). Despite this, much creativity is still found in parishes, at least where there are older clergy. A cultural anthropologist has written a dissertation on the work of inculturation undertaken by the Catholic Church in West and Central Flores (Daeng 1989). The greatest change is surely in the area of hymns as exemplified by the most popular hymnal by far, *Madah Bakti*, from *Pusat Musik Gereja* in Yogyakarta, which has gone through well over one hundred printings and a number of editions (latest 2000) since its first appearance in 1980. Although all the lyrics are written in *Bahasa Indonesia*, the words often

⁸⁰ E.g. Sinaga 1984.

reflect local conditions. A majority of the more than 800 hymns are original Indonesian compositions many of which are products of music workshops held throughout the country.

MAWI/KWI has issued pastoral guidelines on a variety of topics such as on the family (1975), education (1977), health care (1978), charismatic renewal (1983, revised 1995), pastoral planning (1985), youth (1986, revised 1993), priestly formation (1987), marriage preparation (1994) and liturgical inculturation (1996). However, the more candid of KWI's theological reflections on church life during these years were the unpublished responses to *lineamenta* from Rome in preparation for Roman Episcopal synods. Time and again KWI reminded Rome that over 70% of Indonesian Catholics do not participate in the Eucharist on Sunday due to the lack of celibate ordained pastors.⁸¹ One response that was published was that to the *lineamenta* for the 1998 synod for Asia.⁸²

As to developments within pastoral theology, it is enough to point to a number of doctoral studies, which analyse a pastoral *case-study* approach. In the 1980s Duta Wacana (Yogyakarta) in cooperation with SEAGST developed a programme for a Doctorate of Pastoral Studies which used this *case-study* method (for titles see Hoekema in *Exchange* 1996). At the same time Mesach Krisetya (Satya Wacana, Salatiga) and others developed contextual variants of (clinical) pastoral training. Recently this also led to a training institute for mediators in (local) church conflicts or conflicts between Muslims and Christians as have erupted in Central Sulawesi and Ambon. On the Catholic side, the Pastoral Centre in Yogyakarta, in collaboration with Duta Wacana Protestant University, has run workshops and published a number of basic texts on building up the local congregation, adaptations of Dutch originals.⁸³ In East Java the Madiun-born Reksosusilo has written on pastoral care based Javanese rather than western models, the result of his own detailed study of Javanese culture.⁸⁴

On the Pentecostal side, a master's thesis looks to the home cell groups of David Yonggi Cho's Full Gospel Church of South Korea as a pastoral way forward for the evangelical and Pentecostal churches in post-Soeharto Indonesia.⁸⁵ Sutrisna Widjaja sees the 'secret' of the phenomenal growth of Cho's church from five members in 1958 to over 700,000 some 30 years later as his home-cell movement with its theology of salvation for the distressed: the threefold blessing of salvation (spiritual, material and physical) and the fivefold message

⁸¹ KWI 2004b:70.

⁸² KWI: EAPR 1998:54–85.

⁸³ Hooijdonk 1996; Kessel 1997; Heitink and Heselaars 1999.

⁸⁴ Reksosusilo 1994 and 1997.

⁸⁵ Widjaja 1998.

of the gospel (salvation in Jesus Christ, baptism in the Holy Spirit, divine healing, the blessing of prosperity, and hope of Jesus' second coming). This soteriology is rooted in the experience of a people in crisis, is considered to be faithful to Christian tradition, and is geared towards a holistic understanding of salvation. Widjaja compares it favourably with the soteriology of Aloysius Pieris: it explains the world (explanatory), changes the world (creative), and seeks wholeness (directional).⁸⁶ A number of Cho's works have been translated into *Bahasa Indonesia*; it is too soon to know whether this theology will reduplicate Korean church growth in the Indonesian context or encourage Indonesian Pentecostalism to be more attuned to social justice issues.

In general we have to conclude, that in this area of the internal life of the churches, theological developments have been rather modest and traditional.

Architecture, literature and dance

Although strictly speaking outside the scope of this chapter, which has looked at written texts, a brief mention might be made of other theological expressions. Over the centuries mosques and Islamic calligraphy have taken up south and Southeast Asian characteristics, but it is only in the twentieth century, in particular during the past fifty years, that we find Christian churches and shrines doing the same. One of the first traditional Javanese or *joglo* churches was built at Ganjuran, south of Yogyakarta, in 1924; another was built by the first Javanese priest at Nanggulan a dozen years later. Today there are a number of these *pendopo*-like churches. In 1927–1930, also in Ganjuran, a *candi*-shrine was built in the style of a Javanese temple, to house a statue of the sacred heart of Jesus. There, even today, a large annual pilgrimage assembles. Half a century later Mangunwijaya's churches (e.g. at Tambran-Ganjuran, Klaten, Sragen, Salam and Yogyakarta), Trappist convent at Gedono and Marian shrine at Sendangsono are outstanding in their marriage of the technically modern with the Javanese. Mangun's churches of the late 1960s and 1970s in Central Java are either open-plan (worship in a garden with the roof as a "tree" or umbrella) or imitate a womb (where the community, in the dark, encounters "the self within the self"). But it has to be said they have not had much of an impact on the designs of other architects. Mangun's low-profile churches use cultural symbols (e.g. the tree of life) rather than more explicitly Christian ones (e.g. the cross). The contrast here is with Evangelical churches with their high steeples and enormous neon crosses. Mangunwijaya explains that, "it is not thought that the liturgy would be formal, but rather a feast, a happening, an at-oneness in the one Spirit... what we seek is how (churches) can image the oneness of grace from above with the dry-land and rice-fields of humans

⁸⁶ Pieris 1996:138–146.

below, one in real life as our breath is one with our body... here we can hold our ecumenical hands with pre-Hindu traditions, as well as the great traditions of Hinduism and Islam... (The church at Tambran) is not a living theology but rather our real life, one person with another, everything that is beautiful and impressive but also that which is rotten and despised, that which is full of smiles and laughter but also that which makes us sick and weep with suffering, everything that envelops us with peace but also everything that almost drowns us in hopelessness, all of this as with dry-land and rice-fields, mirrors the sun and is rained upon with the tears of Christ who is transfigured above us.”⁸⁷ Until recently Protestants did not pay much attention to the architecture of their church buildings, however, this seems to have begun to change during the last decade. An early exception is the Protestant church complex at Blimbingsari (1977–1981). Together with the smaller Catholic church building at Tuka (near Denpasar), and the cathedral of Palasari, the Blimbingsari complex is an example of authentic Balinese architecture.

Art and movement have had a wide impact in both Protestant and Catholic churches. PGI has published the *Many Faces of Christian Art in Indonesia* (1993). In his introduction theologian Eka Darmaputera explains, “Art not only enables us to see what we see with precision, but also enables us to participate in what we see. Through art we see the unseeable. The transcendent becomes immanent. Or, to be more precise, that which is immanent has a transcendental dimension. It is at this point that art and religion merge. Theology becomes an artistic experience, and art becomes a theological expression.” (p. 5). The theology faculty of Duta Wacana University encourages Christian art and, for instance, put on a remarkable art exhibition to coincide with the third conference of the Congress of Asian Theologians in 2001. Robert Setio links the theologians’ congress with the exhibition thus, “Theologians may sometime have to learn from painters that imposing a confinement on the interpretation of God (by which I mean theology), is impossible, if not unnecessary... we should take the wisdom of the painters that there is no certain way of interpreting the wonder of God.” In the exhibition’s catalogue theologian Sumartana writes on “Spiritual Art among Spiritualities” (pp. 23–30) and Suwarno Wisetrotomo on “Weighing Religious Codes” (pp. 39–48). Perhaps the best known of the older artists is Bagong Kussudiardja (1928–2004) of Yogyakarta who also directed his own dance-dramas, at least two of which have been recorded (“The Birth of Jesus” and “The Ascension”). Theologian Judowibowo Poerwowidagdo was a founder member of the Christian Art Association (which had its office in Yogyakarta) and editor of the association’s journal *Image: Christ in Art in Asia*. His wife, Timur Indyah, is a professional (Christian) artist.⁸⁸

⁸⁷ Mangun in: Muskens 1973:190–199.

⁸⁸ More on these artists in chapter twenty.

Since the 1970s the Audio Visual Studio (AVS) of the Jesuit Catechetical Centre, already referred to above, has sponsored artists, producing, for instance, one hundred Balinese-style paintings of biblical scenes as well as more contemporary themes. Six Hindu artists read the relevant bible passages (for the first time) and then freely expressed their message in Balinese style. The studio's videocassettes and CDs contain a large selection of Indonesian music, art and drama. Through AVS Suryo Indratno, a young artist from Solo, Central Java, was chosen to paint a large (1.80 × 2.66 metre) jubilee-year *Hungertuch* for the churches in Germany. Through long discussions with Suryo, Ruedi Hofmann, then director of AVS, has interpreted this large painting in terms of a theology of creation and of the Spirit in the context of violent times. The chapters follow *via positiva* (beauty) through *negativa* (renunciation) and *creativa* (fertility) to *transformativa* (compassion). The final chapter on compassion is replete with quotes from the Qu'ran, the Buddhist scriptures, Mahatma Gandhi and the Hebrew prophets.⁸⁹

These exceptions to the much more common western 'kitsch' are uncovering vibrant Indonesian forms of belief and giving birth to a living Christian Indonesian identity. To what extent mainstream churches will take up these faith expressions (theologies) we still have to see. The alternative is that the worshipping community becomes 'ghettoised' while architects, artists, composers and choreographers move out into local and national culture. Whatever the outcome is, it is remarkable that over the past half-century Christian poets, literati, artists, dramatists and architects have entered the mainstream of Indonesia's cultural life. Socially-engaged artists and politically-aware dramatists are creating a new language in which to re-picture the Jesus of the Gospels: to picture the Incarnate Word as living, as whole, as authentically Asian, as the heart-beat of popular culture struggling for space to breathe, for dignity, for a meaning and purpose that overcomes death.⁹⁰

Concluding note

Even though virtually all scholarly research in the field of theology has taken place within private church-based institutions which have inadequate financial resources and limited access to written sources and little, if any, government support, we may conclude that Indonesian Christians have produced a large number of worthwhile studies in a broad range of theological disciplines. Several younger scholars are the equal of other prominent third world theologians elsewhere; they have been making a quiet and constructive contribution on the international stage. Such scholarly theology came to the fore after

⁸⁹ Hofmann 2000.

⁹⁰ Cf. Prior 2001:185; Singgih 2005a:79–91.

lay theologians, and ecumenical or ecclesial documents, had earlier set the theological tone for several decades. These lay pioneers influenced the policies of the Indonesian churches, which then shifted the emphasis from personal salvation and denominational interests to engagement in nation building. Naturally, deliberation at congregational level remains valuable and theologians continue to publish collections of homilies and spiritual reflections. All this is certainly a great achievement. In the period immediately before and after the Japanese occupation even noted missiologists like Hendrik Kraemer were of the opinion that the Javanese and other Indonesians were unable to produce scholarly, ‘reflective’ studies such as were being written by Europeans.

There is perhaps no single key word to characterise Indonesian theology as, for instance, we might be inclined to characterise much Latin American theology in the 1970s as liberationist, that of black Africa as inculturationist, or that of India as multi-faith. Liberationist, inculturationist and inter-faith strands are all present in Indonesian theologies in moderate quantities. *Liberationist strands*: during the somewhat chaotic political transition since 1998 both individual theologians and church bodies such as KWI have been producing significant theological reflection on political ethics and public morality. *Inculturationist strands*: earlier theology was rooted in local languages and cultures; later ecumenical theology was broadly national; at the end of the twentieth century the pendulum seems to be returning to local issues as indigenous cultures are undergoing a dramatic revival and ecological concerns come to the fore. *Multi-faith strands*: the time of ignoring the Muslim majority has past; practical and scholarly collaboration has emerged as an important component in both Muslim and Christian communities—and this despite the parallel development of religious fanaticism. A further strand claiming attention is that of *gender*. At the turn of the century women students formed a majority in many Protestant faculties and the first generation of Catholic nuns with doctorates in theology has appeared; one can anticipate an ever-greater contribution from women theologians in the future. In short, we might characterise theology in Indonesia as a ‘patchwork theology’ (*tambal-sulam*), or, as Albert Widjaja stated some time ago, a “beggarly theology.”⁹¹ Nevertheless, however we typify Indonesian theology, great progress has been made in the fields of inter-religious dialogue, public ethics, and religion and culture including the visual arts.

Understandably, given limitations of both language and finance and the specific socio-political and religious context, to date certain areas of study are underdeveloped. Thus, there are not many scholars in the field of biblical studies, especially the Old Testament. Also, a contextualisation of several areas

⁹¹ Widjaja 1973.

in practical theology has still to take place, notably within Protestant circles. Not much either has been done to gather material for oral church history. Since the time of Harun Hadiwijono, hardly any studies have been made in the field of systematic theology. We may need to wait for a more sustained treatment of theological themes in dialogue with local contexts, and a deeper discourse with social scientists and philosophers, before an authentically Indonesian systematic theology can be crafted. Finally, theologians have yet to tackle issues surrounding 'practical agnosticism' in the cities, a product of a market-valued, post-modernist urban culture.

The further development of Indonesian theology faces a number of formidable challenges. First of all, most churches do not value daring and creative theology very highly. Theologians have always had to be aware of keeping in touch with the leading ideas and key figures within their often-conventional churches. Of course, the fact that the churches form a minority in a largely Islamic society is an important factor in making church leaders and many theologians hesitant in thinking too autonomously. Independent thinkers such as Th. Sumartana did not always receive the support they deserved. Also, the problems, which PGI (and world ecumenism in general), has had to face towards the end of the century do not invite further renewal. And the fact that there are too many theological institutions and bible colleges has weakened all the schools but especially the ones which were endeavouring to maintain standards and enhance the quality of both students and staff. Many theological colleges belong to evangelical groups and churches, which seek to defend existing theological positions rather than promote creative thinking; they promote proselytism rather than community witness and dialogue. Many younger Catholic theologians have returned from neo-conservative studies in Europe; only after creative interaction with the crises of contemporary Indonesian Catholicism will they have any chance of burgeoning into original thinkers. Since most theologians operate outside the wider context of the multi-disciplinary university, they lack ongoing discourse and the challenge of debate with scholars from other disciplines. To date not many theologians are actively engaged in regional and global academic networks such as the *Congress of Asian Theologians* (CATS), *Ecumenical Association of Third World Theologians* (EATWOT) and *International Association for Mission Studies* (IAMS). Glancing at the shelves of the more important chains of Christian bookstores such as Gramedia and BPK Gunung Mulia, one notices with some discomfort that books in the wide area of personal spiritual growth, faith, healing and success in business (many of them translations of works by western authors) are gaining ground at the cost of serious theology. In the 1960s contextual theology, always the work of a minority, gained ascendancy which it sustained for four decades; at the turn of the century evangelical and charismatic concerns have become mainstream. Finally, in general, Christians

are members of a culture in which reading is not a priority; publishers rarely accept manuscripts of more than 150 (small) pages.

Cooperation between Catholic and Protestant faculties and schools has been taking place between the more distinguished institutions only and even there on a limited scale; yet, it may be expected that such cooperation will intensify. There is also periodic cooperation between Christian theological centres and government-owned universities, including Islamic religious faculties as in Yogyakarta and Jakarta. Some schools are looking for partners abroad, in the Western world, to enhance the exchange of staff and students. All these efforts are necessary to prepare the churches for a future in which they can continue to play a role within Indonesian society and contribute to the ongoing conversation in multi-faith and multi-faith Asia in a globalising world.

To conclude: the initial encounter between the gospel and Javanese culture a century and a half ago birthed a number of remarkable indigenous evangelists; the struggle for independence brought lay theological thinkers to the fore who set the agenda for subsequent contextual theology. As a new century begins and Indonesia undergoes profound change in all sectors, the churches have to choose between promoting theologies that reinforce the internal cohesion of the congregation and the individual salvation of its members, or embracing broadly ecumenical and inter-faith theologies that support a communion of justice and compassion in the wider society.

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CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

THE ECUMENICAL MOVEMENT IN INDONESIA WITH SPECIAL ATTENTION TO THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

The parameter or indicator commonly used to monitor the process of the ecumenical movement in Indonesia is the National Council of Churches, the *Dewan Gereja-gereja di Indonesia* (DGI, founded in 1950 and since 1984 the *Persekutuan Gereja-gereja di Indonesia*, PGI). DGI/PGI, however, is not identical with the ecumenical movement. The performance of this institution, especially during the last ten years, might even be contrary to the spirit of the movement, as observed with a deep concern by many church leaders and ministers.¹ Besides that, as we will see, there are some other councils or communions of churches in Indonesia that also claim to be ecumenical institutions.

However, DGI/PGI plays a very strong and significant role. It is commonly recognised as a ‘flag-carrier’ of the ecumenical movement in this country and—at least until the 1980s—the representative of the Protestant Churches with both the government and the other faiths. Therefore we will pay particular attention to it, while also taking into account the seeds and the development of the ecumenical movement quite a long time before its foundation as well as the role of some other institutions or groups that also claim to be the expression and the manifestation of this movement and spirit. By doing this we also see the various and wide understanding of *ecumene* among the churches and Christians in this country.

The development of the ecumenical movement in this country is part of an international movement, including a variety of ecumenical understanding and expression. Therefore we cannot avoid glimpsing aspects of the global history, especially among the mission organisations and conferences that initiated this movement. As this movement is also influenced by political and ideological reality (like the emergence of nationalism among the colonized countries since the beginning of the twentieth century), we also have to note this history in global as well as in national perspective. In line with this, the three-self idea and movement (self-supporting, self-propagating and self-government) also made a mutual contribution to the ecumenical movement, in that they foster each other’s growth.

¹ As expressed by Joas Adiprasetya, a young minister and theologian, doing his Ph.D. at Boston College, USA, in his paper “Inisiatif Kaum Muda dalam Gerakan Ekumene: Tantangan dan Terobosan,” (Young generation initiatives in the ecumenical movement: challenge and break-through), 9 November 2001.

As a general survey, this chapter will mainly rely upon formal and institutional publications, but in certain cases it also tries to give a real portrait of developments in the field. The scope of the ecumenical movement will be too diminished if it is only seen in its formal activities or formulations. Therefore the burning issues will also be presented to see the dynamic of this movement.

The Seeds and Pioneers²

As already mentioned in chapter six, in the first half of the nineteenth century the king of the Netherlands and the Dutch colonial government initiated a new church institution in this country that was called the Protestant Church in the Dutch East Indies, commonly called the *Indische Kerk*. From the confessional perspective this church had a quite serious weakness: it had no confessional identity. But from a certain point of view we can also say that this church united the Reformed, Lutheran and other Protestant traditions and it did not emphasize doctrinal uniformity, so that to a certain extent this church could also be referred as one of the pioneers of the ecumenical spirit.

Meanwhile, from the beginning of the nineteenth century more and more missionary societies chose this country as their mission field. Already from the second half of the nineteenth century onwards a consciousness grew among these missionary societies that they should build cooperation in various sectors. First cooperation was in the media of information and communication (cf. chapter twenty-one). From 1851 onwards they published a monthly called *Opwekker* (Awakener). In the beginning this bulletin was initiated by a missionary society, the *Genootschap voor In- en Uitwendige Zending* (Society for Internal and External Mission) led by Rev. E.W. King, and from 1881 until 1941 it was taken over and published by a newly founded association of missionaries from various mission bodies, the *Nederlandsch Indische Zendingsbond* (NIZB). This bulletin contained reports of the various missionary conferences and gave wide room for articles that stimulated discussions regarding the development of mission and churches, including cooperation and unity among them.

A second field of cooperation was the preparation of indigenous workers. In 1869 J.A. Schuurman, a minister in Batavia/Jakarta, published an article to summon Christians in this country to build a seminary. This appeal was responded to positively by some missionary societies, and in 1878 they built the seminary in Depok, around 35 km south of Batavia. Many mission societies

² This section is mainly based on Hartono 1984:9–57; Holtrop 1982:7–22; Ngelow 1982:3–30 and 1994:107–174; Ukur, “Tinjauan Sejarah,” in: Aritonang (ed.) 2000:12–17; Van den End ⁵2002:381–385; and Hoekema 1997:96–229.

sent students from their mission fields: Batakland, Minahasa, Timor, Sangir-Talau, as well as from the fields in Java. Through the process of learning and teaching among the teachers and the students they were enriched and learned many valuable things from each other, and developed a spirit of cooperation and unity that was later called the ecumenical spirit. This spirit was expressed in many ways when the students finished their study and went back to their own churches.

This Depok Seminary was closed in 1926 because the sponsoring societies had opened their respective seminaries and planned to start a higher or university level seminary. This plan was implemented in the founding of the so-called *Hoogere Theologische School* (Higher School of Theology) in 1934 (since 1936 moved to Batavia/Jakarta, and since 1954 known as the *Sekolah Tinggi Theologia [STT] Jakarta*). The role of this theological school in the development of the ecumenical spirit and movement is very remarkable, up to the present. Dr. Hendrik Kraemer, one of the initiators of this school, said in his inaugural speech that in the future the existence and role of this school would be theologically and ecclesiastically very important for the development of a strong and undivided Indonesian Protestant Christian community, even though the churches are separated by geographical and ethnic factors.

A third step towards cooperation was the forming of the above-mentioned union of mission societies, NIZB, in 1881, as an agreement and decision of a missionary conference at Depok Seminary in 1880. NIZB regularly organised missionary conferences to discuss actual issues and problems dealing with mission and evangelism. From the 1920s NIZB also discussed the development of the churches towards autonomy and self-subsistence as well as the cooperation and unity of the churches. From 1928 until 1941 NIZB even planned the founding of a council of missionary societies and churches that would function as, and should be upgraded to be, a national Christian council. Due to some obstacles, up to the last conference of the NIZB in Karang Pandan in 1941, this idea could not be implemented, although the preparatory committee had already prepared a draft of its constitution. However, this conference is very important because it was also attended by some prominent indigenous leaders like Soewidji, J. Leimena and Amir Sjarifuddin, who proposed their ideas regarding the unity of the churches in Indonesia as well as the standpoint and the role of the churches in the nationalist movement. They also criticized the missionary societies who did not build and support political consciousness and the spirit of nationalism among the indigenous Christians.

A fourth step was the founding of the *Zendingsconsulaat* (Mission Consulate, 1906) as a connecting link between the government and the boards of the various missionary societies in this country. The harmonious relationship between the colonial government and the mission consulate in Batavia enhanced the daily intercourse of missionaries and civil servants. It also influenced the

cooperation of the missionary societies in the Netherlands, including the founding of the Dutch Missionary Council in 1929. This consulate existed until 1953 and played a significant role in fostering the cooperation and growth of the churches through their respective missionary societies.³

The role of the Bible Society is also worthy of mention. As an interchurch and intermission institution, the *Nederlands Bijbelgenootschap* (NBG) was designated as the parent organization for the Mission Consulate. More important was the NBG's role (and in a much lesser degree that of the British and Foreign Bible Society) in providing infrastructure and qualified personnel for the translation of the Bible in a number of Indonesian languages, and especially in looking for a solution to the difficult problem of selecting one out of the many varieties of Malay to become the language of a common Malay Bible that could take the place of the Leijdecker and, in the twentieth century, the Klinkert translation. However, this problem was only solved after the *Lembaga Alkitab Indonesia* (LAI, Indonesian Bible Society) had taken over the lead in this field from the NBG (1954).

Among the Chinese churches, especially in Java, there was a development worthy to note. The spirit of unity among these churches had a close connection with the nationalist movement led by Sun Yat Sen, and the ecumenical movement in China as seen among other things in the founding of NCC in China in 1922. The first step was taken in their conference in Bogor in November 1926, led by Rev. Pouw Peng Hong. This conference agreed to form a forum for the Chinese Christians that they called the *Bond van Chinese Christenen in Indonesië*, with a goal to unite all Chinese Christians in Indonesia. In spite of some weaknesses, such as having a more Chinese than Indonesian character, they continued to develop by forming a new institution they called the *Geredja Tionghoa Serikat* (Chinese United Church). However, until the 1940s, the idea of uniting all Chinese churches in one institution was still a dream; they could only form, in 1948, a council for the Chinese churches that they called the *Dewan Geredja-geredja Kristen Tionghoa*.⁴

We also have to mention the founding of students' and women's organisations. In 1924 the *Nederlandsche Christen Studenten Vereeniging* (the Dutch Christian Students' Union) sent Dr. C.L. van Doorn to serve Christian youth and students in Indonesia. In 1926 he formed the *Christen Studenten Vereeniging [op Java]* (Christian Students' Union [in Java]). In the same year Dr. John R. Mott, a prominent figure in the ecumenical movement and the chairperson of the World Student Christian Federation, and some other leaders, visited Indonesia for mission and youth programs. During the meetings,

³ For comprehensive and detailed information on this consulate, see Jongeling 1966.

⁴ For more information regarding the Chinese-Indonesian churches, see chapter nineteen.

including a youth conference and the NIZB conference, they promoted the idea of *oikoumene* or church unity. This visit made a very deep impression and the motto of the WSCF, *ut omnes unum sint* (quoted from John 17:21), began to be known among Indonesian Christians. A few years later, in 1928, the *Christen Jonge Vrouwen Federatie* (the Young Christian Women's Federation), led among others by Mrs. Gunung Mulia and Ms. A.L. Fransz, was formed and accepted as a member of the World Young Women's Christian Federation).

Last but not least we must mention the role of the International Missionary Conference (IMC). In the first conference in Edinburgh 1910 no indigenous Christian from the Dutch Indies or Indonesia was present. The delegates from Indonesia consisted only of some missionaries, but Dr. Todung Sutan Gunung Mulia attended the second conference, in Jerusalem in 1928. He was impressed by the serious attention of this conference to various social-political-economic issues connected to the essence and goal of mission, as well as to the presence of the representatives of some young churches. That is why in his speech at a NIZB conference, soon after he returned from Jerusalem, he sharply criticised the policy of the missions that did not seriously take into account some important international or global developments.⁵

In other words, through Dr. Gunung Mulia the Jerusalem conference encouraged the young Indonesian churches to strengthen their consciousness of unity and cooperation, and to reflect more seriously on their tasks in order to achieve autonomy. No wonder that the third IMC conference in Tambaram in 1938 was attended by more indigenous Indonesian Christians (there were twelve, among others are Ms. A.L. Fransz and Dr J. Leimena) besides some mission leaders who worked in this country. More than the former, this conference encouraged the young churches including those in Indonesia to be more serious in endeavouring to express their unity.

As the follow-up to these international conferences some important conferences took place in this country. One of them was the WSCF conference for the Asia region in Citeureup, close to Batavia/Jakarta, in 1933, attended by delegates from many western and Asian countries. In this conference the *CSV op Java* chaired by Dr. J. Leimena was accepted as a member of WSCF. This conference made a deep impression on the participants and Dr. Hendrik Kraemer, one of the missionary leaders who continually urged and encouraged the missionary societies to give autonomy to the young churches, praised this conference for its success in efforts to facilitate and to support the unity of the young Christians. Later on, since 1947, the *CSV op Java* became the *Madjelis Pemoeda Kristen Oikoumene* (Council of Ecumenical Christian Youth)

⁵ Published in *De Opwekker* November/December 1928:518–537, and quoted by Ukur in Aritonang (ed.) 2000:13.

and from 1954 became the *Gerakan Mahasiswa Kristen Indonesia* (GMKI, Indonesian Christian Student Movement). Many of its leaders and leaders became prominent leaders in the ecumenical movement, like Fridolin Ukur, Liem Khiem Yang, Sabam Siagian, Sabam Sirait, and Nico Rajawane.

Following up from the Tambaram conference, in January 1939 the leaders of some churches in Java met in Batavia/Jakarta to discuss the possibility of forming a council of churches and missions in Indonesia. They formed a working committee that consisted of some prominent leaders, but this plan had to be postponed due to the outbreak of World War II.

World War II (1939–1945) and the Japanese military occupation (1942–1945) hampered the progress of the ecumenical movement but also motivated some new steps. The short period of Japanese occupation became a catalyst for the development of ecumenical aspirations to accelerate, to widen and to enhance the spread of the idea of Christian unity. The churches were forced to implement their respective self-supporting and self-governing strategies. The usual difficulties and pressures had a significant role in making concrete the idea of Christian fraternity (brother/sisterhood). The unity of the Indonesian Christians was also expressed through some organisations formed by the Japanese military government, such as the *Kiristokyodan Rengokai* (Christian Council or Union) in Minahasa, South Sulawesi, Kalimantan and the Moluccas, which gave the churches valuable experience of how to live in an ecumenical spirit and atmosphere.

The presence and activities of some ministers sent by the *Nippon Kirisuto Kyodan* (the Japan Christian Church) also strengthened the ecumenical experience and widened the understanding of Indonesian Christians, although it was frequently burdened with political load. One of the ministers, Rev. H. Shirato, chairperson of the *Rengokai*, said: “Indonesian Christians, be united to support *Dai Nippon!*” But Shirato and his colleagues did not only ask the Christians to support their government, they also helped and defended the Christians in relation to the government, especially against the brutal acts of military personnel.

*Preparations towards DGI*⁶

One year after the proclamation of Indonesian Independence, and after the release of the European missionaries from internment, a missionary conference took place in Batavia/Jakarta on 10–20 August 1946. This conference

⁶ This section is mainly based on Hartono 1984:57–71; Holtrop 1982:22–82; Ngelow 1982:39–44; Ngelow 1994:261–263, Ngelow in: Henky C. Wijaya (eds.) 1996:47–50; Ukur in: Aritonang (ed.) 2000:18–23; and Hoekema 1997:233–247.

was initiated by the *Zendingsconsulaat* and there were two main issues to be discussed: (1) the place and task of the mission and missionaries in the new independent Indonesia, and (2) the plan to found an assembly or ecumenical body of the churches. Regarding the first issue, J.C. Hoekendijk, who was to become a prominent missiologist, introduced his theology of the apostolate and the so-called comprehensive approach that emphasized the task of the church as the gospel propagator to face and to care for humankind and the world as a holistic and comprehensive unity. This concept and approach was adopted later by DGI and its members, and is maintained up to the present.

Regarding the second issue, the discussion was based on an idea from M. de Niet (*Zendingsconsul* 1939–1949). As a result of his meditations during the Japanese internment he suggested in December 1945 the founding of a *Balai Kristen* (Christian Chamber). This *Nota de Niet* proposed that the members of this chamber would be the Indonesian churches as well as those foreign churches that were doing mission and evangelism in this country. This chamber would be led by a secretariat with a number of secretaries who are expert in their respective fields (dogmatics, missiology, pedagogy, social environment, and administration). The main centre would be in Batavia, equipped with various facilities (library, museum, lodge, etc.) while in some regions there would also be founded a provincial Christian council as part of the national chamber.

The *Gereja Protestant Indonesia* (*Indische Kerk*) approved this idea but the conference preferred other options, either the forming of a *Gereja yang Esa* (One United Church) in Indonesia, or a federation of the churches in Indonesia. De Niet himself was aware that it was not easy to form one united Indonesian Christian Church. That is why in his *Nota* he already warned, “One truly Indonesian Christian Church cannot be formed by a group of people or on human authority overnight or with acclamation or a majority vote. That church must grow by the grace of God, and will do so, although its result will possibly be different from what the Christians are thinking.”⁷ Finally the conference drew some conclusions (without taking any decisions),

1. Ecumenical togetherness of the churches in Indonesia, already expressed before World War II in various forms, should be continued and widened.
2. The target of that ecumenical togetherness is the founding of one single church in Indonesia.
3. The council of churches and missions in Indonesia is planned as a cooperating body of the churches in Indonesia and the sending churches

⁷ M. de Niet, *Oecumenische Samenwerking en Eenheid in Indonesië* (Batavia: Zendingsconsulaat, 30 December 1945), quoted in: Holtrop 1982:89 and Ngelow 1982:90.

in Europe with a goal to intensify ecumenical conversation and cooperation among the churches.

4. Due to political conditions that hampered the gathering of the national council of churches and missions, it is advised that the churches and the embryonic churches (*bakal gereja-gereja*) in some regions as far as possible form regional or provincial councils to do and promote the common task.

Meanwhile, before the August 1946 conference, in certain regions like in Yogyakarta, the so-called Conference of the Protestant Churches formed a *Dewan Permoesjawaratan Geredja-geredja di Indonesia* (Consultation Council of the Churches in Indonesia). In this conference, attended by quite a number of native Indonesians, some participants expressed their aspiration to be more responsible in evangelism and also their complaint that the foreign missions hampered the effort of the churches towards unity and reduced the interest of the Indonesian churches in handling themselves the tasks of mission and evangelism. As a result, therefore, this conference concluded that the foreign missions should no longer come to this country. They might send their missionaries, but only to be assigned to and managed by the churches in Indonesia.

This conclusion raised tension between the *Dewan Permoesjawaratan* and the missions. To neutralise the tension both sides gathered in May 1947 in a spirit of "partnership in obedience," and they came to an agreement called the *Kwitang Accoord*. In this document it was agreed, among other things that the churches in Indonesia and their foreign church partners would form a council of churches that consisted of synod with representatives from both sides. Although two small groups produced this document, it could be perceived as a turning point in the relationship of the missions and the churches in Indonesia.

At the end of the August 1946 conference in Jakarta some prominent church members from eastern Indonesia proposed a conference in their region. They agreed to have a special conference in March 1947 with two main agenda items: (1) to declare the unity of the churches and the emergent churches; and (2) to form a council of churches and emergent churches as branches of the *Balai Geredja Keristen di Indonesia* (Chamber of the Christian Churches in Indonesia). In accordance with this plan, 54 delegates from 16 churches and some missionary societies gathered in Malino (close to Makassar), and on 17 March 1947 they founded the *Madjelis Oesaha Bersama Geredja-geredja Keristen, yang berpoesat di Makassar* (Council of Common Efforts of the Christian Churches, centered in Makassar), shortened as *Madjelis Keristen*.

This ecumenical body accepted as members all mission organisations which aimed to serve the churches. In its constitution it was also formulated that one of its goals was to inquire into the founding of one Christian Church in

Indonesia. In line with this, the conference decided that the position of the *Madjelis Keristen* should be as a branch and a pilot project of the coming national ecumenical body: to do on a small scale what should be done later by DGI. In fact, the prominent leaders in the *Madjelis Keristen* played important roles in the founding and the running of DGI.

Another important decision of the Malino conference was the founding of an ecumenical theological school for the churches in eastern Indonesia that was later realised as *Sekolah Tinggi Theologia Indonesia Timur* (STTIntim) in Makassar.

Besides those conferences and movements in Java (Yogyakarta) and eastern Indonesia (Makassar), there were some ecumenical gatherings in other regions, like North Sulawesi and East Sumatra. The Chinese churches held in May 1948 a conference in Jakarta as a continuation of the movement before the war, followed by a conference in September 1949 that formed the *Dewan Geredjageredja Kristen Tionghoa di-Indonesia* (DGKTI, Council of Chinese Christian Churches in Indonesia). Besides aiming to tighten the relationship and to promote unity among the Chinese churches, it also wanted to seek a relationship with the churches in Indonesia, and promote evangelism. The representatives of DGKTI and its members also attended the conference to found DGI and declared their willingness to join that council. However, DGKTI maintained its existence until it changed to become the *Badan Permusjawaratan Persatuan Geredjani* (BPPG, Consultation Body of Church Union) in 1954. BPPG brought a number of the Chinese churches in Java together in the *Sinode Am Gereja Kristen Indonesia* (General Synod of the Indonesian Christian Church) in 1962, resulting in the following years into a more real unity.

The *Gereja Protestant Indonesia* (GPI, *Indische Kerk*) also had its share in the process of founding DGI. Although GMIM had already become autonomous in 1934, followed by GPM in 1935 and GMIT in 1947, until 1948 GPI—while giving birth to another church, the GPIB—still maintained its existence as a ‘holding church’ for those regional churches, although it also supported the above-mentioned *Nota de Niet*. Following an idea proposed by Rev. A.Z.R. Wenas, chairperson of GMIM, GPI took a new step in its second general synod-conference in June 1948, by combining autonomy and unity. On the one hand GPI continued like the covering peel of an orange fruit, in gathering the autonomous units together—therefore functioning differently from the unity models of the mango or the grape—and on the other hand it supported its units joining DGI as was done by GPI itself. GPI even declared its willingness to end its existence if the churches in Indonesia would achieve unity in a form more perfect than GPI.

The founding of the Dewan Gereja-gereja di Indonesia, DGI⁸

After establishing a planning committee that consisted of representatives of the above-mentioned organisations or councils, the committee and around forty church leaders and delegates held a preparatory conference in Jakarta in November 1949. Some of them had just returned from the assembly to found the World Council of Churches in Amsterdam and brought some new ideas and concepts from that assembly that it was assumed could enrich the ecumenical vision to be formulated and implemented in the coming national council. One of the topics discussed in that preparatory conference was the essence of the ecumenical movement among the churches, based on a working paper prepared by Rev. J.L.Ch. Abineno.⁹

The conference came to an understanding that, although nationalism has a contribution, the ecumenical movement in Indonesia was not primarily based on nationalism but on the consciousness of Christian unity as the body of Christ. The conference also agreed that the main goal of this movement is the forming of one Christian Church in Indonesia, based on the conviction that the essential unity already existed, and the long process toward unity should be started with the formation of a cooperating body. The conference also realised that the movement and the unity did not happen in the form of a conference but in and by the people of the churches themselves. It was already realised too in this conference that this ecumenical movement did not only represent a movement to unite the Protestants, but all Christians, even the Roman Catholic Church and the dissenting groups. In the closing message of this conference it was even emphasised that the church does not seek for unity for the sake of unity itself, and does not exist for itself but for the whole world, and stands in the midst of the world as the servant of the Gospel of the Kingdom of God.

This preparatory conference also discussed some other agendas and programs that were expected to be handled later by the coming council, i.e. relations with the various existing and developing regional councils, spiritual care for military personnel, health and social service, publishing and communication media (including radio), schools and education, theological education, the Bible society, youth, international relations, official language, church and politics, division of tasks and the composition of commissions. All of these essential and operational matters were formulated in a draft constitution

⁸ This section is mainly based on Hartono 1984:76–84; Ngelow 1982:31–38; Ngelow 1994:241–261; Ukur et alii 1979:573–575; and Ukur in: Aritonang (ed.) 2000:23–31.

⁹ Abineno later became one of the prominent leaders in the ecumenical movement, especially in Indonesia. He held the position of general chairperson of the DGI in 1960s and 1970s, succeeding Todung Sutan Gunung Mulia.

and by-laws. A number of international ecumenical leaders like W.A. Visser 't Hooft and C.W. Ranson also attended this conference, where they shared information about the global ecumenical movement and contributed their ideas and advice regarding those matters.

As the follow-up to the preparatory conference, the founding conference of DGI as a national council of churches was held on 22–28 May 1950 in the campus of HTS/STT Jakarta. One of the crucial points of the discussion was whether this council would only consist of churches or also of missionary societies. Eventually it was agreed that the council would only accept Indonesian churches as members. In line with this, it was decided that the *Zendingsconsulaat* would be liquidated and its tasks, including the task of representing the churches to the government, would be taken over by the DGI. Regarding mission and evangelism previously undertaken by various missionary societies, the conference came to an understanding that it is basically and prominently the task of the churches. To coordinate this task the DGI would set up a permanent commission and the churches would gather in this commission along with the foreign mission societies.

Regarding the ecumenical goal, it was agreed and formulated in the constitution that the ultimate goal of this council is *pembentukan Gereja Kristen yang Esa di Indonesia* (the forming of the One Christian Church in Indonesia). Following the acceptance and approval of the constitution, the conference that consisted of the representatives of 27 churches declared the formation of the DGI through a *Pengumuman* (Announcement)¹⁰ as follows:

We, participants of the Conference for the formation of the *Dewan Geredja-geredja di Indonesia*, herewith announce that now the *Dewan Geredja-geredja di Indonesia* is already founded as a place of consultation and common effort of the churches in Indonesia towards the unity of the churches in Indonesia, as stated in the constitution of the *Dewan Geredja-geredja di Indonesia* already decided by the conference on 25 May 1950. We believe that the founding of the *Dewan Geredja-geredja di Indonesia*, as an effort towards the implementation of God's message to His people, is merely God's grace. We trust this council into the hand of God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. May God always keep its going out and coming in from this time on and forevermore, for the glory of the name of God in this world. Djakarta 25 May 1950.

Besides appointing the executive committee (where Todung Sutan Gunung Mulia was appointed first chairperson), this conference took time to discuss a the release of a bulletin *News* regarding a declaration of the founding of the

¹⁰ In some publications, e.g. Ukur in: Aritonang (ed.) 2000:27, and *Almanak Kristen Indonesia 2003*. Jakarta: PGI, 2002:10, this announcement is called *Manifes Pembentoeakan DGI* or *Manifest Pembentukan DGI*, and there is certain difference of wording between the versions. English translation by JSA.

Republik Maluku Selatan (Southern Moluccas Republic, RMS, a separatist state) on 25 April 1950, but then agreed that the conference would entrust this issue to be handled by the newly elected Executive Committee.

*Some developments and challenges, especially on the concept of unity*¹¹

In the founding of the DGI two aspirations were brought together, i.e. *mengesa* (to be one) and *mandiri* (to be self-reliant). In the founding conference of 1950 (later also counted as the first general assembly of the DGI) the goal of the council was also declared, but the precise meaning or content of the goal and how it was to be achieved was not yet specified. In the following years and assemblies there was much discussion and struggle regarding these questions. In the second conference, 20–30 June 1953, for example, it was formulated that, “what is meant with the forming of the One Christian Church is the forming of one Church of Christ in Indonesia that has one confession and one basis of church order.” Based on this, the DGI formed a special committee of Faith and Order, modelled on what was done in the WCC. The task of this committee was to adjust and to unite the confessions (statements of faith) and church orders of the members in order to have a common ground of unity. But then it was realised that this comparative approach did not fit the essence and the nature of the church, because the norms of church unity are not determined by the historical and empirical reality of the church.

From time to time, from conference to conference, the discussion of the essence and meaning of church unity and of how to express its manifestation went on, without any final result or agreement. We will not relate how many working papers and documents have already been written and presented on this subject. On the one side there was an emphasis on spiritual or essential unity, whereas on the other side there was an emphasis on the uniformity of some institutional and more operational aspects. In the 1960s there was, partly as an echo of the third WCC assembly in New Delhi, also an idea that the unity should be clearly expressed in each place or at the local level, not at the top or synod level. The DGI tried to implement this idea through a practical consensus that each member-church should refrain from planting new congregations in the areas of the other churches, so that the local congregations from the different denominations could be more directed toward integration. Or at least all members should be willing to come to an agreement about the mutual recognition of the members and ordained ministers of other fellow DGI member churches. But this idea was in conflict with the

¹¹ This section is mainly based on Hartono 1984:84–99; Ngelow 1982:45–86; Ukur et alii 1979:576–594; and Ukur in: Aritonang (ed.) 2000:31–72.

high desire and ambition of each denomination to have local congregations in as many regions or provinces as possible. From 1984 onwards, this mutual recognition was theoretically agreed to, as one of the so-called Five Documents of Church Unity.

Meanwhile the DGI continued to find an acceptable and suitable formula for church unity. To achieve this aim, in 1960 a new committee was formed to design a scheme for One Christian Church as the goal of the DGI. In the fifth general conference of the DGI in 1964 this committee proposed two concepts: a synod (like the Lambeth Conference in the Anglican Church) or a federation. But this assembly did not discuss these two concepts in detail, it rather discussed papers from three speakers: Rev. G.H.M. Siahaan from HKBP, Rev. P.H. Rompas from GPI, and Dr. Soedarmo from GKJ. Although the discussion created tension, this conference succeeded in coming to the conclusion that each member-church of the DGI, without any exception, wanted soon the formation of the One Christian Church and was committed to enhance the effort towards this formation, while also understanding each other in respect to the difference of opinion regarding the speed, ways and procedure of the formation. This consensus showed that the main role would be played by the member-churches, with the DGI playing only the role of facilitator.

Based on this consensus, from 1964 onwards, the DGI took some further steps. Besides continuing the effort to provide a concept of Faith and Order, DGI with its members also tried to form a concept of liturgy. But soon they became aware that what should be the result could not be one Church Order, one Statement of Faith, and one Liturgy, because it would lead to a uniformity, something already objected to since 1953. Therefore they tried to find another model of unity, i.e. unity in diversity, a model that reflected the influence of the "New Delhi 1961 Statement on Unity." Based on this, in 1967 DGI's Commission on Unity proposed a concept of *Tata Sinode Oikoumene Geredja-geredja di Indonesia* (Ecumenical Synod Order of the Churches in Indonesia), henceforth *Tata Sinogi*, in the sixth conference or assembly of the DGI in Makassar. It was realised that this ecumenical synod was not yet identical with the One Christian Church, but compared to the past it was a great step forward. In this concept were outlined, among other things, some principles as follows:

1. The togetherness of the churches in Indonesia in the form of a council would be enhanced to be an ecclesial institution in the form of a synod.
2. The decision of the prime meeting (*sidang utama*) of this synod would bind the members.
3. Its fundamental doctrine and confession are the Word of God, the Apostles' Creed, and Common Understanding of Faith.

Quite disappointingly, this general assembly did not accept the concept, which was only recommended “as a document to be discussed and struggled further with in opening more possibilities for the member-churches.” In the following meetings, even in the seventh assembly of the DGI in Pematangsiantar 1971, it was concluded, “the time has not yet come to take a decision on the forming of the Ecumenical Synod.” “This subject would become our churches’ concern. Apparently the efforts towards the manifestation of unity so far endeavoured are not yet so intensive and comprehensive.”

From 1971 onwards the DGI, with the members, continued their efforts to find a more suitable and acceptable model of unity. Through various ways of monitoring it was found that the churches in Indonesia preferred to put more emphasis on the manifestation of their unity in “unity in each location (in the local level)” and “unity in action” rather than unity in organisation, liturgy and confession. Therefore the DGI and its members had to make a reorientation. They left the old concept of “interdenominational ecumenism” and the emphasis on unity in organisation, liturgy and confession, and turned to a new approach, the integration of unity in worship, witness (testimony, *marturia*) and service (*diakonia*) while also developing the concept of “unity in diversity.” In terms of organisation only one commission handled the tasks of witness and service and it was understood to be an evangelical role of the ecumenical movement. In other words, the unity of the churches is for the sake of witness and service to the world, whereas in the understanding of the form of unity, it was realised that it should be also more and more manifested in strong motivation, participation (support) and the mandate of the members of the DGI, not merely in the structural form.

Through a number of discussions and seminars during the 1970s it was also realised that the unity of the church, or the One Church itself in Indonesia, essentially existed already according to the essence of the Church; the task of the churches is to manifest and to implement it. Through this awareness it was also realised that the ecumenical movement should avoid the danger of institutionalism, uniformity and centralistic-pyramidal unity or community. The consequence of this consciousness was the reformulation of the goal of the DGI, including its constitution. There was already since the 1970s an idea to change the terminology from *pembentukan* (forming) to *penampakan* or *perwujudan* (manifestation). In line with this, it was proposed that the term *dewan* (council) in the name of DGI should be changed to *persekutuan* (community). But it took time to internalise these two ideas or proposals, until they were agreed to and decided on, in the tenth general assembly in Ambon 1984.

In line with the reformulation of the meaning and goal of the ecumenical movement, since the 1970s there has been a strong tendency towards a greater social-humanitarian concern and service. This tendency, as was also reflected in the theme of the DGI’s general assembly in Pematangsiantar 1971,

“*Disuruh ke dalam dunia*” (Sent into the world), was influenced by the theme and concern of the WCC general assembly in Uppsala 1968. We will see this further in the next section.

After some preparation and discussion in the period between the DGI’s general assemblies of 1976 and 1984, in the Ambon general assembly of 1984 the name of the DGI was changed to become the *Persekutuan Gereja-gereja di Indonesia* (PGI). One of the arguments and explanations for this change was that the term *Persekutuan* (Communion) is more ecclesiastical and biblical than *Dewan* (Council). Moreover, with this new term the idea of unity is more obvious and more manifest. Together with this change, the assembly also approved a series of documents called the *Lima Dokumen Keesaan Gereja* (LDKG) (Five Documents of Church Unity) that consist of:

1. *Pokok-pokok Tugas Panggilan Bersama* (PTPB) (The Basic Tasks of Common Calling)
2. *Pemahaman Bersama Iman Kristen* (PBIK) (The Common Understanding of the Christian Faith)
3. *Piagam Saling Mengakui dan Saling Menerima* (PSMSM) (The Charter of Mutual Recognition and Acceptance)
4. *Tata Dasar Persekutuan Gereja-gereja di Indonesia* (TD-PGI) (Constitution of PGI)
5. *Menuju Kemandirian Teologi, Daya dan Dana* (MKTDD) (Towards Self-Reliance in Theology, Human Resources, and Finance)

These documents were from time to time revised, updated, and reformulated according to the development of the PGI and its members’ understanding of their context and challenge.¹² For example, in and after the general assembly of 2000 in Palangkaraya the content and composition was modified. The second document, *Pemahaman Bersama Iman Kristen* (PBIK) was placed first, based on the assumption that the One Christian Church (*Gereja Kristen yang Esa*) must be built on a common understanding of the faith. The title of the series was also changed to become *Dokumen Keesaan Gereja* (DKG) (The Documents of Church Unity), anticipating the possibility of adding or reducing the number of documents therein. But then the general assembly of December 2004 decided to put the document of *Pokok-pokok Tugas Panggilan Bersama* (PTPB) back as the first, while also modifying the title to become *Dokumen Keesaan Gereja 2004–2009*.

¹² The last version using the name LDKG was the product of the twelfth general assembly of 1994 in Jayapura, i.e. *Lima Dokumen Keesaan Gereja, Persekutuan Gereja-gereja di Indonesia—Keputusan Sidang Raya XII PGI Jayapura, 21–30 Oktober 1994*. Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 1996.

Some Main Issues and Programmes

Relationship and cooperation among the streams and the denominations

When the DGI was founded in 1950 there were 27 church organisations or denominations that agreed to join, and then registered to become the first members. Most of them were the so-called mainline Protestant churches (including the Methodist and Chinese churches). In the meantime the number of its members grew to be 81 in the year 2005, from among around 300 church organisations in Indonesia. From this figure we may see that in terms of numbers that only around 27% of the churches have become members of DGI/PGI, although in terms of membership those 81 churches cover more than half of the Protestants. As we see in chapter eighteen, besides the DGI/PGI there are also some other church unions among the Pentecostals, Evangelicals, and Baptists, and there are some other churches that do not join any union or communion of churches.

Generally speaking, all of the approximately 300 churches agree to and support the idea of *ecumene*. Many of them even use the word *oikoumene* or ecumenical in their activities (like ‘ecumenical revival meeting,’ ‘ecumenical community,’ ‘ecumenical gathering’ etc.). But we may also say that among those approximately 300 churches more than half are products of schism. We may find schisms among all categories of churches: the mainline, the Pentecostal, the Evangelical. This fact leads us to a basic question: what do those churches mean by *oikoumene* or church unity?

Among these church unions sometimes we find a consciousness to build a cooperation, network, or forum of gathering. In the 1990s, for example, six church unions or communions formed the so-called *Forum Komunikasi Lembaga-lembaga Gerejawi* (Communication Forum of Ecclesiastical Institutions) that included the *Konferensi Waligereja Indonesia* (Indonesian [Roman Catholic] Bishops’ Conference). Besides that there is also the *Forum Komunikasi Kristiani Indonesia* (Indonesia Christian Communication Forum). In August 2000 a number of church leaders—from the mainline Protestant, Pentecostal, Evangelical, Baptist, Salvation Army, and Orthodox communities—issued a declaration (that was called *Deklarasi Kempinski*, using the name of a hotel in Jakarta where they gathered) expressing their agreement to build a more permanent organisation that could unite all Christians and churches in this country.¹³ But, as had already repeatedly happened before, this kind of forum or agreement tends to be incidental when facing certain burning issues or urgent and emergency situations (like the burning of church

¹³ Ign. Dachlan Setiawan, “Deklarasi Kempinski,” in: *Panggilan* (magazine of the Indonesian Evangelical Fellowship/PII), April–June 2001:18–21.

buildings, inter-religious conflict, political manoeuvres of Islam, the tsunami disaster). The difference of doctrine or confessional and denominational heritage hampers them from taking further steps.

Even the DGI/PGI and its members have, from time to time, faced a dilemmatic situation. On the one hand they struggle for the unity of the churches, but on the other hand they have to accept new member churches that were mostly founded in an excess of schism. The more the number of the member churches increases the farther the DGI/PGI walks from its former and original goal. To solve this problem, at least tentatively, the general assembly of the PGI in December 2004 declared “ecumene in action,” i.e. the implementation of the ecumenical spirit and movement in concrete action together. It was shown, for example, in the relief action of the churches to handle the impact of the earthquake and tsunami disaster since the end of December 2004.

Dealing with the relationship and cooperation of the DGI/PGI with the *Majelis Agung Waligereja Indonesia/Konferensi Waligereja Indonesia* (MAWI/KWI), we need to add some more information.¹⁴ Before the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965) the relationship of the Protestant churches and the Roman Catholic Church was characterized by tension and rivalry.¹⁵ But soon after the Second Vatican Council there was a very significant shift in atmosphere. From the late 1960s up to the present for example, the DGI and the MAWI every year issued a joint Christmas Message to all churches and to the whole nation. Reflecting on the participation or role of the church in national life and development, the DGI and the MAWI through their respective special departments frequently sat together and formulated their common understanding and plan of action.

The close cooperation and togetherness was also seen in regard to some crucial issues, as we see in the following examples.¹⁶ Dealing with the Joint Decision or Instruction of the Minister of Religious Affairs and Minister of Internal Affairs No. 1, 13 September 1969 regarding the requirement to get permission for building places of worship, the DGI and the MAWI issued together a Memorandum on 10 October 1969 that noted certain contradictions and vagueness in the joint-decision and proposed some ideas to maintain the right of religious freedom and to maintain a good inter-religious relationship.¹⁷

¹⁴ Here is not the place to describe the history of the MAWI/KWI, its place in the structure of the Roman Catholic Church in Indonesia, and its concept or understanding of ecumene. It is clear, however, that the nature of the DGI/PGI as a council or communion of many Protestant churches is different from that of the MAWI/KWI as a conference of bishops of one Roman Catholic Church.

¹⁵ For example, in Verkuyl 1961, the Roman Catholic Church was still regarded as one of the heresies. It was a heritage from the era of missionaries.

¹⁶ Some more examples can be found in chapter sixteen of this book.

¹⁷ The complete text of the Memorandum: see in Weinata Sairin (ed.) 1994:443–446. Up

The second example is regarding the Draft of Marriage Law (*Rancangan Undang-undang Perkawinan*) of 1973. In this draft it was stated that marriage is legalised by its registration in the government office and by an officer of marriage, and that the difference of religion does not become a hindrance for marriage. When the government issued this draft, some Islamic leaders and organisations reacted sharply; they alleged that there was a ‘play’ or manoeuvre by certain Christian (especially Catholic) circles behind it and they appealed to the government to revise this ‘secularised’ draft so that marriage would become determined by religious law. Towards this severe reaction of the Muslim side, and some indication that the government tends to accommodate the aspiration of the Muslims, the DGI and the MAWI issued a document “*Pokok-pokok Pemikiran BPH DGI dan MAWI*” (Basic Thoughts of the Executive of DGI and the MAWI) that basically appealed to the government to be very careful in making a decision on this Marriage Law, so that it will not be contrary to the Constitution of 1945, especially article 29 verse 2 that guarantees religious freedom.¹⁸

The third example deals with the Decisions or Instructions of the Minister of Religious Affairs Nos. 70 and 77, 1 and 15 August 1978,¹⁹ which on 2 January 1979 became a part of a Joint Decision/Instruction (No. 1/1979) of the Minister of Religious Affairs and the Minister of Internal Affairs about the rules for the spreading of religious propaganda and foreign aid for religious organisations in Indonesia.²⁰ In response to these decisions DGI together with MAWI issued a review that principally asked the government to cancel them based on three arguments: they are contrary to the religious freedom guaranteed in the Constitution, the classification of regions in Indonesia according to religion is contrary to the essence of the Republic of Indonesia as a unitary state, and the church as a religious institution has a universal dimension.²¹

to the time of writing this chapter the Christians (including Catholics) repeatedly appealed to the government to cancel this Joint Decision, while Muslims asked for the opposite. The Muslim party even wanted the Joint Decision to be upgraded to become a Law. The draft of the Religious Harmony Law provided by the Department of Religious Affairs in 2006 seems to accommodate this Muslim aspiration.

¹⁸ The complete text of the “*Pokok-pokok Pikiran*,” see in: Weinata Sairin and J.M. Pattiasina (eds.) 1994:248–249. Eventually the Marriage Law was issued as No. 1/1974 in January 1974 and since then, up to the present, brought many complicated problems, especially regarding inter-religious marriage.

¹⁹ The complete texts in: Weinata Sairin (ed.) 1994:50–59.

²⁰ The complete text of the “*Keputusan Bersama Menteri Agama dan Menteri Dalam Negeri Nomor 1 Tahun 1979 tentang Tatacara Pelaksanaan Penyiaran Agama dan Bantuan Luar Negeri Kepada Lembaga Keagamaan di Indonesia*,” in: Weinata Sairin (ed.) 1994:63–68.

²¹ The complete text of the “*Tinjauan mengenai Keputusan Menteri Agama nomor 70 dan 77 tahun 1978*,” in: Weinata Sairin (ed.) 1994:453–476.

*Education and formation*²²

As already mentioned, among the missionary societies we find a strong consciousness that they had to work together and that one of the fields of cooperation was education, especially theological education. After the founding of the DGI, this ecumenical body paid quite serious attention not only to the field of theological education but also to general education or schooling. While many of the churches, especially members of DGI/PGI, were also busy developing their educational programs, the DGI/PGI also took a number of strategic steps. The establishment of the *Majelis Pusat Pendidikan Kristen/MPPK* on 5 June 1950 (since 2000 the *Majelis Pendidikan Kristen/MPK*, the Council of Christian Education), to coordinate Christian schools from elementary to high school levels all over the country, was also co-initiated by the DGI. So was the founding of the *Universitas Kristen Indonesia* (Indonesia Christian University) in Jakarta in 1953 and the *Badan Kerjasama Perguruan Tinggi Kristen di Indonesia* (Cooperative Body of Christian Universities in Indonesia) in the 1970s.

Especially in the field of theological education, the DGI/PGI developed a close relationship with the *Perhimpunan Sekolah-sekolah Theologia di Indonesia/Persetia* (the Association of Theological Schools in Indonesia) that was founded in 1963. Many programmes of the Department of Education and Formation of the DGI/PGI were held together with *Persetia*, for example regarding the curriculum for Sunday-Schools in the churches and religious education in the general schools (from elementary school up to the universities).

This Department of Education and Formation of the DGI/PGI (regardless of its frequent change of name) also paid serious attention to the training (*pembinaan*) of church members, covering spiritual, practical, organisational, missionary, and ecumenical formation. In cooperation with its member churches and with some Christian and para-church organisations, this department held a series of regular training events for Sunday-School teachers, youth and teenagers, women, lay people, and also pastors (including those who served in the military and police). It also provided booklets and modules of training to be used by the churches. To support this program the DGI/PGI provided several special buildings (like the *Pondok Remaja* in Cipayung and *Wisma Oikumene* in Sukabumi), and in 1971 it also founded a special institute, the *Institute Oikumene Indonesia/IOI* (later integrated into the Department of Education and Formation). Through this department the DGI/PGI, in cooperation with

²² A summary of and reflection on this subject, esp. in the circle of the DGI/PGI, we may find in an article of S.M.T. Rajagukguk, "Membentuk Tujuan Pembinaan dan Pendidikan (50 Tahun Pelayanan Pembinaan dan Pendidikan DGI/PGI," in: Aritonang (ed.) 2000:217-235.

its overseas partners, also distributed scholarship grants and supported students of general as well as theological schools and universities.

Since the 1970s there had been a dream to establish a special institute to train young Christians to become ecumenical cadres, like the Ecumenical Institute in Bossey, Switzerland. To prepare the implementation of this idea, the DGI/PGI founded a special institute, the *Akademi Leimena*, as a sort of ‘think tank’ that also equips church members in their roles in society, among other ways through the series of *Konferensi Gereja dan Masyarakat* (Conferences on Church and Society), since 1984 (see below). Unfortunately the realisation of this idea had to be postponed and the *Akademi Leimena* itself was liquidated due to some difficulties faced by the PGI (see further below).

*Participation in nation building and development*²³

From the beginning that is from the time of DGI’s preparation and formation, there was awareness that the ecumenical movement and its institutions should make a contribution to the process of nation building, including making some efforts to solve various social-political-economic-legal-cultural problems. During the ‘revolutionary era’ (1945–1949), especially since 1947 when Indonesia became a federal state (*Republik Indonesia Serikat/RIS*), there was a strong aspiration that Indonesia should become a unitary state (*Negara Kesatuan Republik Indonesia*), as was declared in its Constitution of 1945. The DGI was founded before Indonesia again became a unitary state on August 17, 1950, and its foundation was also motivated by the consciousness that Indonesia is a unitary state. This consciousness was reflected in the minutes of the first conference of 22–28 May 1950.²⁴ The forming of the DGI, therefore, can also be viewed as a support and encouragement to the *Negara Kesatuan*.

Soon after the first conference, DGI formed a special commission that was called the Commission on Church and State (in the second conference of 1953 this was changed to become the Commission of Church and Society). In the fourth conference, 1960, under the theme “Unity of the Church—Unity of the Nation” it was stated:

The idea of church unity in Indonesia is essentially different from the one-nation building in Indonesia, because church unity is a unity of faith, not political unity.

²³ Information on this topic is summarised in Aritonang 2000:87–138. Regarding the thinking and ideas of some Christian leaders in the 1960s on this subject, see Sidjabat 1964 and 1968. Review of the concept, policy and program of the ecumenical movement, especially the DGI, regarding participation in the development in 1960s and 1970s is provided by Erari 1994; whereas the developments during the 1980s and 1990s can be found in a series of compilations of the CCS published by the DGI/PGI.

²⁴ PGI 1996a:23–81.

However, between these two things there is a mutual relationship, because both of them are present in the one and same society. With that unity the churches in Indonesia can do their task of service more perfectly and help to strengthen the unity of the society and the state.²⁵

This is also the reason why during the period of 1950–1960, characterised by a number of revolts, the DGI issued an appeal to the whole nation to maintain the unity of the state and nation, as well as the unity of the church, while also inviting the people, especially the Christians, to participate in the first general election of 1955.

Ever since independence the DGI and its members held an understanding that one of the main pillars of the unitary state of Indonesia is the *Pancasila* (the Five Principles or the Five Pillars of national identity), the fundamental philosophy and ideology of the state. As already shown, during the preparatory meetings for the independence of Indonesia, from late May until August 1945, Christian leaders like Mr. Johannes Latuharhary fought to maintain Pancasila. This struggle continued during the 1950s, especially in the *Konstituante* meetings in 1956–1959. DGI also took the same position, because the prominent Christian leaders in the *Konstituante*, like Rev. W.J. Rumambi and Mr. J.C.T. Simorangkir, were also prominent leaders of DGI.

Since the 1960s the DGI, following the WCC, held a series of Conferences on Church and Society (CCS). In line with the slogan and program of “revolution” declared by President Soekarno, the DGI and its members (through the general conference as well as the CCS) also conceived revolution as their task, while also critically giving a theological understanding of this concept. The first CCS, combined with a consultative meeting of the DGI and the East Asia Christian Conference in November 1962, was held under the theme, “Christian Service in the Revolution.” One of the conclusions was, “The church can live in every political system. But the church has a duty to give witness of warning against things contrary to God’s plan and will.”

The commitment of the DGI to participate in the revolution of Indonesia culminated in the fifth conference of 1964, under the theme, “Jesus Christ a Good Shepherd” and sub-theme “Christian Task in the Revolution.” The ‘brain’ or star of this assembly was the retired Lieutenant General Tahi Bonar Simatupang, who was also one of the chairs of the WCC. One of the statements of this assembly said:

In this current situation, where the people are facing some heart-attracting hopes besides disappointment and worry, which are commonly found in every revolution, there is a Good Shepherd for man. Especially for the Christians, the Good Shepherd leads them to live *constructively, creatively, realistically, and*

²⁵ PGI 1996b:213–215.

critically in this revolution. Essentially the Christians are very glad to participate in giving content to the revolution of Indonesia. The Christians are glad because various fields of culture were and are revolutionarily blooming. . . . At first glance we may see a parallel of the fundamentals, direction and goal of the Indonesian revolution in many aspects of what we may find in the revolution started by Jesus Christ. . . . To be more competently contributing to nation building during the revolution *constructively, creatively, realistically, and critically* the Christians should firstly be called to listen to the word of God.²⁶

These “tetra-words” formulated by T.B. Simatupang (later ‘constructive’ was replaced by ‘positive’), became DGI/PGI’s jargon for several decades. Especially regarding critical attitude, the fifth assembly also focused its attention on the habit of corruption that was already extensively practised. But so far there has been no significant result, even up to the present, because even within the churches this ‘endemic disease’ is also quite common.

Not long after the fifth assembly a so-called *coup d’état* was attempted on 30 September/1 October 1965. This failed coup brought radical change in the political constellation in Indonesia. The DGI itself—as far as we can find data—did not say a lot or express a comprehensive review of it. One of the very few statements was “*Pernyataan dan Seruan DGI*” (Statement and Appeal of the DGI) on 7 October 1965 that, among other things, contained a criticism and condemnation of the *Gerakan 30 September/Partai Komunis Indonesia* (G30S/PKI, 30 September Movement/Indonesian Communist Party) and support for the government under the President Soekarno to maintain the Pancasila State.²⁷

In the second CCS and the sixth conference of the DGI in 1967 we hardly find the *revolution* word, although it was not totally deleted or neglected, and there was very little attention paid to the failed coup. The more dominating themes, following the change of social-political-economic atmosphere and the emergence of the so-called *Orde Baru* (New Order) regime under Soeharto, were *pembaharuan* (renewal), *pembangunan* (development) and the like. The DGI and its members took the renewal of humankind, church and society, as the most important renewal, and this was understood as parallel with modernisation. The main pattern of DGI’s theological concept regarding the position, role and task of the church in state and society had, however, not shifted from the former emphasis on the Kingdom of God that has already come, is, and will be coming.

As Christians we perceive the modernisation, revolution and renewal under the light of the Kingdom of God. . . . The Kingdom of God is among us. The Kingdom

²⁶ Quoted in Sairin (ed.) 1996b:365–368. Cf. T.B. Simatupang 1968:7–35.

²⁷ The complete text of the “*Pernyataan dan Seruan DGI*,” in: Weinata Sairin (ed.) 1998:296–298.

of God influences history, the unjust orders are overthrown and we are called to participate in the great change in history. We assess the modernisation, revolution and renewal under the light of the Kingdom of God to decide what within it we need to support and what we have to reject... The knowledge of the Kingdom of God frees us from despair and cynicism. Therefore Christian ideas can contribute realism on the one hand and future-oriented hope on the other hand to the political ideas of our nation.²⁸

Based on this theological concept the second CCS also formulated the understanding of the DGI and its members of their task in the field of politics, law, economics, and in the tide of modernisation. This concept also reflected an understanding and consciousness that the ecumenical movement is not only dealing with church internal issues but also with the problems and struggle of the people in the whole life of the nation. This was also reflected in the decision of the sixth general conference of DGI held around four month after the second CCS,

All of us are already involved in the process of modernisation and nation-building. We Christians participated in it with a sense of responsibility to God and to the future of our state and nation... Besides living as responsible citizens Christians have to participate fully in the efforts to renew the structure of society, the political and economical system, and the values that dominate the culture and ideals of society.²⁹

Precisely in the year of the second CCS and the sixth general conference a conflict containing religious aspects, especially between Islam and Christianity, broke out in several places, including Makassar where it is known as the *Peristiwa Makassar 1967* (see also the following section). But this did not reduce the commitment of the DGI and its members to participate in the nation-building program; they even intensified their commitment in the coming years, especially when development became a key word, not only in Indonesia but all over the world. In 1970 the DGI and the KWI formed a special committee, SODEPAXI, as a follow-up of the SODEPAX Committee (Committee on Society, Development and Peace) founded by the WCC together with the Roman Catholic Papal Committee for Justice and Peace. SODEPAXI held a special study conference on development, *Konferensi Studi untuk Pembangunan* in Cipayung, West Java, on 9–15 May 1970.

This Cipayung Conference had a special significance since it showed a manifestation of a broader ecumene already long dreamed of, one that involved

²⁸ Quoted from S.A.E. Nababan (ed.) 1968; also quoted in: Aritonang (ed.) 2000:100–101. This Kingdom of God theme was then re-echoed and re-intensified in the theme of the ninth general assembly of the DGI at Tomohon in 1980 *Datanglah Kerajaan-Mu* (Thy Kingdom Come!).

²⁹ Quoted from *Keputusan-keputusan Sidang Lengkap DGI ke-VI 29 Okt.–8 Nop. 1967 di Makassar (Sulawesi Selatan)*, Djakarta: DGI, n.d., pp. 83–85; also quoted in: Aritonang (ed.) 2000:103–104.

both the Protestant and the Roman Catholic churches. The theme of this conference was *Partisipasi Gereja dalam Pembangunan Nasional* (Participation of the Church in National Development) and this theme became very popular between the DGI/PGI and its members during the 1970s and 1980s. This conference on the one hand appreciated the progress of modern science and technology and supported the development program of the New Order regime as a strategic step to overcome the poverty and misery of humankind as well as to uphold justice and humanity. But on the other hand it also warned of the potential danger implied in the process and concept of development, that of giving an exaggerated emphasis to physical development. The conference was also aware that the development did not only aim to overcome visible poverty but also to endeavour to make structural changes in human life. Out of this awareness the conference challenged the churches and tried to formulate a theology of development.

In DGI and its members this concept and theology of development was elaborated further in the seventh conference (from this time on it was called the general assembly) in Pematangsiantar 1971 and those that followed. The theme of this general assembly was *Disuruh ke dalam Dunia* (Commissioned to the World), following the theme of the WCC fourth general assembly in Uppsala 1968, and the sub-theme was *Tugas kita dalam negara Pancasila yang membangun* (Our task in the developing Pancasila state). There was a rising consciousness that Christian churches are not only called to be one but are also called to serve one world, troubled with various problems. One of the prominent leaders in DGI/PGI who persistently introduced and applied the theological concepts and ideas of the WCC to the DGI/PGI and its members, and built a critical theological thinking on the relationship between church and state was Soritua A.E. Nababan, its general secretary in 1967–1984.³⁰

Although from the beginning the DGI already showed its concern and responsibility to humankind and to the life of the nation and society, this assembly was perceived by its members as a turning point in the orientation of church life, from a more future and other-worldly orientation to a more current-real-world-orientation. The address of this assembly stated:

We are called to take part responsibly in the efforts to free humankind from their suffering caused by backwardness, poverty, disease, fear and legal uncertainty. We are called to fully participate in endeavouring justice in all fields of life: in economics and politics, in inter-human and inter-group life, in the social order and international life. We are called to strive for the demolition of falseness,

³⁰ One of Nababan's writings on this issue is *Apa Kata Uppsala?*, Djakarta: BPK, 1969. During the late 1980s and 1990s there was a sharp conflict between Nababan and Soeharto and this brought complication and troubles into PGI as well as HKBP (where Nababan held the office of ephorus 1986–1998). For this see chapter thirteen.

hypocrisy, corruption and dishonesty. We are called to work hard to enhance the welfare of all humankind, physically and spiritually.³¹

Based on this new orientation, DGI and its members soon renewed the structure of their organisation and program and they formed some new working-units such as *Pelayanan Masyarakat Kota dan Industri* (Urban and Industrial Social Ministry) and *Departemen Pelayanan* (later *Partisipasi dalam Pembangunan* (Department of Participation in the Development). DGI also founded a Development Centre to provide and to train development motivators in its member churches, especially for rural development. For around twenty years, until the 1990s, there were hundreds of motivators working in their own churches or inter-church until the big-budget departments and development centres were liquidated in the late 1990s, also because of mistakes and internal problems in the DGI/PGI and its members. After all it had become a project-oriented, very bureaucratic and top-down approach. Finally the development concept was revised and assessed as having failed to achieve its goal.

The third CCS in 1976, the fourth in 1984, the fifth in 1989 and the sixth in 1993 (also attended by the Roman Catholics) as well as the eighth general assembly of the DGI in Salatiga 1976, the ninth in Tomohon 1980, the tenth in Ambon 1984, the eleventh in Surabaya 1989 and the twelfth in Jayapura 1994 still echoed the same spirit and understanding of the churches regarding their ecumenical calling in the life of the nation and society. But from time to time we may hear a more critical review and evaluation of the concept and program of development as implemented by the New Order government. Already in the third CCS of 1976 we hear some critical notes regarding the excesses and victims of the development:

All over the world as well as in our country, the hope for a better future is mixed with various restlessness, tension and worry. The expectation for a just and prosperous society that was raised by Pancasila and the development program itself is facing the reality of a widening gap between the rich and the poor. The appeal for a sober life is sounded in the midst of striking luxury, legal uncertainty and the more marginalised condition of the homeless, the prisoners and some other groups.³²

In tune with this, in two theological colloquia held by the DGI, *Pertemuan Gerejawi tentang Partisipasi Gereja dalam Pembangunan* (Sipoholon-Tarutung 1978) and *Konsultasi Teologi mengenai Partisipasi Gereja-gereja dalam Pembangunan* (Tentena-Central Sulawesi 1979), the attending churches focused

³¹ Quoted from *Notulen Sidang Raya ke-VII Dewan Gereja-gereja di Indonesia, 18-28 April 1971*, pp. 93-95; also quoted in: Aritonang (ed.) 2000:107-108.

³² Quoted from, *Melihat Tanda-tanda Jaman. Pengamalan Pancasila dalam Membangun Masa Depan. Laporan KGM Klender 15-21 Maret 1976*. Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 1976:97-99; also quoted in: Aritonang (ed.) 2000:110.

their attention on poverty as the impact of development and as a theological problem. One of the conclusions of the Tentena consultation said:

The churches now arrive at a point of history where the problem of poverty, or more accurately the poor and suffering people, is evident: shortage in food, clothes, education and knowledge, nutrition and health, and also diminished involvement in decision-making. All of these become a more challenging and urgent reality in the society and on all levels of life. The shortage situation also becomes a burning problem for the churches all over the country.³³

Reading those touching formulations may lead us to be impressed by the concern of the DGI and its members for the poverty and suffering of the people. Reality was not always such! The ninth general assembly at Tomohon (North Sulawesi) in 1980, for example, was marked by a quite luxurious opening ceremony, including expensive fireworks. Experiencing real poverty, and having total involvement and commitment to overcome it, is not as easy as making beautiful formulations. Anyway, DGI and the members continued to perceive *Pembangunan* as the key to abolishing poverty. The fourth CCS in Bali 1984 was held under the theme *Harapan dan Keprihatinan Bangsa dan Gereja Memasuki Akhir Abad ke-20* (Hope and Concern of Nation and Church Entering the End of the twentieth Century, then also used as the sub-theme of the tenth general assembly at Ambon) and the sub-theme *Panggilan Kita dalam Pembangunan Nasional sebagai Pengamalan Pancasila* (Our Calling in the National development as the Application of Pancasila).

This sub-theme was once again proposed by T.B. Simatupang and the key-formula, *Pembangunan Nasional sebagai Pengamalan Pancasila* (PNSPP), was maintained by the PGI and its members until the 1990s. Eka Darmaputera³⁴ even said that the success of PNSPP became one of the obsessions—not to say the only obsession—that Simatupang had until his death on 1 January 1990. Even the New Order government used this formula and put it into *Garis-garis Besar Haluan Negara* (Outlines of the Direction of the State) of 1988.³⁵ Notwithstanding their awareness and concern over the excesses and deviation of the development program, the member churches still wanted to express their conviction that development would be successful in bringing the nation and society to a take-off (*tinggal landas*)³⁶ for the achievement

³³ Quoted from, *Realisme yang Berpengharapan—Laporan Konsultasi Teologi mengenai Partisipasi Gereja-gereja dalam pembangunan, Tentena 1–5 April 1979*. Jakarta: DGI, 1981:226; also quoted in: Aritonang (ed.) 2000:112 and reviewed in Erari 1994:173–184.

³⁴ Eka Darmaputera is one of the most prominent Indonesian theologians. He was one of the chairpersons of the PGI in 1989–1994 and then became vice-chairperson of the Consultative Board of the PGI. He passed away in July 2005. See also his role and theological thinking in chapter sixteen.

³⁵ T.B. Simatupang 1987.

³⁶ This term became a very popular jargon term in 1980s in the documents of the government

of their dreams and ideals, on the condition that they were implemented as the application of Pancasila. Therefore it is not surprising that PGI and its members, or supporting-theologians, intensified their efforts to formulate the so-called *Teologi Pembangunan* or *Teologi Pancasila*. This was later used by the PGI and its members as an argument for accepting Pancasila as *satu-satunya asas dalam kehidupan bermasyarakat, berbangsa dan bernegara* (the only principle in the life of society, nation and state) and to put it into their respective constitutions, as was required by law No. 8/1985 regarding social organisations. When Indonesia eventually collapsed or crashed, wrecked by a multi-dimensional crisis from 1997 onwards, some claimed that the mistake was not in the *Pembangunan, Pancasila*, or the related theology, but because the government did not run the development as an application of Pancasila.

If we look into the statements of the fifth CCS of 1989 and the sixth of 1994, as well as the messages of the eleventh general assembly at Surabaya in 1989 and the twelfth at Jayapura in 1994, actually there were many warnings related to the more serious problems regarding poverty, social-political-economic injustice, violation of human rights, the destruction of the environment, to sum up: the failure of the development program. We might say that the PGI and its members, together with the other churches and denominations as an ecumenical body, have more or less fulfilled their prophetic task. Most of the warnings became reality during the crisis period. The question is how seriously the government heard and noticed the voice of Christians and the churches and how effective was the method they used to communicate their message? In line with this, it may be asked how consistently the Christians and churches in Indonesia keep their distance and their critical function towards the government, and how seriously do they apply all of their statements and messages themselves? This series of questions will later be elaborated further.

Not long after the sixth CCS and the twelfth general assembly, precisely from June 1996, many churches suffered material loss and even loss of life, caused by a series of conflicts, most of them having religious dimensions (see the following sub-section). While the conflicts were still burning, a series of crises, initiated by the monetary crisis from 1997, devastated the whole nation and brought a change of regime and era. In such a situation the PGI and the members, as well as the other churches and denominations, strove to continue their role and contribution in the life of the nation. The Roman Catholic Church through the KWI even showed a more critical attitude that frequently inspired the PGI and the members to follow. In a pastoral letter before the general election of 1997, for example, when some critics of the government

as well as the PGI. After the multi-dimensional crisis of 1997 onwards this term was downgraded to be *tinggal kandas* (crashed or stranded) or *tinggal di landasan* (left on the runway).

requested the people not to vote (*Golongan Putih, Golput*) the KWI said, “If you feel that you are not represented and you are confident with a clear and strong conscience that your dignity is not channelled, we can understand that you express your responsibility and freedom by not voting, and you are not sinning if you don’t give your vote.”³⁷

The end of the New Order regime and era and the rise of the Reformation era that was indicated by a series of very bloody riots in several cities in May 1998 did not automatically bring Indonesia to a better condition, even just the reverse. During around six years of the so-called Reformation era the conflicts were growing worse, and they often brought serious suffering and claimed victims among the Christians. In the midst of that situation the PGI and its members together with the Evangelicals, Pentecostals, Baptists, Adventist and Roman Catholics continued to show their concern and make their contribution. Sometimes the steps they took brought controversy among the Christians and the churches as might be seen in the delivery of a ‘tribute’ or donation in March 1998 while Indonesia was facing the peak of the crisis.³⁸

Through the seventh CCS in 1998 and the fourteenth general assembly at Palangkaraya (Central Kalimantan) in 2000, under the theme “Seek for God that you will live” (Amos 5:6^a) and the sub-theme “Our calling to be together overcoming the crisis of the society and the nation,” the PGI and its members called themselves and the whole nation to self-examination and to show a sense of crisis and of urgency. They also appealed to the other faiths, especially the Muslim community, not to be trapped by emotional behaviour or by a certain destructive design and action that would bring the nation to total construction. By observing this we turn to the following sub-section.

*Relationship and dialogue with people of other faiths*³⁹

Among the mission societies that participated in the International Missionary Conferences until 1938 there was a perception that the other faiths were objects of evangelisation (read: Christianisation). The churches in Indonesia also inherited this perception. No wonder then that in the mission era (before 1942) as well as in the period after Indonesian independence there was much

³⁷ *Keprihatinan dan Harapan (Surat Gambala Prapaskah)*. Jakarta: KWI, 1997. Also quoted in: Aritonang 2004:515. This letter was criticised by the government.

³⁸ At that time a group of church leaders from various organisations and denominations, at the initiative of some Evangelical and Pentecostal businessmen, visited President Soeharto in his palace to submit an amount of money and gold to express the concern and responsibility of the Christians and the churches regarding the crisis then occurring. Soelarso Sopater, chairperson of the PGI in the period 1989–2000, submitted the ‘tribute’ on behalf of the delegates, but he denied that he did it on behalf of the PGI and that it was his initiative to make the visit.

³⁹ The content of this section is mainly based on Djaka Soetapa’s article in Aritonang (ed.) 2000:165–216 and Aritonang 2004: esp. chapter IV–VI. See also chapter six of this book.

tension caused by such a perception. This tension, especially between Islam and Christianity, was intensified by the issue of the *dasar negara* (the foundation of the state): Islam or Pancasila? During the Japanese and 'Old Order' or Soekarno era (1942–1965) the tension and conflict were more in formal and official forums, (BPUPKI/PPKI and the Konstituante).⁴⁰ But since the beginning of the New Order or Soeharto era the tension and conflict became more openly expressed and involved common people. As already mentioned, in 1967 the *Peristiwa Makassar*⁴¹ broke out, and this incident was followed by many other conflicts.

Since the beginning of its existence the DGI with its members paid attention to this issue of inter-faith relationships especially with Islam. In its first (founding) conference in 1950 one of the topics discussed dealt with the *Kementeriaan Agama* (Ministry or Department of Religious Affairs). A number of participants expressed their concern that this department would lead Indonesia to become an Islamic state. In the second conference in 1953 one of the sections reported that there was a serious effort by certain Muslims to create an Islamic state where Islamic law would be applied. Based on this report, the conference issued a resolution regarding religious freedom (referring to article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights) and the Department of Religious Affairs. This second conference also arrived at a conclusion that the Christians and the churches in Indonesia were always called to proclaim the gospel to other faiths with an understanding that the core and the secret of the gospel proclamation are love for God and love for fellow humans. A similar concern was shown in the third conference in 1956; this conference arrived at a common consciousness and responsibility to see the whole country as only one evangelisation field.⁴²

Notwithstanding certain tensions in the inter-faith encounter, especially in Christian and Muslim relations, during the Old Order era there was a common impression that the relationship between the Christians and the government was quite intimate. Soekarno put trust in a number of Christian leaders in his government (although not all of them represented *Parkindo*, the Christian political party), among others Dr. Johannes Leimena, Arnold Mononutu, Herling Laoh, H. Johannes, and Dr. Ferdinand L. Tobing. Leimena, an outstanding *Parkindo* figure, even became the second Vice-Prime Minister and was several times appointed to be acting President. Soekarno also attended

⁴⁰ The destruction and loss caused by the Darul Islam/Tentara Islam Indonesia (DI/TII) to a number of Christians and churches in several regions were not perceived as part of an Islam-Christianity conflict in this country, because it was caused by a separatist movement; see further in: Aritonang 2004:292–303.

⁴¹ A short description of this incident is summarised in Aritonang 2004:383–388. See here chapter six.

⁴² PGI 1996a:58–151, summarised in: Aritonang 2004:289–2891.

and gave a speech at several important church events, such as the third and the fifth conference of the DGI in 1956 and 1964, the inaugural conference of the East Asia Christian Conference at Parapat (North Sumatra) in 1957, and in the centennial jubilee of HKBP at Tarutung (North Sumatra) in 1961. Therefore it is not surprising that the Christians (including Catholics) in 1963 endorsed a proposal to appoint Soekarno as president-for-life.⁴³

When Soekarno's regime ended and was replaced by Soeharto's New Order, there was an expectation among certain Muslim circles that their place and role in the government would become greater. But then they were disappointed to see that so many Christian leaders were given positions of trust in the cabinets from the very beginning of that New Order regime. Even more than the various causes that triggered a number of open conflicts from 1967 on, including the bloody *Peristiwa Makassar* of 1 October 1967, that fact motivated certain Muslim groups and leaders to express their disappointment and also their objections to the strategies of the Christians, including the so-called Christianisation of Indonesia, soon after the abortive coup of 30 September/ 1 October 1965.

The rising tension between Christians and Muslims, caused by and following the Makassar incident, led the government to take the initiative to hold a *Musyawaharah Antar Umat Beragama* (Inter-religious Consultation) in Jakarta on 30 November 1967, followed by a series of regional consultations in several cities such as Garut (West Java). In the 30 November consultation President Soeharto and the Minister of Religious Affairs K.H.M. Dachlan proposed a concept of 'religious harmony' that basically provided that religious propagation should not directed to people already adhering to a religion, and should not raise conflict among adherents.⁴⁴ The Muslim side gladly hailed this proposal; they even provided a concept of a Joint Charter and Declaration of Islam and Christianity on Religious Harmony. The Christian side accepted most of the content of the concept except one clause, "*tidak menjadikan umat yang beragama sebagai sasaran penyebaran agama masing-masing*" (not to make another religion's adherents a target of the religious propagation) because they understood that this clause meant that Christian mission or evangelisation or Islamic *dakwah* could only be aimed to deepen their own adherents' faith. The Christians (Protestant as well as Catholic) argued that the Christian religion is a missionary religion and all mankind have a right to choose and to change their religion.⁴⁵

⁴³ See further in: Aritonang 2004:335–337 and 348–354.

⁴⁴ The religions meant, and recognised by the government, are Islam, Christianity [Protestant], Catholicism, Hinduism and Buddhism. The local or tribal religions were later asked to choose and integrate themselves to one of these official religions.

⁴⁵ These inter-faith consultations are summarised in: Aritonang 2004:389–393.

Consequently this consultation failed to agree, or to produce a code of ethics of religious propagation, and the Muslim side reacted sharply to this failure. They blamed the Christian side for it, since the Christians were intolerant. But the Christian side did not accept this accusation; they agreed that improper tactics such as persuading, forcing, or giving some material aid should be prohibited, but they could not accept a situation in which they were prohibited from obeying the divine commandment to proclaim the gospel to all mankind. The tension caused by the failure of the consultation heightened when the Minister of Religious Affairs and the Minister of Internal Affairs issued the already-mentioned Joint Decision/Instruction No. 1/1969 regarding requirement for building places of worship. The failure of the consultation also brought Christian-Muslim relations into a more and more complicated situation in the future. But, on the other hand, this consultation has motivated and encouraged both sides to work more intensively to know and to understand each other. This consultation became the starting point of a series of efforts and activities in consultations and dialogue that followed on a local, regional, national and even international level.

The rising religious tension, especially the Christian-Muslim relationship in the 1960s and the need to build a dialogue occurred not only in Indonesia but also in many other countries. That is why at last, from 1970 onwards, there was a series of international dialogues initiated or sponsored by various international institutions, among others the WCC. For example, in 1970 an international religious dialogue was held in Ajaltoun (Lebanon), attended by the representatives of four religions (Christian, Muslim, Hindu and Buddhist). Mukti Ali and Peter D. Latuihamallo represented Indonesia.⁴⁶ A similar conference was held by the WCC in cooperation with two study institutions from England in 1976 at Chambésy, Switzerland, attended by two Indonesian representatives, H.M. Rasjidi and Ihromi.⁴⁷

There have been hundreds (not to say thousands) of interfaith consultations or dialogue forums held from the beginning of the New Order era up to the so-called Reformation era, especially between Christianity and Islam. There were also uncountable writings on this issue, irrespective of what the

⁴⁶ Mukti Ali, Minister of Religious Affairs, 1971–1978 and professor of Comparative Religion at State Islamic Institute *Sunan Kalijaga* Yogyakarta, deserves to be called “Bapak Dialogue” (father of dialogue) in Indonesia. During his ministry the inter-religious relationship, esp. Christian-Muslim, was quite encouraging. P.D. Latuihamallo at that time was chairperson of the DGI.

⁴⁷ H.M. Rasjidi was the first Minister of Religious Affairs (1946 onwards) in his early thirties, later he became a professor at Indonesia University-Jakarta. He was very critical of a number of government policies suspected to have been influenced by the Christians, such as the already-mentioned draft of Marriage Law of 1973, and on certain manoeuvres of the Christians in the political field as well as in religious propaganda. Ihromi was a professor of the Old Testament at Jakarta Theological Seminary and came from a Muslim background.

authors meant by dialogue. There were even a number of interfaith institutions founded to handle this issue. But as a matter of fact conflicts containing religious dimensions and even riots were rising, with accumulating effects. Therefore it is not surprising that some critical questions were expressed: for what purpose are all these consultations or conferences of dialogue? Is it not a waste of time, funds and energy? Are they not just a mask or camouflage to hide certain intentions and plans of the respective sides that are frequently contrary to what they were addressing in such a dialogue forum? On the other hand some activists and protagonists of dialogue replied that simply because there were still numbers of conflicts and riots we still need, and have to continue, dialogues to express our respective opinions, convictions, identities and feelings as well as to undertake self criticism and introspection. It was, however, realised that many of the dialogues were initiated and sponsored by the government and had a political agenda behind them, so that it was difficult to come to a genuine and authentic dialogue.

In such a situation and condition the DGI/PGI through its research and development department (*Lembaga Penelitian dan Studi*, later changed to *Badan Penelitian dan Pengembangan*, Balitbang), from 1981, held a series of *Seminar Agama-agama* (Seminars on Religions) that were essentially a forum of interfaith dialogue. Besides inviting participants and speakers from all the 'official' religions, this seminar also aimed to equip and to train students from a number of theological schools (especially members of *Persetia*) in interfaith knowledge and the skills of dialogue. Each seminar was held under a certain theme, such as "Review of Islam from various aspects" (1981), "The development of the Islamic movement and thinking in Indonesia" (1982), "Religion and Modernisation" (1985), "Morality and Ethics in Nation-Building" (1987), "Environment and National Development" (1988), "Spirituality in Modern Society" (1989), "Religion and Economic Development" (1991), "Pluralism and Democracy" (1992), "Religions and Cultural Challenge" (1994), "Religions towards the third millennium" (1996), and "Religions, Violence and Peace in the Reformation Era" (1999).

Closing his review of the seminars held in 1981–1999, Djaka Soetapa concludes that through these seminars it was shown that religions have the same agenda and concerns that are based on humanity and have a divine dimension. All religions have an aspiration to manage these agendas and concerns and therefore, if conflicts with religious dimension occurred then the religions deny and disappoint their own calling.⁴⁸ Although this series of seminars has not yet shown its real contribution for promoting more harmony and mutual understanding the PGI and its members persist in accepting their share of

⁴⁸ Soetapa's review and conclusion is summarised in: Aritonang 2004:497–511.

the responsibility in building and enhancing a more conducive and healthier inter-religious relationship.⁴⁹

*Environmental concern*⁵⁰

In line with WCC's concern, shown since its fourth general assembly in Uppsala 1968, and culminating in the sixth general assembly in Vancouver 1983 under the theme "Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation" (JPIC), DGI/PGI began to show its concern for environmental issues from 1970, through a special conference, the above-mentioned Cipayung Conference, and at its seventh general assembly at Pematangsiantar in 1971. This environmental concern was related to the development program of the government, since development frequently brought destruction to the environment. The third CCS in 1976 had already reaffirmed that science and technology had to be used for the welfare, peace, justice, and sister/brotherhood of all nations and for the conservation of nature and the environment.

This concern was intensified during 1980s as expressed in the ninth general assembly of the DGI in the 1980 and in the fourth CCS in 1984. The eighth Seminar on Religions in 1988 took the JPIC theme seriously. The PGI even held a national consultation on JPIC at Salatiga (Central Java) in 1989 as a preparation for the fifth CCS in the same year. After describing many cases of environmental destruction this fifth CCS formulated the responsibility of the churches in Indonesia among other things as follows:

The churches together with all their members and networks ought to start solemnly accepting the responsibility as humans and fellow creatures to apply the Word of God i.e. to maintain the integrity of creation, justice and peace, as their attitude of worship. This assumes that the churches together with all their components are aware of their role to obey God's covenant that is simultaneously an invitation to all human beings and creatures and to accept the reconciliation made by the Giver of Life, Jesus Christ.⁵¹

Following this statement, the CCS proposed to the PGI and its members a set program on Integrity of Creation, Justice and Peace, consisting of conscientisation, confession of the sin of destroying the environment, Bible study on this theme, formation of working groups to handle and elaborate the issues

⁴⁹ For 2005 PGI plans to hold such a seminar under a theme "Theodicy and Theology of Disaster" inspired by the tsunami and earthquake disasters at the end of December 2004 and March 2005, besides some "social disasters" like those in Papua and Poso-Central Sulawesi."

⁵⁰ A summary of this topic prepared by Robert P. Borrang in: Aritonang (ed.) 2000:147–54. A detailed description could be found in the minutes of various conferences and assemblies held by the DGI/PGI since 1970s.

⁵¹ *Visi Baru untuk Era Baru dengan Generasi Baru—Laporan Konferensi Nasional Gereja dan Masyarakat V, PGI, 18–21 April 1989, di Wisma Kinasih, Caringin-Bogor.* Jakarta: Akademi Leimena PGI, 1989:109.

related to the theme, building of networking with any groups or institutions that have the same concern, and initiating study and action on environmental issues. This statement and programme proposal was discussed and sharpened further in PGI's twelfth general assembly at Jayapura in 1994. One of the concrete decisions of this assembly was to establish a special foundation with the main task of handling any kind of environmental destruction and disaster. The implementation of this decision was fulfilled in 1996 by establishing the *Yayasan Tanggul Bencana* (the Foundation to Handle Disaster).⁵²

This environmental concern was also inserted by Persetia (the association of theological schools) into its considerations and program. In 1999 its Study Institute, in cooperation with the *Badan Penelitian dan Pengembangan* (Research and Development Unit) of the PGI, set up a special syllabus on environmental concerns in the curriculum, with an expectation that every graduate of a theological school will have a strong environmental awareness and attention that in turn will be applied and developed in their ministry among the people and the churches.

The PGI's thirteenth assembly at Palangkaraya in 2000 also pushed the churches and society to deepen their understanding and to enhance their action on the human rights and environmental issues. This assembly even endorsed the PGI's setting up of a special unit to handle environmental issues, namely the *Badan Pemberdayaan dan Advokasi Lingkungan Hidup di Indonesia* (Unit of Empowerment and Advocacy of Environment in Indonesia), while it also underlined the Persetia program of including Environmental Education in the curriculum of theological schools.

The most fundamental theological concept of the PGI and the church-members regarding this environmental concern is formulated in one of the Documents of Church Unity, the *Pemahaman Bersama Iman Kristen*, chapter II: Creation and Conservation. How far this concept and the program derived from it were implemented and brought improvement to the environment in Indonesia is still to be discussed and observed, because up to the present moment the destruction of environment and the exploitation of natural resources is still going on, and even worsens from time to time.

*Information, publication and communication*⁵³

From the very beginning there was a consciousness that the growth and the progress of the ecumenical movement should be publicly and widely exposed

⁵² This foundation, although by incident split from PGI in early 2005, was trusted by overseas partners coordinated by ACT (Action by the Churches Together) to participate in the recovery of post-tsunami disaster program in Aceh and Nias.

⁵³ On this subject see also chapters sixteen and twenty-one.

and communicated, not only to the church and Christian circles but also to the whole nation. Therefore already in the first conference of the DGI there was a special commission to set up a plan in this regard, among other ways by using radio broadcasting and printed mass media already available. The DGI and the member churches intentionally used these media not only as agencies to give information about what they were doing but also to proclaim the gospel based on the consciousness and understanding that the whole nation and country was an open field of evangelisation.

Until early in the 1960s the publications of the DGI as well as of its members were very limited, in line with the still limited development of information and publication technology. Some of the debates in the churches were published in the form of books or booklets by *Badan Penerbit Kristen*, a Christian publishing house already formed in 1946 while the churches prepared the founding of a national council or chamber (see section 2). But since the mid 1960s there was remarkable progress. Some church leaders, including those who were sitting in the structure of the DGI, started a Christian newspaper called *Sinar Harapan* (Rays of Hope) besides continuing to use the other printed media to expose churches' and DGI's activities, programs, statements and ideas. Parallel with this they also launched a Christian-flavoured popular-science monthly, *Ragi Buana* (Yeast of the World) in 1967.⁵⁴

Not long after the opening of the government TV broadcasting (*TVRI*) in 1962, the DGI and the churches used a programme slot every Sunday afternoon, called *Mimbar Agama Kristen* (Pulpit of Christian Religion). In the course of time DGI had to share it with some other denominations outside the DGI, such as Roman Catholic, Pentecostal, Adventist and Baptist. The sharing also contributed to the enhancement of cooperation among these churches. Meanwhile, in the 1970s, the DGI/PGI formed a special unit (then reconstituted as an autonomous foundation called *Yayasan Komunikasi Masyarakat*, or *Yakoma*) to prepare and manage the TV program package, not only broadcast by TVRI but also by a number of private TV stations that have flourished since the 1980s. Yakoma also provided various programs in the field of communication such as the training of TV-drama actors, writers, reporters, and the publishing of some books along with a bulletin named *Komunikasi*.⁵⁵ Since the late 1990s the content of this bulletin and the statements of Yakoma

⁵⁴ This *Reader's Digest*-style magazine only persisted until the early 1980s, whereas the similar magazine, *Intisari*, from the Catholic-Gramedia-Kompas group, persists and even flourishes up to the present moment.

⁵⁵ More detailed information on Yakoma as well as the other foundations or working units under the umbrella of the DGI/PGI can be found in the annual report or five-year report of the DGI/PGI such as *Dari Salatiga ke Tomohon* (1980), *Dari Tomohon ke Ambon* (1984), *Dari Ambon ke Surabaya* (1989), *Dari Surabaya ke Jayapura* (1994), *Dari Jayapura ke Palangkaraya* (2000) and *Dari Palangkaraya ke Kinasih-Caringin-Bogor* (2004).

as well, quite frequently criticized the policies and decisions of the PGI. This is only a small example from a huge and complicated complex of problems faced by the PGI since then.

Besides opening an Information Office, since the 1970s the DGI/PGI has also published its official monthly, *Berita Oikoumene*. Actually this was expected to be a public magazine, but since it mainly contained reports of the activities of the DGI/PGI and its members, or articles written by their leaders or thinkers for church consumption, and because it was not managed professionally, this magazine could not flourish. Occasionally, particularly during the era of external (national) and internal crisis, it got into difficulties due to financial problems and could only be re-issued after some incentives from the PGI's home or overseas supporters.

During the period of the 1970s to the 1990s the DGI/PGI also diligently published the documents of its meetings, conferences, assemblies, and the compilation of its statements regarding various themes, through BPK Gunung Mulia or through its own office. These statements, including Christmas and Easter Messages and pastoral letters on certain issues or incidents, were usually circulated by mail to all members and to many other Christian organisations. Since 1994 the PGI also used Internet facilities and provided a website to communicate faster and more efficiently. Unfortunately this website was also not handled professionally so that the users have no access to up to date news. Similar conditions can also be found regarding some other church or ecumenical communions. Fortunately there are many other Christian media or communication agencies, especially those managed by the Catholics that steadily grow and even show significant progress in terms of quantity as well as quality.

Reviewing various kinds of media and methods used by the DGI/PGI and some other church or ecumenical institutions, and seeing how diligently they formulated attractive statements, it appears likely that they should have been playing an important role in communicating Christian vision, mission and ideas to the whole nation, including a prophetic and priestly voice dealing with so many crucial issues and problems in this country. Surprisingly, or regretfully, there are still complaints that DGI/PGI as well as the other so-called ecumenical organisations could not communicate their message clearly and effectively to the people and the government.⁵⁶ Some observers argued that it is actually quite normal and natural, since the percentage of Christians is very small while the current society and government are dominated by Muslim or secular ideas. Moreover PGI and other ecumenical bodies have no power to

⁵⁶ This sort of complaint is frequently expressed in many Christian meetings and gatherings, even those held by the DGI/PGI itself or together with some other organisations.

make their voice or opinion and standpoint heard and followed by anyone. There must be, however, some other causes that make the existence and the role of the PGI and other ecumenical communions not very widely felt and meaningful. We will try to trace them in the following, and final, section.

Some Current Problems and Struggles

Since the 1970s there were many criticisms directed against the DGI/PGI. The presence of some other 'ecumenical' bodies among the Protestant churches (PII, DPI/PGPI, PBI and others) can also be understood as an expression of dissatisfaction with the performance of the DGI/PGI, or with its failure to embrace and unite all [Protestant] churches in this country, although on the other hand there are more and more Evangelical and Pentecostal churches who have joined this communion.⁵⁷ Corresponding to this is the theological colour or tendency of the DGI/PGI. When it was founded, the DGI adopted and inherited the theology of the mission societies and their founding churches that was more or less the combination of orthodox Protestantism and Pietism-Revivalism. But then gradually the theology of the WCC that was commonly known as ecumenical, became more dominant, and in the eyes of the Evangelicals and Pentecostals this tended to liberal or horizontal-oriented. Even members of DGI/PGI—mostly traditional and regional or ethnic churches—did not easily understand and follow the new theology. That is, among other factors, the reason why the members of the DGI/PGI as well as the regional communions (*PGI Wilayah*) could not easily implement the decisions of the DGI/PGI, including the LDKG/DKG, although they theoretically participated and were involved in the process of decision-making.

Together with this theological problem the PGI and its members struggled with many other problems. We will only highlight some of the striking issues that especially appear in the last ten years (1995–2005).

The fading and disorientation of the ecumenical spirit

One of the sharpest criticisms thrown at the PGI is that it more and more tends to be bureaucratic and institutional. In the centralistic-formalistic structure of the PGI the ecumene lost its *élan vital* and spirit as a movement. It

⁵⁷ In 2005 there are 81 member-churches of PGI (including *Gereja Kristen Timor Timur* that *de facto* already changed its name after the independence of Timor Leste in 1999), compared to 27 at the time of its forming in 1950. Around 20 of these 81 churches can also be categorised as Evangelical and/or Pentecostal. Besides, joining the DGI/PGI certain churches, like *Gereja Bethel Indonesia*, also join PII and/or the DPI/PGPI. The growing number of the DGI/PGI members cannot be always be perceived as the enhancement of the ecumenical spirit among the churches, because some of the new members are the products of schism.

was indeed realised that the unity of the church does not mean uniformity and does not necessarily lead the churches in Indonesia to be institutionally one church. It was also understood that the PGI is not a super-church above all of its member-churches. The tendency of institutionalisation, however, was quite strong especially since the 1970s. The organisation of the DGI/PGI became very big. Under the general assembly there are a central committee, an executive committee, departments and bureaus, about twenty foundations, and a number of working groups. On the one hand this caused inertia in its action and in making decisions, while on the other hand it seduced many church leaders or activists to pursue full-time positions, especially during the boom-time of overseas grants.

When the PGI celebrated its jubilee in 2000 there was a gloomy atmosphere. Besides lamenting the result of nominations (see below) there was the awareness and anxiety that not only the PGI but also the ecumenical movement as a whole was threatened and could become disoriented and fade away. To avoid this some observers gathered in a series of meetings on the revitalisation of the ecumenical movement in Indonesia, and the result was published in a book. In that meeting it was stated that the ecumenical movement in Indonesia—including the PGI—needed re-evaluation, redefinition, revitalisation, reorientation and reformation.⁵⁸ Corresponding to this 5R, it was stated that:

The problem that particularly needs to get attention in this 5R movement is a paradigm change from an exclusive ecumenical movement to an inclusive ecumenical movement; from an inward-looking ecumenical movement to an outward-looking ecumenical movement. The fifty years journey of the ecumenical movement in Indonesia, especially motored by PGI, tends to be exclusive and narrowing, it only viewed a unity of church organisation, which is in fact not achieved yet. An outward movement, to the society (outward looking), is still getting very minimal attention and therefore the ecumenical movement became weak.⁵⁹

To recover the ecumenical spirit and orientation, while entering the twenty first century, the meeting recommended some agenda issues, among others to redefine the vision and mission of the PGI, to leave the centralistic approach and to develop the principle of decentralization and regional autonomy, and to plan a systematic cadre-forming through the so-called ecumene-education.

The crisis of leadership and trust

In spite of many shortcomings and the weakness of the ecumenical movement in general and the DGI/PGI in particular, during the almost forty years of its presence the DGI/PGI has had quite strong leaders and leadership. Some leaders like T.S. Gunung Mulia, Simon Marantika, W.J. Rumambi, J.L.Ch.

⁵⁸ Robert P. Borrang and Supardan (eds) 2001:17–20.

⁵⁹ Robert P. Borrang and Supardan (eds) 2001:18.

Abineno, P.D. Latuihamallo, T.B. Simatupang, S.A.E. Nababan and Fridolin Ukur were well-known persons with integrity. They were also successful in building a networking with and trust from many circles. Sularso Sopater was actually a good, very fatherly leader and a man with integrity, although he was incidentally trapped in the case of the “tribute to the palace.” With their leadership at least the Christians and the church-members of the DGI/PGI have boldness and self-esteem when they were facing serious problems or pressure regarding the existence of the Christians in this country.

But during the period of 2000–2004/5 the PGI faced a serious crisis of leadership and trust, and this had a close connection with the result of nominations in the thirteenth general assembly at Palangkaraya in 2000. At this assembly, through an abnormal (not to say amoral) process of nomination Natan Setiabudi was elected as the general chairperson. This aroused a protest from a number of church leaders and activists that was expressed in a press release.⁶⁰ In the press release it was stated that the process and result of the nomination jeopardized the future of the ecumenical movement in general and the PGI in particular, and was also contrary to the spirit of reformation that was blossoming in this country.

In fact Natan Setiabudi held the position although his term together with the other executive committee members had to be a little shortened through an accelerated general assembly in December 2004 (instead of March 2005). During his leadership there were many problems, among others: he could not properly cooperate with the general secretary, Ishak Panumbu Lambe. Their conflict and disagreement had actually started a few years before but then sharpened during their term as the two key persons in the PGI. Also, many member-churches that did not elect Natan also did not support him or have trust in him.

This non-conducive situation in turn brought the PGI as well as the ecumenical atmosphere and performance to its nadir. The PGI could not set up its operational program and could not give a verifiable financial report, including the use of funds from partners. Eukumindo, an ecumenical body in Europe that has gathered and represented PGI’s church-partners in Europe from the 1970s, no longer put trust in the PGI and blocked the designated funds. As a matter of fact this unaccountability had already been shown by the PGI for a long time, especially since the early 1990s, and this was the main cause of the

⁶⁰ “Press Release Pernyataan Keprihatinan Komunitas untuk Reformasi Gereja mengenai Situasi Persekutuan Gereja-gereja di Indonesia (PGI) dan majelis Pekerja Harian (MPH) saat ini,” 27 April 2000. This document was, among others, signed by S.A.E. Nababan, Eka Darmaputera, Septemmy Lakawa (see chapter sixteen), Febry Tetelepta (a young leader) and Luhut M.P. Pangaribuan (a famous lawyer). It was accompanied by a note written by Febry Tetelepta, “Catatan tentang Politisasi Kinerja Panitia Nominasi dalam Sidang Raya XIII PGI, 24–32 Maret 2000, di Palangkaraya.” (n.d.).

dismissal of the *Departemen Partisipasi dalam Pembangunan* (Department of Participation in the Development, *Depparpem*), a department in the PGI that made use of a large amount of money to finance a number of development projects ran by the PGI and its members. In all events this case of internal conflict and distrust in the period 2000–2004 sank the PGI into even deeper mire.

The Christians and churches in and outside the PGI have a big expectation that the result of the general assembly in December 2004, including the nomination and election of the new executive committee, with Andreas A. Yewangoe as the general chairperson and Richard M. Daulay as the general secretary, can recover strong leadership, trust and accountability. Time and history will be the witnesses of their success or failure. This, however, does not only depend on their strong cooperation and leadership, but also on the commitment of the churches together to continue and to enhance the quality of the ecumenical movement.

The financial dependency on foreign/international partners

In line with its growth and widening task to promote the ecumenical movement and spirit, the DGI/PGI needed greater and greater funds. An appeal was made to the members to contribute an annual membership fee, but this amounts to almost nothing compared to the mounting budget, even if all members paid duly and fully. There are, of course, a number of dedicated home supporters—businessmen and the like—who have donated to the DGI/PGI or to other ecumenical bodies, but usually they give it incidentally so that those bodies cannot rely upon them for their regular budget. Regarding the approximately twenty foundations under the umbrella of the PGI, there are a few that are already financially self-reliant, like the *Yayasan Rumah Sakit PGI Cikini* (Cikini PGI Hospital Foundation). Some foundations are autonomous and raise their own funds, including funds from overseas resources; examples are *Yakoma* and *Yayasan Tanggul Bencana*. There are even some foundations, like the *Yayasan Oikoumene*, that were particularly founded to manage the endowment funds (formerly granted by some overseas partners) or to manage a number of properties (like the guesthouse in Jakarta and the conference resort in Cipayang) that in turn provide some amount of funding to back up the program and regular expenses of the PGI. From time to time, however, especially in this last ten years, the PGI had to rely upon the support or donations of its overseas partners to finance its program. Meanwhile the PGI's financial condition and reports showed a serious deficit that also needs overseas help to cover.⁶¹

⁶¹ See PGI's financial reports at the thirteenth and fourteenth assemblies in 2000 and 2004, as

As already noted, one of the causes of the deficit was the financial unaccountability and mismanagement, not to say fraud by certain personnel. During these last years there was also a consciousness that the PGI has to go back to basics, that is to foster and to preserve the spirit and fire of the ecumenical movement, and not to act too much as a sort of holding company. In line with a new *Undang-undang Yayasan* (Law on Foundations), gradual steps are being taken to reduce the number of foundations that have no direct link with the 'core business' of the PGI, or that have potential to maintain their existence and task independently of the PGI. Parallel with this, soon after the fourteenth general assembly of 2004 the PGI held a management and organisational assessment and capacity-building training to improve its performance and capacity.⁶² With these steps it is expected that in the future the PGI can show a better accountability and credibility and also become more financially self-reliant.

Relationship and interaction with the government and political powers

As repeatedly shown, from the very beginning implementation of the ecumenical movement and spirit, especially as carried out by the DGI/PGI, frequently had to do with the government. This is one of the consequences of taking over the task of the *Zendingsconsulaat*, as well as the policy of the government, at least until the middle of the New Order Era, that the DGI/PGI represented the Protestants in dealing with the government. That was the reason why during the Old Order and until the middle of the New Order era one person from the DGI/PGI (usually the chairperson) became a member of the *Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat* (MPR, People's Assembly).

There was no single picture of this relationship. Not infrequently the relationship was very close and warm (we remember Soekarno). Even during the New Order era that was marked by so many incidents and conflicts, at least until the late 1980s the relationship was quite friendly. There were almost no large ecumenical and church events that were not attended by government officers, who were also asked to give a speech or address. This habit or custom also occurred—and not infrequently in more striking form—in the Evangelical and Pentecostal circles. But as we have already seen there were also many cases that showed a high level of tension or even conflict between the DGI/PGI and/or its members and the government. The HKBP case in 1992–1998 is one of the very striking examples, besides those involving the GKI Papua and the GKST Central Sulawesi around 1998–2004.

well as at the annual reports in the annual meeting of *Sidang Majelis Pekerja Lengkap* (Central Working Committee Meeting).

⁶² Therefore in February 2005 PGI—helped by WCC and CCA—invited Leo Basyham (a management consultant hired by WCC) and Tony Waworuntu (one of the associate secretaries in CCA).

For financial needs the DGI/PGI, like many churches and Christian organisations, also frequently asked for government contributions or donations; if not from the government institution itself support was expected from the officials, especially those who were Christian.⁶³ This habit made it difficult for the PGI and the leaders of member churches to show and maintain a critical standpoint. As for Simatupang's "tetra-words" i.e. positive, creative, realistic and critical, the last word was frequently neglected. For the future it is still a big question whether the PGI and all ecumenical bodies, together with the churches in this country, have a boldness and toughness sufficient to keep a distance from those holding power, without becoming 'rebel priests,' or continuing to rely upon the protection and backup of the government, while the government tends to be more Islamic. It is, of course, possible that by building a close relationship with the government the churches and the ecumenical bodies are also building a more harmonious relationship with the other faiths, especially Islam. But many examples from the history of this country show that the Islamic members of the government were not always from the moderate and inclusive line.

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CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

THE SPECTACULAR GROWTH OF THE THIRD STREAM: THE EVANGELICALS AND PENTECOSTALS

The term “Evangelical” has a very broad meaning and scope. Many mainline¹ churches in Indonesia, for example GMIM, GMIT, GMIH, GMIST, GMIBM, and *GKI di Tanah Papua* (formerly *GKI di Irian Jaya*), use this term (in Indonesian *I* stands for *Injili*) as more or less equal with “Protestant” (cf. the term *Evangelisch* in the German Church, i.e. *Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland*, and *Evangelis* used by another mainline church in Indonesia, GKE).² In its very essence, every church actually may claim to be Evangelical. But what we mean by this term or category in this chapter is Christianity or churches identified by a conservative-evangelical character, although there is also a wide range of variety among them.³ Some of the ‘mother missions’ came from Europe, but most of them came from the USA; therefore to a certain extent they have a close affinity to the fundamentalism that emerged in the USA in the early twentieth century, besides inheriting the eighteenth century Pietistic and Revival spirituality which was also inherited by the mainline churches through their founding European missionary societies.⁴

The gathering organisations

Most of the Evangelical churches or denominations have joined in a special council called the *Persekutuan Injili Indonesia* (PII; Indonesia Evangelical Communion, founded in 1971), whereas the Pentecostal churches mostly are members of the *Persekutuan Gereja-gereja Pantekosta di Indonesia* (PGPI;

¹ ‘Mainline’ or ‘mainstream’ is actually a rather vague term. It is usually understood as a stream or cluster covering the churches faithful to the orthodox Reformation teachings, like Lutheran and Reformed or Calvinist. But in the further development the Methodist, and in some countries the Anglican, Baptist and the Mennonite are also included as mainline. We use this term here artificially just to make an arbitrary distinction between the ‘traditional churches’ (those that were founded by the European missions, especially coming from Lutheran and Reformed traditions) and the ‘new churches’ (those mainly founded by the American missions).

² See the abbreviations about the names.

³ One of the definitions among the Evangelicals is as follows: Evangelicals are those who accept (1) the authority of the Scripture as the Word of God; (2) the essential nature of the atonement of Christ and an existential saving encounter with the Holy Spirit; and (3) the obligation of the church to evangelise non-Christians throughout the world. Arthur F. Glasser 1993, as quoted in: Albert R. Konaniah 1995.

⁴ Cf. Ellingsen 1988.

Communion of the Pentecostal Churches in Indonesia, 2001; formerly *Dewan Pantekosta Indonesia*, DPI, founded in 1979). There are also some Pentecostal churches in the PII, because they also claim or confess themselves as Evangelical (although some Evangelical theologians disagree with such a claim). Some of them have even joined the *Persekutuan Gereja-gereja di Indonesia* (PGI, where most of the members are mainline churches; see chapter seventeen), because they also claim to be bearers of the ecumenical spirit.

But not all Evangelical churches link up with the PII (up to 2001 there were 84 churches and mission agencies that had become full members). An example is the *Gereja Reformed Injili Indonesia* (GRII, the Evangelical Reformed Church in Indonesia, see below). On the other hand some of its members also join the ecumenical national council of churches (PGI), for example the *Gereja Kristus Tuhan* (GKT, the Church of Christ the Lord), officially founded in 1968 in Lawang, East Java (which also inherited and absorbed Methodist and Presbyterian traditions from the USA), *Gereja Kristen Anugerah* (GKA, the Grace Christian Church, Jakarta 1968), *Gereja Kristen Kalam Kudus* (GKKK, the Christian Church of the Holy Word, Jakarta 1973), *Gereja Kristen Injili Indonesia* (GKII, the Evangelical Christian Church in Indonesia, Bengkulu 1967), *Gereja Kristen Injili di Indonesia* (Gekisia, the Evangelical Christian Church in Indonesia, Bengkulu 1985, as a split off from GKII), *Gereja Kristen Setia Indonesia* (GKSI, the Faithful Christian Church in Indonesia, Jakarta 1988), *Gereja Kristen Perjanjian Baru* (GKPB, the New Testament Christian Church, Surabaya 1989), and *Gereja Keesaan Injili Indonesia* (Gekindo, the Church of Evangelical Unity in Indonesia, Jakarta 1993).

At an international or global level, many Evangelical churches and missions in Indonesia became members of the World Evangelical Fellowship (WEF, founded in 1951) and were represented in many international events, such as the World Congress on Evangelism in Berlin 1966, in Lausanne 1974, in Seoul 1982, and in Amsterdam 2000; whereas at a regional level the most recent congress was the South East Asia Congress on Evangelism (SEACOE), Singapore 2001. Through these congresses the Indonesian Evangelicals refreshed their spirit and insight on Evangelism and also widened their cooperation and networking with many ecumenical bodies outside the Evangelical group that were also invited to those events. On the other hand they also have had the opportunity to revisit their understanding of mission and evangelism, especially in relation to social-political issues and the pluralism of religions in this country.

Resources and division of the chapter

A comprehensive and analytical study regarding the history of the so-called Evangelical and Pentecostal Christianity in Indonesia is still to be awaited.

Among more than 150 Evangelical and Pentecostal denominations or church and mission organisations in Indonesia, several began to write their respective histories; but most of them are merely descriptive or full with expressions of piety, and are usually focused on the founders, in the fashion of hagiography, with almost no theological and historical analysis. However, we have to use them as our sources, alongside some secondary sources, such as books, or chapters about them in more general books. Unfortunately we cannot utilise the primary sources because of the huge variety among them. Therefore this chapter can be perceived only as an embryo or initial effort and an incentive to them to provide a more comprehensive and complete picture regarding this category of Christianity.

In the following section we will find a chronological and institutional sketch regarding the presence and development of these Evangelical and Pentecostal missions, churches, and agencies. Corresponding to this historical description we will see briefly their respective basic-theological concepts and characteristics, which are the basis for their methods of mission or Evangelism. Then their methods and strategy will be described briefly. Finally we glance at the result and impact of their activities as well as their relationship with other churches and other religions.

Chronological and Institutional Survey

The Evangelicals

Since all missionary societies from Europe and America that came to Indonesia from the beginning of the nineteenth century professed the ideas and spirituality of Pietism and Revival, and since some of them joined the Evangelical Alliance founded in London in 1846⁵, we may consider their arrival in Indonesia as the beginning of the Evangelical missions. But since the meaning of 'Evangelical' in those societies is not precisely the same as what we mean by the term (see *supra*), and since most of the churches founded by these missionary societies became 'mainline' churches, we cannot identify these missionary societies as the carriers or representatives of the Evangelical missions and churches we discuss in this chapter.

Meanwhile the Baptists also claim or confess to be Evangelical⁶ and there are many prominent Baptist figures who are recognised as the leaders of Evangelical fellowships, like Billy Graham.⁷ Therefore we have to mention this denomination as the first Evangelical mission that arrived in Indonesia.

⁵ De Jonge 1998:21.

⁶ Aritonang 2003:138.

⁷ Cf. Aritonang 2003: chapter six.

Moreover the Baptist Missionary Society (BMS) from England had already arrived and worked in Indonesia for the first time during the British era (1811–1816/1825), earlier than the continental missionary societies coming from Lutheran and Reformed backgrounds. A son of William Carey, the BMS missionary in India and the ‘father’ of modern mission, Jabez Carey, worked in Maluku in 1814–1818 (see chapter nine). From 1816 onwards Gottlob Bruckner, previously sent by the Dutch Missionary Society, worked for the BMS in Java (see chapter fourteen). Then Richard Burton and Nathaniel Ward worked in Sumatra in 1820–1825. Due to the termination of British rule in Indonesia, the Baptist mission had to leave, until it could come back again after Indonesian independence. Because these first Baptist missionaries did not establish any Baptist congregation⁸ (the first Baptist churches were only founded after 1950), the Baptists can also be categorized as a new church or denomination, like many other Evangelical denominations. Therefore we will add some basic information on this later Baptist mission.

In 1950 a number of missionaries of the Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention had to leave China. Some of them came to Indonesia and started a Baptist mission there (1951). The first baptism was administered in Bandung (West Java) on 23 November 1952. They also established a theological seminary and a publishing house in Semarang (Central Java, 1954), and a hospital in Kediri (East Java, 1955). Since then and particularly after the abortive coup of the Communist Party (1965), there were many Baptist missionaries from various mission agencies working in Indonesia.⁹ Like many other Evangelical missionaries from various mission societies, they also carried out mass baptisms for people who previously did not adhere to any official religion, and secured a large harvest, so that the post-1965 era can be conceived as a big harvest time for the Evangelical churches.¹⁰

Currently there are a number of Baptist denominations; among others 1. *Gabungan Gereja-gereja Baptis Indonesia* (GGBI, Federation of Baptist Churches in Indonesia, founded by the Indonesian Baptist Mission as a branch of the Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, and which particularly works in Java and Sumatra); 2. *Gereja Perhimpunan Injili Baptis Indonesia* (GPBI, the Assembly Church of Evangelical Baptists in Indonesia, founded by the Conservative Baptists in the USA, which particularly works in West Kalimantan); 3. *Persekutuan Gereja-gereja Baptis Irian Jaya* (PGBIJ, the Communion of Baptist Churches in Irian Jaya, now Papua, which has its own seminary and hospital); 4. *Kerapatan Gereja Baptis Indonesia* (the Alliance of Baptist Churches in Indonesia), which particularly works in North Sulawesi

⁸ Cf. Van den End et alii 2002:chapter 51.

⁹ For more detailed information see a.o. Smith n.d.

¹⁰ Willis 1977.

but also in some other provinces, supported by the Canadian Baptists and the Southern Baptist Convention; 5. *Sinode Gereja Kristen Baptist Jakarta* (the Synod of the Baptist Christian Church in Jakarta); and 6. *Gereja Baptis Independen* (Independent Baptist Church) centred in Sunter, Jakarta. At least five of these churches assemble in the *Persekutuan Baptis Indonesia* (PBI; Communion of Baptists in Indonesia) and at least two of them have also joined the PII, although there is also a Baptist church which does not want to join any council or communion, the *Gereja Baptis Independen*. Total membership of these Baptist churches is more than 100,000, not including the children who are not yet baptised.

Turning to the *Salvation Army* (SA, Indonesian name: *Bala Keselamatan*) this denomination also claims to be Evangelical¹¹ and had already commenced its mission in Indonesia in 1894 with the arrival of two officers from Holland, Captain J.G. Brouwer and Ensign A. van Emmerik.¹² Because the SA has specific characteristics that distinguish it from most Evangelical missions and churches (organisational system, doctrine and practice, and its focus on social service parallel with Evangelism), we will only glance at it here. In Indonesia, as in its country of origin, England, and all over the world, the SA combines Evangelism and social service. The officers began their humanitarian service in Purworejo (Central Java) and the surrounding districts, and then widened their work to many provinces, with western Central Sulawesi (especially the Kulawi district) as the main focus. Here they developed education and medical outreach programs together with evangelism and social development. “Gifts, medical service, and education were key strategies for gaining converts in western Central Sulawesi. Yet Salvation Army leaders held good works as a major goal, not simply a felicitous by-product of the salvation of souls.”¹³ One of the officers, Leonard Woodward, was very highly respected and honoured by the native people and they gave him a local honorary name *Tua Janggo* or *Tua Jangku*, meaning “Grandfather Beard.”¹⁴

To achieve its goal of service the SA was also active in the transmigration program to relocate poor people from Java to some agricultural areas in the outer islands. They also helped people who had suffered disaster and calamity, illness and poverty, by establishing orphanages, hospitals, schools, homes for the aged, etc., combined with Evangelism and pastoral care. To prepare and train its soldiers and officers, since the 1960s, the SA founded a big training centre in Jakarta. Since 1988 the SA in Indonesia has been transformed into

¹¹ Aritonang 2003:260.

¹² Brouwer 1994:1.

¹³ Aragon 2000:10, 114–115.

¹⁴ Aragon 2000:121.

a church institution, rather than a social institution.¹⁵ While at social development level the SA became a member of the WCC, in Indonesia it became one of the “cooperating bodies” of the PGI. Currently it has around 3,500 officers and around 60,000 members.

Certain church historians point to the Christian and Missionary Alliance (CAMA, occasionally abbreviated CMA), initiated by A.B. Simpson in USA in the 1880s, as a pioneer of Evangelical mission and churches in Indonesia, especially through the work of its famous missionary, R.A. Jaffray, from 1928.¹⁶ To a certain extent this is an accurate observation, as we see the CAMA’s concept and method, as well as the role of the church cluster it founded—gathered under the so-called “Alliance” or *Gospel Tabernacle* cluster (Indonesian: *rumpun Kemah Injil*)—in the PII. The teaching of the CAMA can be summarized in four principles, usually called the “four-fold Gospel,” i.e. Christ saves, sanctifies, heals, and will return as the Lord. The hope and conviction of the second coming of Christ and the Millennium Kingdom motivated its missionaries to proclaim the gospel to the people who had never heard and received it before. This evangelistic effort was conceived as hastening the return of Jesus Christ.

In 1928 Jaffray left China after he heard that there were thousands of Chinese migrants in Southeast Asia. After an orientation visit to some harbour cities in various areas in Indonesia, he established his evangelism ministry in Makassar in 1930, and then widened the scope of his mission to Bali, Lombok, Sumbawa, East and West Kalimantan, South Sumatra, and Irian Jaya (Papua), working in areas where so far there were no other mission societies at work. He recruited some Chinese missionaries brought from China and then added some missionary workers from the USA as well as Indonesia. Besides evangelising the Chinese, these missionaries also worked among indigenous people. They constructed ‘Gospel Tabernacles’ in native architectural style while also referring to the revival tradition in the USA with its ‘tent meetings.’ Besides Jaffray, one of the other prominent missionary figures was George E. Fisk who worked in East Kalimantan from 1929. He was highly honoured by the local people because of his appreciation and respect for their customs.¹⁷

Currently this cluster has developed into a number of churches (GKII, KIBAID, GKKA, Gepekris, GPMII, etc.),¹⁸ scattered in almost all provinces,

¹⁵ Ismail 1997.

¹⁶ 1928 e.g. Van den End et al. 2002:280–282.

¹⁷ Conley 1976: *passim*.

¹⁸ GKII stands for *Gereja Kemah Injil Indonesia* (Gospel Tabernacle Church in Indonesia) and according to Scheunemann 1995:214 is the biggest evangelical church in Indonesia with almost 500,000 members; KIBAID for *Kerapatan Injil Bangsa Indonesia* (Gospel Alliance of Indonesian Nation), GKKA for *Gereja Kebangunan Kalam Allah* (Church of the Word of God’s Revival), *Gepekris* for *Gereja Persekutuan Kristen* (Church of Christian Fellowship), and GPMII for *Gereja Persekutuan Misi Injil Indonesia* (Church of Mission Community in Indonesia).

with more than 500,000 members.¹⁹ Besides establishing a number of elementary Bible schools in almost all mission fields, they also opened a number of theological seminaries (multiplied from one Bible School founded in 1930 in Makassar, South Sulawesi). One of them, the *Institut Filsafat, Teologi dan Kepemimpinan Jaffray* (IFTK, the Jaffray Institute of Philosophy, Theology and Leadership) in Jakarta, was for a long time (1986–2002) led by Rev. Yakob Tomatala D.Miss. before he was elected to be synod leader of GKII.²⁰ This institute offers various degrees at undergraduate, graduate and post-graduate levels that become one of the attracting factors of this *Kemah Injil* group (regarding this, notice also the last paragraph of this section).

Since Jaffray was one of the founders of the Chinese Foreign Missionary Union (CFMU) in 1929 (after working for 30 years in China) and his former target of evangelism was the Chinese community in Indonesia, some of the 'Alliance' churches concentrated upon their activities amongst the Chinese, so that they (e.g. Gepekris, GKKA and GPMII) were also known as *Chinese Evangelical Churches*.²¹ But Jaffray and his successors did not only serve among the Chinese, they also worked among the indigenous people in East and West Kalimantan, and Papua. In these provinces there are autonomous churches of the *Kemah Injil* group with a quite large number of members, and which play an important role in developing the life of the community.²² One of the prominent figures of *Kemah Injil* in Papua at the moment is theologian and anthropologist Dr. Benny Giay.

Besides the above mentioned mission societies, there are many other Evangelical missions, mainly from the USA, that came to Indonesia from the beginning of the twentieth century. Their work, combined with the influence of the Revival movement initiated by John Sung in the 1930s in China and other Asian countries (including Indonesia), encouraged the founding of some evangelical churches, among the indigenous as well as the Chinese community. Not a few of these churches got their members from already existing mainline churches, so we may also perceive some of these churches as the effect of schisms among mainline churches. If we examine the membership list of the PII, we may find that most of them were founded during these last 40 years, in areas formerly served by the mainline churches. In many cases certain Evangelical missions in the USA and Europe supported their planting or development processes but there are also several Evangelical churches that emerged in areas where the mainline missions had not worked before, and where they succeeded in recruiting their members from non-Christian

¹⁹ Lewis 1995 and Van den End 2002:284.

²⁰ More detailed information regarding Tomatala, IFTK Jaffray and their theology, Scheunemann 1995: 214–238.

²¹ Lukas Chandra 1999; see also chapter nineteen.

²² Conley 1976 and Lewis 1995.

communities. From wherever they attracted their members, together with the Pentecostals they show a spectacular growth in numbers.

There is one Evangelical mission that deserves special attention, the Overseas Missionary Fellowship (OMF). This mission is the successor of the China Inland Mission (CIM) founded by James Hudson Taylor. After the closing of China for Christian missions by the communist regime, CIM moved to some other countries in Asia and one of the countries it has served since the 1950s is Indonesia. Unlike many other Evangelical missions, OMF—under its Indonesian name, *Yayasan Persekutuan Kristen Indonesia* (YAPKI, literally Foundation of Indonesian Christian Communion)—supports many mainline churches in mission and evangelisation, training, literature, and theological education, and participates in the ecumenical movement.²³ Therefore the mainline churches and their theological schools welcome the OMF, although they know that theologically OMF strongly promotes the Evangelical theology and spirituality.

As has been mentioned, not all Evangelical churches join the Evangelical or ecumenical alliances. One example is the *Gereja Reformed Injili Indonesia* (GRII) that was founded in Jakarta in 1989 as the follow-up of the *Lembaga Reformed Injili Indonesia* (Indonesian Evangelical Reformed Institution) founded in 1986, and followed by the *Sekolah Tinggi Teologi Reformed Injili Indonesia* (STT RII, the Indonesian Evangelical Reformed Theological Seminary) in 1991. This church together with the seminary, led by Rev. Dr. (hc) Stephen Tong, the ‘Billy Graham of the East’²⁴ and Rev. Dr. Yakub B. Susabda, is very enthusiastic in claiming itself to be a restorer of the Reformed or Calvinist doctrine in Indonesia and at the same time a promoter of the evangelical spirit.²⁵ This church and theological school has a very close and strong relationship with the *Gereja Kristen Immanuel* (Immanuel Christian Church) in Bandung, one of the Evangelical churches that is also promoted by the Tong family, as well as with the *Seminari Alkitab Asia Tenggara* (SAAT, South East Asia Bible Seminary) in Malang, East Java and with the *Sekolah Tinggi Teologi Bandung* (Bandung Theological Seminary) led by Rev. Dr. Joseph Tong, one of Stephen’s brothers. We may even say that the STT-RII and the STT Bandung are two among a number of SAAT’s ‘children’.

This SAAT (formerly a Bible school, founded in 1952) was initiated by Dr. Andrew Gih, a missionary from China (sponsored by the Bethel Mission, an interdenominational mission from the USA), quite well known as a strong

²³ See John Suwahyo in *Penuntun*, July 1996:363–365.

²⁴ So called by Philip Teng in a foreword to Stephen Tong’s 35 years ministry anniversary, *Serving My Times* 1992:4, as quoted in Scheunemann 1995:196.

²⁵ For more detailed information regarding Stephen Tong, GRII, STT-RII and their theology, see Scheunemann 1995:194–214.

promoter of the Evangelical movement. It is not restricted or tied to certain churches or denominations.²⁶ Since there are many members of the mainline churches—especially the churches with a strong Chinese background—who are influenced and attracted by Evangelical Christianity, the role of this seminary with its ‘children’ in promoting the evangelical spirit among the ‘traditional’ and Evangelical churches is remarkable. Not a few of the congregations of those churches send their members to study here or called their pastor-candidates from this seminary.

The *Yayasan Persekutuan Pekabaran Injil Indonesia* (YPPII, the Foundation of the Indonesia Missionary Fellowship) also deserves special attention. This foundation was established in 1960 at a small town, Batu near Malang (East Java, and was officially ratified as a mission foundation in March 1961, after some years of preparation. It followed the WEC Bible School, which was founded in 1959 (from 1961 using a new name, *Institut Injil Indonesia, I-3*, Indonesian Gospel Institute). This foundation was initiated by several persons and it was claimed by Octavianus as the first truly Indonesian missionary or evangelisation body.²⁷ The central figure is Rev. Dr. (hc) Petrus Octavianus who began his evangelising activities among the students in Malang in 1954.²⁸ He was supported by several Evangelical missionaries, especially Rev. Heini Germann Edey and Detmar and Volkhard Scheunemann from the Worldwide Evangelising Crusade (or the World Evangelism Crusade, WEC) in England and Germany. Later these twin institutions—YPPII and I-3—were also supported by mission societies from some other countries like the USA and Japan. The lecturers at the WEC Bible School/I-3 were appointed mainly by WEC, but the influence of Fuller Theological Seminary at Pasadena USA and some other Evangelical seminaries in the USA was increasingly felt.

According to M. Djami Radja Uly, one of the first students of I-3,²⁹ there are four spiritual pillars as specific strengths of WEC, YPPII and I-3: faith, holiness, sacrifice and fellowship. Linked to this, Klaus Wetzel also emphasized the influence and heritage of Pietism, especially Philipp Jacob Spener, in the theological education system developed in I-3.³⁰ Regarding these spiritual characteristics, Sikitari wrote,

²⁶ SAAT—*Katalog 1995–1996*:3–6; cf. Koch 1970:74–76.

²⁷ Octavianus n.d.:3–5; Scheunemann 1995:187–194.

²⁸ Although Octavianus had been preaching since 1950 he admitted that it was on November 20, 1957 that he repented and accepted Jesus Christ as his personal Savior, i.e. during an Evangelistic meeting led by Roland Brown from Moody Bible Institute (Sikitari 1990:6). This cataclysmic repentance is quite typical among the Evangelicals. More detailed information regarding Octavianus and his theology see in: Scheunemann 1995:288–302.

²⁹ Hadiwinoto et alii (eds.) 1995:230.

³⁰ Hadiwinoto et alii (eds.) 1995:213.

The Theological Education Department of the IMF (YPPH) has four theological schools. . . . These theological schools include a strong emphasis on the spiritual life of the students for the Board [of the IMF] recognizes that the spiritual ministry in the church can only be carried out by men and women of God who have been brought to new life in Jesus Christ and are living out the Word of God. The primary requirement for acceptance was that the student evidences the new birth, God's calling and high motivation to sacrifice life if need be for the ministry.³¹

Accordingly, regarding the contribution of YPPH and I-3 to the church and Christian life in Indonesia as well as in Asia, Wetzel³² mentioned three objectives: 1. to revive the traditional churches in Indonesia which were marked by spiritual decadence; 2. to foster the development of Protestantism in Indonesia during the rapid phase of growth, especially since 1965; 3. to widen the ministry reach of the Indonesian servants of God through global mission service, like sending Indonesian missionaries to some Southeast and East Asian countries.

Up to the early 1980s YPPH and I-3 were warmly welcomed and supported by many churches, even the mainline or traditional churches, because the constitution of these institutions declared that they will not found any new church, but rather empower already existing churches by injecting them with the spirit of revival and Evangelism.³³ But later, since 1984, this foundation with its affiliated theological/Bible schools established some new Evangelical churches; among others are the *Gereja Misi Injili Indonesia* (GMII, Evangelical Mission Church in Indonesia, or Indonesia Missionary Church) and *Gereja Protestan Injili Nusantara* (GPIN, Protestant Evangelical Church in Nusantara). These developments made many churches withdraw their recommendation and caused polarization between the evangelical and ecumenical wings. Some of the reasons for establishing new churches were explained by Octavianus as follows:

At that time [1984] the condition [in southern Sumatra where YPPH worked to evangelise the people, especially in Serawai, Bengkulu] demanded that there should be a church established. . . . Before going to Serawai, we stopped in Lampung to meet the pastor of the Javanese Church. In Palembang we arranged a meeting with pastors of the Javanese Church, GPIB (Western Indonesian Protestant Church) and the Methodists. We asked them to join us in Serawai and southern Bengkulu, to accept the decision if a church must be born. But we know that at that time it was not easy. . . . After serving there around two and half months, there were 299 baptised; all of them came from a non-Christian background. Therefore the church is born. As the leader of YPPH I named this church *Gereja*

³¹ Sikitari 1990:9–10.

³² Hadiwinoto et alii (eds.) 1995:216–217.

³³ See for example Octavianus in: Wagiyono Sumarto et alii (eds.) 1998:1–3.

Kristen Injili di Sumatera Selatan (Gekisus, Evangelical Christian Church in southern Sumatra). I also ordained several pastors in southern Bengkulu and Serawai... God gave me vision because formerly I already had experience... God gave me an original charisma, without that there will be no YPPII.³⁴

Through this explanation we see one of the main concepts and methods of the Evangelicals, that is church planting, which we will discuss later. We also find a typical example regarding the rise of Evangelical churches, that is the role of a central and dominating figure that usually claims to have received a special vision and calling from God, and to be proclaiming the Kingdom of God while simultaneously establishing a personal and family kingdom.³⁵ It is also noteworthy that the leading figures of I-3 and YPPII as well as their derivate institutions—many of them coming from Octavianus' family—also hold important positions in the PII. As Wetzel³⁶ pointed out, most of the board members of the PII are I-3 alumni, so that these twin institutions play an important role in the rise and development of the Evangelical movement and activities in Indonesia.

Since around the year of 2000 there has been a new development in I-3 as well as in some other Evangelical theological education institutions; they have invited several lecturers from ecumenical theological schools to be guest professors. This is actually not new, because in the beginning YPPII and I-3 also built a good ecumenical relationship with many church organisations, including the DGI/PGI. On the one hand this should be accepted gladly and thankfully, because this may recover the cracked relationship enjoyed before, but on the other hand it should also be observed carefully.

Particularly in the circle of theological institutions, in the 1980s the Evangelicals founded a special association, the *Persekutuan Sekolah-sekolah Teologi Injili di Indonesia* (Pasti, Fellowship of the Evangelical Theological Schools in Indonesia), as a 'competitor' with the *Perhimpunan Sekolah-sekolah Teologi di Indonesia* (Persetia, Association for Theological Schools in Indonesia) founded by theological institutions mostly supported by the main-line churches. But not all of Evangelical theological schools become members of Pasti. STT RII, for example, prefers to be a member of the Persetia. As in the case of double or triple membership or affiliation among some Evangelical churches, there are also certain Evangelical theological schools that have become members of Pasti, Persetia, and even *Perhimpunan Sekolah-sekolah Teologi Pentakosta di Indonesia* (Pesatpin, Association of Pentecostal Biblical and Theological Schools in Indonesia). One example is the *Institut Keguruan*

³⁴ P. Octavianus, "Gereja Misi Injili Indonesia (GMII)." (transcript of his speech in the opening session of the Synodal Assembly of GMII in 1996?). Later *Gekisus* was changed to *GPIN*.

³⁵ Cf. Aritonang in Sumarto (ed.) 1998:94–96.

³⁶ Hadiwinoto et alii (eds.) 1995:214.

dan Teologi Indonesia (ITKI, Institute of Teaching and Theology in Indonesia), established by *Gereja Bethel Indonesia* (GBI, Bethel Church of Indonesia) that is also member of PGI and PII.

Still regarding theological education, in 2004 there were around 200 so-called Protestant theological schools or seminaries in Indonesia. More than 100 of them were established during the last 30 years and most of these new schools were established by Evangelical and Pentecostal churches and missions. Dealing with these Evangelical (as well as Pentecostal) theological schools, Herlianto³⁷ noted that their strength is the evangelical and missionary spirit, besides a personal devotion that is frequently lacking in ecumenical theological schools in general. But the weakness is the lack of effort to adopt national education systems; consequently the curriculum and the degrees they confer do not meet the national standard decided by the government through the Department of National Education. There are even some Evangelical and Pentecostal schools that offer higher degrees, like Master of Divinity, Master of Theology, and even Doctor (including Doctor *honoris causa*), in only a few days, weeks, or months of quasi-study, without a thesis or dissertation, or by faking it. These degrees usually were awarded to or bought by businessmen, church leaders, or officials in certain government departments. This phenomenon can create the impression that theological schools in Indonesia, as some pseudo-theological education abroad, fall victim to commercialisation, which actually insults the quality of education and jeopardizes the future of the nation.

Besides these church organisations and theological seminaries, we also find hundreds of foundations or para-churches organisations, which also claim to be Evangelical. Until 2001 there were more than one hundred that became full members of PII, besides associate members. They work in varied fields and with diverse methods to support Evangelism directly or indirectly, through spiritual formation, education/schools, literature and mass media, physical and mental health care, information and communication (including radio and TV broadcasting), social service, etc. Among them we need to mention briefly a number of influential organisations.

Regarding ministry and spiritual formation among students there are at least two prominent organisations, the *Lembaga Penginjilan Mahasiswa Indonesia* (LPMI, Indonesia Institute of Student Mission, affiliated to the Campus Crusade for Christ in the USA),³⁸ and *Persekutuan Kristen Antar Universitas* (Perkantas, Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship, a split of LPMI and now affiliated to Inter-Varsity International). In the 1970s Perkantas was emerging as an assertive Evangelical alternative to the ecumenical student movement GMKI, which,

³⁷ "Theological Education, a new commercialisation?" in: Hadiwinoto et alii (eds.) 1995:29–54.

³⁸ Hery Susanto in: *Penuntun* July 1996:401–403.

although affiliated internationally to the WSCM, had, up to that time, held the loyalty of Evangelical students.³⁹

In the field of information and communication an institution deserving attention is the *Lembaga Informasi dan Komunikasi Kristen Indonesia*, LINK (Indonesian Christian Institute of Information and Communication) led by Dr. Iman Santoso. This institute regularly issues a *Kalender Doa Nasional* (National Prayer Calendar) and a bulletin, *Visi, Misi and Prakarsa* (Vision, Mission and Motivation), distributed monthly to many churches and Christian institutions, not only among the Evangelicals and Pentecostals but also among the so-called ecumenical or mainstream churches. By doing this, and by showing a serious consciousness of Indonesian context and plurality, Iman Santoso and his group are also recognised as having a close relationship with the ecumenicals, including PGI. Santoso even joined as a board member of the *Akademi Leimena*, a ‘think tank’ established by the PGI (see chapter seventeen).⁴⁰

The *Yayasan Wahana Visi Indonesia* (WVI, Foundation, affiliated to World Vision International in the USA) also deserves to be mentioned because—as an Evangelical institution founded by Bob Pierce in the USA—it pays full attention to social service. This is expressed in its Mission Statement, “World Vision is an international partnership of Christians whose mission is to follow our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ in working with the poor and oppressed to promote human transformation, seek justice, and bear witness to the good news of the Kingdom of God.”⁴¹ This foundation, previously named *Lembaga Pelayanan Kristen Indonesia* (LEPKI, Society for Christian Service in Indonesia), after some years of preliminary activities commenced service in 1962 in Malang, led among others by Rev. H. Germann Edey, the founder of the WEC Bible School/I-3 mentioned above. Therefore in the 1960s there was a very close cooperation and relationship between WVI and I-3⁴² although it became looser in the following period. Based on such cooperation we see that Evangelicals (although not many of them) also pay attention to social service and perceive this to be one of the methods of a broader mission and evangelism.

The Pentecostals

The arrival of Pentecostal denominations in Indonesia was pioneered by the Bethel Temple Church from Green Lake, Seattle, USA. This church, through its leader, W.H. Offiler, sent two missionaries, Cornelius Groesbeek and Richard (Dirk) van Klaveren in 1921. They arrived first in Bali, translated the gospel

³⁹ Personal observation of Simon Rae, ecumenical university chaplain, Bandung, 1972–1975.

⁴⁰ More information on LINK and Iman Santoso incl. their concept and strategy of mission, Scheunemann 1995:303–319.

⁴¹ WVI, *Who We Are* (leaflet, n.d.), p. 3.

⁴² Raja Uly in: Hadiwinoto et alii (eds.) 1995:230–231.

of Luke into Balinese, and distributed it during the Sunday service they conducted. They also performed divine healing and succeeded in bringing a number of people to believe in Christ. But then they were evicted from Bali by the Dutch colonial government according to its policy to close Bali for missionary work (see chapter fifteen).

The evangelisation programme spread to Surabaya and Cepu, East Java, since the Groesbeek family moved to Surabaya in November 1921, while the Van Klaveren family moved to Jakarta. In Cepu Groesbeek met pastor J. Thiessen and F.G. van Gessel, both of whom also played important roles later in the growth of the Pentecostal movement in this country. This Pentecostal movement and congregations grew rapidly so that on 23 March 1923 they founded the *Vereeniging der Pinkster Gemeente in Nederlandsch Oost-Indië* (the Union of Pentecostal Congregations in the Dutch East Indies) with its office in Bandung, chaired by D.W.H. Wenink van Loon. This organisation was recognised by the Dutch colonial government on 4th June 1924 with the name of *de Pinkster Gemeente in Nederlandsch-Indië* (the Pentecostal Congregation in Dutch Indies), and later (in 1937) changed to *de Pinkster Kerk in Nederlands Indië* (the Pentecostal Church in the Dutch Indies) following a renewed recognition by the government. This name was again changed in 1942 to become the *Gereja Pantekosta di Indonesia* (GPdI), the largest of the Pentecostal churches in Indonesia up to the present, with more than three million members.

Since 1922 Cepu and Surabaya became centres of this Pentecostal movement which produced missionaries who later became forerunners of Pentecostal churches in Indonesia. Meanwhile Temanggung (Central Java) also grew as another centre, served by William Bernard (sent by a Pentecostal group in England) who was followed by the sisters M.A. Alt and F.N.M. Abkoude, who had been there before and were attracted by the Pentecostal teaching. Since then the Pentecostal churches have spread to many towns in East Java, West Java (pioneered and led by J. Thiessen in Bandung), the Moluccas, North Sulawesi, South Sulawesi, Timor, Kalimantan, Papua, Yogyakarta, Sumatra and the surrounding islands.

Van den End⁴³ observes that the first groups in society attracted to Pentecostal teachings were from Eurasian background. For a long time they were neglected by the mainline and state church (i.e. the *Indische Kerk*). The Chinese followed and some other ethnic groups that had been Christianised before, such as the Minahasan, Moluccan, and Batak groups. For the Pentecostal missionaries or evangelists, evangelising those who had been Christians before was not regarded as an act of hijacking or stealing sheep from other flocks but rather adding some new elements to their traditional Christian teaching and experi-

⁴³ Van den End 2002:272.

ence, like the doctrine of being born-again or born-anew, the baptism of the Holy Spirit (as expressed by *glossolalia*), divine healing, etc.

One of the prominent phenomena in the development of the Pentecostal churches in Indonesia (as in many other countries) is the intensity of schism among them, even before their church was recognized by the government in 1937 as a *kerkgenootschap* (church institution). The first schism was in 1931 when M.A. Alt, the first woman missionary among the Pentecostals in this country, left the *Pinkster Gemeente* and formed a new organisation, *Pinkster Zending* (Pentecostal Mission), later renamed the *Gereja Utusan Pantekosta*. This schism was mainly caused by a doctrinal dispute. M.A. Alt refused to accept W.H. Offiler's teaching about God and his name, and she refused to accept Offiler's baptismal formula, "You are baptised into the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, namely the Lord Jesus Christ." This doctrine and formula is commonly known as 'Jesus Only'. She also rejected the limitation applied to women in preaching or pulpit service.

Besides that schism of 1931, Sumual, Senduk and Van den End⁴⁴ also mentions further schisms during the period of the 1930s–1970s, among others:

- (1) In 1932 the *Pinkster Beweging* (later called *Gereja Gerakan Pentakosta*), led by Rev. J. Thiessen, split from the *Pinkster Gemeente*;
- (2) In 1936 Rev. R.M. Devin and R. Busby left the *Pinkster Gemeente* and together with Abkoude established the *Gemeente van God (Sidang Jemaat Allah)* then affiliated to the Assemblies of God in the USA that commenced its evangelism in Jakarta from the 1930s; this church also maintained the Trinitarian baptism formula and rejected the formula of Jesus Only;
- (3) In 1941 Rev. D. Sinaga left the *Pinkster Kerk* and established *Gereja Pantekosta Sumatera Utara* (GPSU; the Pentecostal Church in North Sumatra);
- (4) In 1946 Rev. Tan Hok Tjoan in Semarang left the GPdI and established *Sing Ling Kauw Hwee*, later called the *Gereja Isa Almasih* (GIA; the Church of Jesus Christ);
- (5) In 1948 Rev. Renatus Siburian and Lukas Siburian left the GPdI and established *Gereja Pantekosta Sumatera Utara* (GPSU; the Pentecostal Church in North Sumatra, using the same name as that used by Rev. D. Sinaga);
- (6) In 1952 Rev. F. van Gessel and H.L. Senduk left the GPdI and established *Gereja Bethel Injil Sepenuh* (GBIS; the Full Gospel Bethel Church);
- (7) In 1957 G. Sutopo and Ing Yuwono split from GBIS and established *Gereja Bethel Tabernakel* (the Bethel Tabernacle Church);

⁴⁴ Sumual n.d.:78–81; Senduk n.d.:13–14; Van den End 2002:272–273.

- (8) In 1959 Rev. Ishak Lew split from the GPdI and established the *Gereja Pantekosta Pusat Surabaya* (GPPS; the Pentecostal Church Centred in Surabaya);
- (9) In 1960 GBIS split again when A. Parera established the *Gereja Nazareth Pentakosta* (GNP; the Nazareth Pentecostal Church);
- (10) In 1966 Rev. Karel Sianturi and Sianipar split from the GPdI and established the *Gereja Pantekosta Indonesia Sumatera Utara* (Indonesian Pentecostal Church in North Sumatra);
- (11) In 1967 the *Gereja Pentakosta Elim* (GPE) was established in Surabaya and Timor;
- (12) In 1970 H.L. Senduk and associates split from the GBIS and established the *Gereja Bethel Indonesia* (GBI; the Bethel Church in Indonesia), supported by the Church of God from Cleveland Tennessee.

When we trace further this story of schism up to the present time, we will find many more cases, and these schisms brought around a hundred new Pentecostal churches into existence. The most recent development is the split of the Bethany Church and the Tiberias Church from GBI in 2003 and 2004. These new churches were formerly two among a number of big congregations in GBI that then multiplied spectacularly. Besides the above-mentioned schisms, there are some other causes of this multiplication. One of them is the arrival of new Pentecostal denominations from the USA, like the United Pentecostal Church since 1939 in Central Java. This church initiated a new church called *Gereja Pentakosta Serikat Indonesia* centred in Semarang. Observing the development of the Pentecostal churches in Indonesia since the arrival of the Bethel Temple, Tapilatu⁴⁵ concluded that the most striking influence came from American Pentecostals although there were also a few European missionaries.⁴⁶

Since the 1970s, while the trend of schism still continued, there has also been another phenomenon, the trend of gathering. The Pentecostal churches formed the above-mentioned DPI/PGPI although not all of them joined this fellowship. Some of the Pentecostal churches even joined the national council, the DGI/PGI. This phenomenon shows an increasing interest among them to participate in the ecumenical movement, as we also find in international and global forums like the WCC. Meanwhile, in terms of quantity, we see not only a spectacular growth of church institutions but also an increasing number of members. Among around 17 million members of the so-called Protestant churches, at least 6 million are Pentecostals, including those still registered in

⁴⁵ Tapilatu 1982:21–24.

⁴⁶ Cf. Sumual n.d.:76–77.

some traditional or mainline churches. This number will become bigger when we include the participants of the Charismatic fellowships and worshipers that have been present within the mainline churches since the early 1970s. No wonder then if the Pentecostals in Indonesia, like their fellows all over the world, claim that, while in 1970s they became 'the third power' (besides the Roman Catholic and the mainline Protestant churches), in the near future they will become the first power.

In line with the multiplication of church institutions, and like the Evangelical churches, the Pentecostals are also very active in opening Bible schools. Already in 1935 they had opened the Netherlands Indies Bible Institute (NIBI) in Surabaya, sponsored by William W. Paterson, a missionary sent by the Bethel Pentecostal Temple in Seattle who then cooperated with Van Gessel. Now we can find more than a hundred Bible schools and many of them have been upgraded to become theological seminaries with a higher education level and offering various academic degrees. But they are only registered in the Department of Religious Affairs; none of them is registered at the Department of National Education or accredited by the national official accreditation body. This brings some difficulties for theological education to secure full recognition from the government. Therefore Herlianto's critical note mentioned above also applies here.

Although there is a number of Pentecostal Bible or theological schools, not all Pentecostal churches require those who want to be pastors to have had a previous theological education. According to their church order, there are three levels of pastors: helping pastor (*pendeta pembantu; Pdp.*), junior pastor (*pendeta muda, Pdm.*), and senior pastor (*Pendeta; Pdt.*). Someone may become a helping pastor when she/he succeeds in recruiting a certain number of members or followers. After fulfilling some more non-academic requirements she/he may be promoted to be junior pastor, etc. No wonder then if in certain Pentecostal churches we may find quite a large number of pastors, many of them professionals like engineers, physicians, or businessmen. This phenomenon becomes more glaring when they also apply the franchise system, attaching the name of a well-known congregation to a new one in return for a fee paid to the famous congregation, just like McDonalds!

Charismatic Movement

The picture of the Evangelicals and Pentecostals will not be sufficient unless we pay special attention to the Charismatic or Neo-Pentecostal movement. As already noted, not long after the emergence of this spectacular movement in the USA in 1960 it had already arrived in Indonesia, from the late 1960s or early 1970s. The spirit and strategy of this movement, in accordance with its initial inter-denominational characteristics, are not limited to the Pentecostals

but are active also among the Evangelicals, and even among the ecumenical or mainline Protestant and Catholic communities. Below will see that some of its characteristics are also found with Pentecostals; here we will only note some attracting elements, followed by an observation of the charismatic movement among the Catholics.

One of the most attractive elements in the Charismatic fellowship or service is the way in which they celebrate worship (usually called Praise and Worship). There is cheerful and vivid music and hymns, an informal and flexible order of worship, and simple, practical preaching or Bible exposition. The participants—mostly coming from the traditional mainline churches where they feel bored—can express their feelings and emotion spontaneously by clapping, crying, dancing and the like. They don't have to squeeze their brain—tired after a whole week working—in order to understand the sermon but get some 'fresh amusement'. They just want to release themselves from the burden of their daily work by enjoying something ecstatic. In short, the worship is performed as an entertainment package. Anticipating this trend in worship and seeking to recover the reduced numbers of worship participants and activists among their members, some of the traditional churches try to modify their order of worship or perform what they call "alternative worship," especially for the younger generation.⁴⁷

Another attractive element is the special attention and approach shown to business people. This has a tight link with the theology of success or theology of prosperity to be discussed later. As is commonly known, one of the embryos of this movement is the Full Gospel Businessmen's Fellowship International (FGBMFI) initiated by Demos Shakarian, an American of Armenian origin. This fellowship came to Indonesia together with the arrival of the Charismatic movement and in a short time succeeded in attracting a number of Christian businessmen as well as high government (including retired military) officers, followed by the establishment of what they called a chapter.⁴⁸ Every chapter meets regularly in an informal and relaxed atmosphere, such as a coffee morning, happy hour lunch or leisurely dinner. Usually the fellowship, after a short welcome address, starts with music, singing and prayer, followed by scripture reading and testimony. On each occasion some of the participants give testimony regarding their success in business as well as in their whole life, which is full of God's abundant blessing. The demonstration of special charisma like

⁴⁷ This policy was among others taken up by HKBP in its synod assembly in 2002 although thereafter it brought internal conflict in certain congregations.

⁴⁸ In 2003 FGBMFI Indonesia had around 25 chapters scattered in several big cities (Jakarta with more than 10 chapters, Surabaya, Semarang, Bandung, Medan, Makassar, Batam, etc.). The Indonesian chair is ret. Lieut. Gen. H.B.L. Mantiri. See its leaflet, 2004 edition.

glossolalia, divine healing and prophesying is not compulsory. Such an occasion is also used for making business deals or negotiations. For young executives or businessmen this fellowship opens an opportunity to advance themselves. No data is available on how many of the members succeed in promoting their business, since the administration of this fellowship is rather loose, but the fact that the number of the chapters and the membership continues to multiply shows that this kind of fellowship is still attractive.

There is a suspicion that the Charismatics do not have a social concern because they are more self-centred or self-oriented. This is not always true. One of the Charismatic fellowships centred in Jakarta named *Abba Love*, whose members are mostly young executives and businessmen, shows an increasing social concern. It has a regular plan and program to help the street-children and the poor people in the slums by providing scholarship grants, health services and the like. The members of this fellowship evidently do not have a strong intention or commitment to the so-called structural or transformative *diakonia* as shown in the documents of the WCC or the PGI, but their interest and openness to building cooperation with certain Christian social service institution such as WVII shows that even the Charismatic circle perceives social ministry to be part of their Christian calling.⁴⁹

The so-called mainline or traditional churches generally have mixed feelings and standpoints towards this Charismatic movement. On the one hand they cannot deny the fact that many of their members are attracted by this movement, by attending its fellowship and gatherings and then trying to bring what they understand as 'new spirituality' into their respective churches. On the other hand these mainline churches are aware of certain 'dangers' contained in this movement or stream, such as an extreme understanding and practice of charisma and its theology of success. Some of the mainline churches set certain guidelines for their members to help them by making clear their standpoint.⁵⁰ Other churches set a regulation that those involved in the Charismatic fellowship can not become elected as elders or deacons or members of the board of certain commissions in the congregation.⁵¹ These guidelines or regulations, however, did not prevent members of those mainline churches from taking part or from imitating in their spiritual life what they experienced in the Charismatic fellowship.

⁴⁹ See a.o. *The World Vision International Indonesia Annual Report of 2004*.

⁵⁰ This is done by *Gereja Kristen Indonesia* (GKI) in their document "Pegangan Ajaran" that is always attached in its book of Church Order.

⁵¹ This is for example stated in one of the decisions of the Synod Council of *Gereja Protestan Indonesia bagian Barat* (GPB) in 1981 and is still applied up to the present.

The short but turbulent history of the Catholic Charismatic movements

As already observed, Pentecostalism and the Evangelical movement are Protestant initiatives. However, there is also a Catholic variant that is commonly called the Charismatic Renewal within the Catholic Church. Its origin can be dated to a weekend meeting in February 1967 at Duquesne University in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Some 25 students, participants of the *Cursillo*-movement (founded in Spain in the 1940s) came together for the three-day weekend retreat that is the basic practice of that movement. They studied the book of Acts and included elements of the Pentecostal movement into their truly Catholic programme. They were lay people, working in an intellectual climate at universities, after the Second Vatican Council. A major element was the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, deemed necessary for full Christian life. Therefore they started “Life in the Spirit Seminars” that would become the backbone also for the Charismatic renewal in Indonesia. They soon established a Centre for Service and Communication (1969), the result of the Catholic expertise in organised Christian formation. The Committee on Doctrine of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops of the USA wrote a report, submitted to the bishops on 14 November 1969, that spoke with caution about this so-called Pentecostal movement, preferring the word Charismatic and mentioning the rebuke of emotionalism. The committee emphasized the strong biblical basis of the movement “which manifested itself abundantly in the early church.” It advised those responsible to remain in close contact and to realise that in the Catholic Church there is a tendency to substitute religious experience for religious doctrine. Cardinal Leo Suenens of Belgium (1904–1996) became, within the universal Catholic Church, the strong advocate of the Charismatics. He was not the joyful and enthusiastic promoter as many hoped, and therefore was also several times criticised. He had a powerful successor. In the Encyclical Letter *Evangelii Nuntiandi* (1975) Pope Paul VI had some negative comments on the Charismatics, “[Par 58: In some regions] *communautés de base* come together in a spirit of bitter criticism of the Church, which they are quick to stigmatise as ‘institutional’ and to which they set themselves up in opposition as Charismatic communities, free from structures and inspired only by the Gospel.” Pope John Paul II (1978–2005) had some more positive comments on the movement but emphasized the need to respect the proper Catholic hierarchy. In the 1990s the Vatican considered the Charismatic renewal on the same level as Opus Dei, Focolare and the Neo-catechumenate as “ecclesial realities.”

In May 1976 bishop Leo Soekoto of Jakarta invited Father O’Brien SJ from Bangkok and another fellow Jesuit, H. Schneider from Manila, to give instruction on the Charismatic movement in Jakarta. They gave some English language retreats to selected small groups. This resulted in the first official

Catholic Prayer Group (*Kelompok Doa* or *Persekutuan Doa*) in Jakarta in January 1977. Later these groups were called *Persekutuan Doa Kharismatik Katolik* (PDKK). Some 150 faithful became members in this first Indonesian speaking retreat. By the late 1970s the Carmelite Yohanes Indrakusuma, of Chinese descent, had started a group of his own in East Java. He would later start a great Charismatic group in West Java. In Jakarta the Jesuit priest Lambert Sugiri (the Javanese version of his Dutch name, Van den Heuvel) became the moderator of the group that was concentrated in the (mostly Chinese) business centre of Mangga Besar. The group soon became bigger and spread also to other dioceses outside the capital.

In early 1980 Sugiri published a 77-page tract on the Charismatic movements as part of a larger book, the four other authors being mainstream Protestants who were also quite uncertain about the rise of new movements and even churches. In his preface, Bishop Leo Soekoto started a curious chain of questions, "Is it allowed for me to practise yoga? Transcendental meditation? To consult traditional healers? Are the voices we hear from God's Spirit or from an evil spirit? Is it right to join a Charismatic Group?"⁵² In 1981 a first national convention was held in Jakarta, followed by Malang (1983), Salatiga (1985) and Bandung (1988). In 1983 the bishops published *Pastoral Guidelines for the Charismatic Renewal*. In 1986 *Lumen 2000* was established as a special Charismatic Prayer Group, concentrating on the modern media, with its youth group *Siloam*. G. Koelman later replaced Father Sugiri as moderator of the Charismatics.⁵³

These very quick developments since the late 1970s led to a quite dramatic conflict involving a major Charismatic group in Jakarta, the *Sungai Yordan* or River Jordan group, that seceded with some 800 members from the Catholic Church and joined the Pentecostal Bethel Church in 1988. The leader of this group was an engineer Ignatius Marsudi Hardono, of Chinese descent, born in Semarang in 1942. Married to a dentist, with three children, he lived in the middle class district of Tomang, Jakarta. He had been baptised a Catholic in 1976 and became in 1978 the elder (*ketua wilayah*) for the section of his parish. This was still the period of mass conversions after the 1965 coup and the start of Soeharto's New Order. Within the Charismatic movement he had the status of an evangelist.

After the disastrous development of 1988 there were repeated warnings from the Catholic hierarchy against the movement. On 7 December 1997 the Archbishop of Jakarta, Julius Darmaatmadja, formally declared a ban on the *Karpena Mission* (after *Karitas* for charity or love and *Pena*, a pen for writing

⁵² Sugiri 1982:8.

⁵³ G. Koelman 1996–2003.

in line with 2 Cor. 3:3, “You are a letter from Christ, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God”). The ban included the excommunication of its leader, Petrus J. Loyani. This latter apparently had a history of serial conversions. As a graduate of the Bethel Theological School he was a Pentecostal Christian, but then studied at the Catholic Driyarkara Philosophy College, applied for recognition as a Catholic Charismatic in 1996, still considering his visionary experience of 12 November 1992 as the basis of his mission.

On 27 August 2003 the diocese of Jakarta issued another warning, signed by the Vicar-general B. S. Mardiatmadja (not by Archbishop Darmaatmadja) in *Hidup*, 23 November 2003. The letter summarised several dangerous aspects of the Charismatic Renewal and Prayer Groups (*Persekutuan Doa*). There was again a warning to remain close to the Catholic hierarchy, not too easily invite preachers from other Christian churches or even from other religions, not to exaggerate the power of evil spirits, let alone ask for exorcisms to be executed by unauthorized people. It was also a warning against the practice of the ‘Family Tree retreat’ (*retret pohon keluarga*, developed in the 1960s by the Hungarian-American psychiatrist Ivan Boszormeny-Nagy as Contextual Therapy), where marriage life was seen more from a psychological than from a social and juridical angle. Finally, it was suggested that the Charismatics work in small groups, like base communities, and not seek large audiences by organising meetings in great conference halls and luxurious hotels.

In 2002 the Catholic Charismatic Movement estimated that there were some 100 Prayer Groups with about 5000 members. That is not a large number, compared to the more than 6 million Catholics of the country at the time. But this is a quite rough estimate. Including sympathisers and incidental participants might lead to a much larger number. Meetings of Prayer Groups can easily collect from 200 up to 500 people. The Mass and Adoration, organised by the group around Father Yohanes Indrakusuma, assembled some 9,000 faithful in the Jakarta Sports Stadium of Senayan on 24 October 2003. There are no figures about people who practise serial conversion and move from Catholicism to Protestant Churches, but as we saw in the case of the Sungai Jordan movement, it happens also in Indonesia, although not on the same scale as in some Latin American countries. Besides, there are again and again new American spiritual movements that attract elite people who are culturally orientated towards the United States. One of these is the Choice Movement for single (but apparently also some married) Catholic adults to look at their lives, popular since its introduction in 1982, and Marriage Encounter that was introduced in 1975 as another initiative of Bishop Leo Soekoto of Jakarta. Marriage Encounter was considered by several priests to be very unusual in Indonesian culture, because it is based on very open expression of sentiments, with neglect of the common East Asian culture of shame, where people do not like to say unpleasant things to their partners. To the surprise of the Belgian

priest Piet Nooy SVD who organised the first weekend meetings, middle class urban Indonesian couples were very open and took real profit from this opportunity to enrich their married life.

The movements discussed in this section have changed the character of a number of urban Catholic parishes in Indonesia, especially in Java. They are concentrated upon individual or family experiences, do not relate to the whole of the parish, let alone the reform of society. They see not the celibate, clerical way of life, but married family life as the basis for a modern Catholic spirituality. Until now the clergy in general have managed to keep the groups within the regular structure of the Catholic hierarchical organisation. Some aspects have even become more common for Catholic life in Indonesian in general. The greeting 'God bless you' (Ind. *Tuhan memberkati*) was even used by the Jesuit priest Dr. Mardiatmadja in his open and severe warning against Charismatics as quoted above.

A major clerical figure in the Catholic Charismatic movement is the learned Carmelite priest, Dr. Yohanes Indrakusuma. Born on 8 June, 1938 in Sumberkepuh, Warujayeng, Nganjuk, East Java from Confucian-Buddhist parents, he became familiar with Christianity through his school and was baptised in a Catholic Church on 14 April 1954 in Malang. He became a Carmelite priest (O.Carm) through his ordination in 1967. In 1973 he received a doctorate in Paris (Institut Catholique de Paris) on the basis of his dissertation on *L'Homme Parfait Selon L'École de Pangestu. Étude de la spiritualité Javanaise et de sa rencontre avec le Christianisme*. In 1982 he established a women's order, the Daughters of Carmel, and in 1986 an order for men (*Carmelitae Sancti Eliae*). The two orders seek to integrate Carmelite tradition with Charismatic Renewal in an open contemplative way of life with predominance on the life of prayer and contemplation. The international Carmelite Order recognized both orders as affiliated branches on 19 December 2002, but not much about them is found in the reports of the official Catholic hierarchy. In 1988 Indrakusuma moved from East Java to West Java, where he created a grand centre in the Puncak mountain resort, in the village of Cikanyere, with the help of two rich benefactors. In 2002 it had 252 beds for guests and was nearly always fully booked. *Pesona Karmel* (a booklet of Carmelites) said about him, "His encounter with the Charismatic Renewal in 1974 became a turning point in his ministry. Although previously he was a popular retreat mentor and spiritual teacher, the experience of the Holy Spirit gave him a new tune and new power in his preaching ministry."⁵⁴

The Charismatics lay much stress upon psychology, but also physical healing may be an important factor for modern Catholics. This occurs also outside

⁵⁴ *Pesona Karmel* (a booklet of Carmelites) 2000:28.

the sphere of the more urban and modernising Charismatics, practiced by members of the Catholic community who possess special healing power. A quite sensational event in 1987 in Langgur, Kai Islands, has been described by Laksono. The priest Yosep Somar from Tanimbar was so well-known for healing and consultation with Catholics, Protestants and Muslims alike in Kai that several thousands people (9,000 registered for a visit) gathered for several days around the airport and parish house seeking healing.⁵⁵ Because of the reserved attitude of the official Catholic Church, not much is found in statistics and overall reports.

Basic ideas, characteristics and goals

What we find among Evangelicals and the Pentecostals worldwide and especially in the USA, including the five fundamentals of faith,⁵⁶ is also valid for the Evangelicals and Pentecostals in Indonesia. In recent years there has been a consciousness and an attempt, especially among certain Indonesian Evangelicals, to develop a so-called contextual theology, but generally speaking their basic concept is still the same. In this section we will add further detail while summarizing the movements.

The Evangelicals

We will take the statement formulated by the PII (Indonesia Evangelical Fellowship) as the representative of this stream or cluster, as follows:

Indonesian Evangelicals called, redeemed, and sanctified by the Son of God and for the glory of his name, realise that they have been called to (1) experience the fellowship of believers as the body of Jesus Christ; (2) serve and bear the burdens of one another with a humble heart; and (3) witness and proclaim the gospel. Its goals among others are: (1) to build Christian fellowship as the realisation of the body of Christ, which is holy and universal; (2) to defend the gospel; (3) to protect the pure hermeneutic and teaching of the Word of God; and (4) to perform social works, such as health care and taking care of orphans.⁵⁷

Adding to this statement, Konaniah quotes the words of Chris Marantika, the president of PII, in his small book: *Kaum Injili Indonesia Masa Kini* (Indonesian Evangelicals of Today) as follows, "Our God wants us to live and work in unity and interdependence. The motivation, methodology, and purpose of Christian ministry should be based on the "3-P" principles: praying together,

⁵⁵ Laksono 2002:202–209.

⁵⁶ These are (1) the inspiration and infallibility of the Bible; (2) the deity of Christ and his virgin birth; (3) the substitutionary atonement by Christ's death; (4) his literal resurrection; and (5) his second coming (Ellingsen 1988:49).

⁵⁷ Quoted from *Anggaran Dasar PII* (Constitution of PII), 1974, by Konaniah 1995:48–49.

paying together, and proclaiming together.”⁵⁸ After analysing the Evangelicals’ understanding of their mission, Konaniah⁵⁹ concludes,

The Evangelicals (in Indonesia) affirm that the church has a mission in the world. Mission is true only if it aims at leading people to repentance. The supreme task of the church is to obey the Great Commission of God (Matt. 28: 19–20)—to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ to the ends of the earth. Christians are to have a genuine concern for the social and economic welfare of the people. But this must not eclipse the fact that their primary task is to proclaim the gospel to the whole world. There is no other way to acquire eternal salvation except through Jesus.

According to Evangelicals, the purposes of mission are (1) to proclaim the gospel and lead unbelievers to Christ; (2) gather new believers into local churches or plant new churches; and (3) to serve those who are in need. But the church should not forget the ultimate purpose—to share God’s love to them.⁶⁰

The Pentecostals

As has also been mentioned, among the Pentecostal churches in Indonesia we may find several doctrinal differences or even conflicts, as in their country of origin the USA. But we may also point out some general similarities found in their statements of faith that at the same time become their special characteristics.⁶¹ Firstly, as to the doctrine of baptism, they believe that there are two kinds of baptism: baptism of water (by immersion and given to believers, not to infants) and baptism of the Holy Spirit as the last stage of salvation and as indicated by *glossolalia* (speaking in tongues). Secondly, divine healing; they believe that this miracle still happens now in several ways. Some Pentecostal-Charismatic pastors perform this healing through revival meetings while others minister through personal contact and prayer (including through telephone and television). Certain pastors, like Yesaya Pariadji from the Tiberias Church, use what he calls “the anointing oil” (*minyak urapan*).⁶² Thirdly, the flexible, simple, and spontaneous liturgy or order of service that is usually completed with an altar call or altar service. They believe that the Holy Spirit will lead the leader as well the participants in what they want to do during worship, including the exposition and the interpretation of the Bible. Fourthly, belief in the second coming of Christ at the end of time. Some Pentecostals believed

⁵⁸ Konaniah 1995:56.

⁵⁹ Albert R. Konaniah was the President of SAAT in 1988–2000.

⁶⁰ Konaniah 1995:73 and 115.

⁶¹ Aritonang 2003:188–192; Sianipar 2002:58–60, 156–157, 171; Senduk n.d.: 55–56.

⁶² At least since 2003 up to the moment of writing (2005) Petrus Octavianus, one of the prominent leaders of the Evangelicals, was also regularly invited by Pariadji to lead the “anointing oil” Sunday service in his Tiberias Church. No wonder that the common Christians have difficulty in seeing the difference between the Evangelicals and the Pentecostal-Charismatics.

that Christ would come back in the year of 2000; therefore before that year there were many seminars and revival meetings that took that issue as their central theme. Although the *parousia* did not occur in 2000 they insist on holding on to the belief in the imminent return of Christ.⁶³

Another prominent development among the Pentecostal and Charismatic groups since the 1980s is the so-called theology of success or theology of prosperity. This theology was first introduced by some American authors like Norman Vincent Peale, Kenneth Hagin and Robert Schuller, and then propagated in Asia especially by Paul (who later becomes David) Yonggi Cho from Korea. One of his prominent students and followers in Indonesia is Yakub Nahuway, the leader of the Mawar Saron congregation of GBI and since October 2004 elected to be the synod chairperson of this church. Then in some Pentecostal and Charismatic churches and fellowships since the 1990s we may also find the phenomenon of the Toronto Blessing, that is the evidence of the fulfilment of the Holy Spirit in some spectacular signs of ecstasy like holy laughter, holy groaning, holy roaring, holy crying and wiping, etc. This phenomenon took place first in the Vineyard Christian Fellowship in Toronto and then spread all over the world. Certain Evangelical theologians, like Herlianto,⁶⁴ are very critical of these elements of teaching and praxis but the Pentecostal-Charismatic theologians defend these.⁶⁵ Some Evangelical churches also adopt the theology of success, parallel with the claim of some Pentecostals that they are also Evangelicals, which makes it difficult to distinguish these two streams or confessional groups.

Methods and Strategy of Mission and Evangelisation

We find that Evangelicals and Pentecostals apply approximately the same methods and strategies, although we may find some difference in detail. Corresponding to this, according to Konaniah,⁶⁶ Indonesian Evangelical churches realise that the mission of the church is a holistic ministry. This means that the ministry of the church includes the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ and social responsibility. If the church limits itself to social service, it ignores the spiritual welfare of man and distorts the biblical meaning of mission.

⁶³ In 2003 Mangapin Sibuea, pastor of a Pentecostal church, prophesied that the *parousia* of Christ would happen on 10 November 2003. He gathered his followers who came from many places (Timor, Papua, North Sumatra, etc.) in a building close to the city of Bandung. The *parousia* did not happen and Sibuea was jailed. Some months later he was sentenced by the court to stay in prison for several years based on the accusation that he caused disorder in society.

⁶⁴ Herlianto 1992 and 1995.

⁶⁵ E.g. Bambang H. Widjaja 1996.

⁶⁶ Konaniah 1995:75.

Discussing the methodology of mission or Evangelism, Konaniah, referring to some prominent Evangelical leaders like Chris Marantika⁶⁷ and Yakob Tomatala, said that the Indonesian Evangelical churches realise that *personal Evangelism* is an effective method to evangelise non-Christians.⁶⁸ Another related method that is also effective and relevant to its context is *household Evangelism*. The structure of Indonesian society emphasizes the family and local community. Therefore, in evangelism and planting churches, Christians have to pay attention to these factors. The third method is *mobilizing the laity*. Among Indonesian Evangelicals there is a strong sense of urgency, “Now is God’s time for Indonesia. Let us not miss the present opportunity because we hold on to an unbiblical concept of the role of the clergy that discourages lay contributions to the church.”⁶⁹

The fourth is *formal education* through public and Christian schools. Regarding this method and strategy, Konaniah, referring to some resources, gave an historical observation. After the abortive coup of the Indonesian Communist Party in September 1965, there was a new era for Christian mission. Since 1966 freedom of religion has been confined to the recognised religions (i.e. Islam, Protestantism, Catholicism, Hinduism, and Buddhism). Every Indonesian citizen has to adhere formally to one religion. Religion courses are obligatory in all schools from elementary through to university levels. Every student has to join a religion class. Thus the Christian evangelistic effort among the youth could be concentrated on establishing Christian schools. This approach has been very successful in the past and is still a wide open door. Regarding this fourth method, only a few Pentecostal churches paid attention to formal general education. Most of the schools they founded are related to evangelistic work, like Bible schools and seminaries.⁷⁰

The fifth method is *dialogue* with people of other faiths, which shows a typical Evangelical understanding of it. Referring to Marantika and some other Evangelicals, Konaniah noted that Christians have often looked upon people of other faiths as enemies.⁷¹ Argumentation, condemnation, and confrontation have failed to win the people of other faiths. Dialogue is based on interpersonal relationship. The purpose of dialogue is to build bridges and create “points

⁶⁷ Chris Marantika is the founder of Sekolah Tinggi Theologia Injili Indonesia (STII) and Universitas Kristen Imanuel (Ukrim) at Yogyakarta and was chairperson of PII in 1983–2002. One of the requirements for a student to finish her/his study at STII is to establish a local congregation with at least 30 newly baptised members. Corresponding to this, Marantika’s motto is “Indonesia 1:1:1—one church in every one of the villages in Indonesia in one generation,” quoted in: Scheunemann 1995:239.

⁶⁸ Konaniah 1995:77.

⁶⁹ Konaniah 1995:83, referring to Herlianto (one of the prolific writers among Indonesian Evangelicals), “Peran-serta Kaum Awam dalam Pertumbuhan Gereja.” [The Participation of the Laity in Church Growth]. 1989.

⁷⁰ Konaniah 1995:84–85.

⁷¹ Konaniah 1995:86–87.

of contact” in order to proclaim the gospel. Today the urgent need in both the Christian church and the world is mission—to evangelise those who are not yet Christians. Here we see that among the Evangelicals dialogue is also an opportunity to evangelise with a target or expectation that the partner in dialogue will be attracted to become a Christian or member of a church through baptism, although they forbid using force. Therefore Konaniah as an Evangelical theologian said,

Today we have to realise that the urgent need is to evangelise those who do not yet believe in Christ. If the church does not have a vision and burden to evangelise, it will die. Since in Indonesia Christianity is a minority religion, believers are to ask God for wisdom so as to act wisely. Christians are not to force anyone to believe or to use materials that provoke anger. In the Indonesian context, witnessing through dialogue (or personal evangelism) and love are necessities.⁷²

The last method Konaniah mentioned is *social responsibility*.⁷³ In this regard, while referring to some other prominent Evangelicals like M.S. Anwari and Peterus Pamudji, he said, “Christians must work against injustice. Yet the church cannot become a political action organisation.”⁷⁴ At this moment, Evangelicals have a unique opportunity to lead the church toward renewal in Evangelism and a Spirit-empowered search for peace and justice. Social justice is needed, but it cannot solve every evil. The root of social evils is sin. Only the gospel of Jesus Christ can adequately deal with sin. Therefore, churches have to be careful that they do not let social works blur their primary task—to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ. However more and more Evangelical and Pentecostal churches or foundations give their attention and dedication to social service, such as giving education and lodging for the street children.

There is another method not yet mentioned which is very popular and also frequently used by the Evangelical and Pentecostal-Charismatic groups, the *Revival Meeting (Kebaktian Kebangunan Rohani, KKR)*. Their churches and institutions, including Bible or theological schools—either alone or jointly—frequently undertake this KKR, inviting mass crowds openly through radio or newspaper, and not infrequently calling it an “ecumenical gathering” or an “inter-denominational fellowship.” Sometimes the events are given other names, like “Faith Refreshing Service,” and every KKR is given a special theme such

⁷² Konaniah 1995:133.

⁷³ Konaniah 1995:88–91.

⁷⁴ It is quite interesting to observe that since 2001 there are several prominent leaders of Indonesian Evangelicals and Pentecostals, like Ruyandi Hutasoit (a physician as well as evangelist who then became a pastor, and the leader of Doulos Foundation) and Jakub Nahuway, who jumped into the political arena by establishing a political party, *Partai Damai Sejahtera* (Party of Peace and Prosperity) with a dream of getting a big number of constituents and votes among the Christians in the impending General Election of 2004. This Christian party, however, was not really successful. It received 2.13% of the votes, nationally, and 5% in Jakarta.

as “God’s visit on our nation,” “Our calling in this end of time,” etc. YPPII together with its twin I-3, for example, has a tradition to perform what they call Annual Worship around one week at its campus in Batu. Thousands of people gather from all over the country, many of them—not to say most of them—coming from the mainline or traditional churches.⁷⁵ Such occasions are usually filled with altar calls, calling the participants to strengthen their commitment and to dedicate their life to serve Christ, to confess their sin, or even to repent and accept Jesus as their Saviour and then to be Christian, and not infrequently accompanied by divine healing. Besides the traditional Christians, not few of the participants are new Christians recruited through such occasions. No wonder that many Muslims complain that these activities are only a trick of Christianisation (see later).

Sikitari added another method often used by the Evangelicals, *Cross-Cultural Ministry*.⁷⁶ By this method he meant preaching the gospel to the people from various cultural backgrounds. They use the language, custom (adat) and art of the traditional tribes to communicate the gospel, in Indonesia as well in the other countries. It is noteworthy that since the 1960s there have been quite a lot of Indonesian evangelists, especially from the circle of YPPII, sent to many other Asian countries like Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, Kampuchea, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Japan, Nepal, Afghanistan and Pakistan. Some of them even went to Europe, Latin America, and Africa. They evangelise the people by visiting them in their houses, arranging gatherings in open areas such as a market place, and using radio broadcasting. This was made possible among other things by cooperation with WEC.

These methods lead to one of the main purposes and goals of the Evangelicals, to gather new believers into local churches or to plant new churches. That is why there are so many new congregations and church organisations initiated by the Evangelical missions. Sometimes this has raised problems, either because they recruit their church members from the church congregations that already exist or they evangelise the people of other faiths. Of course, this is not a general phenomenon applied to all Evangelical and Pentecostal-Charismatic churches.

Summarising this description of methodology, Konaniah said that the Evangelicals stress that the command of God and the content of the gospel remain the same, though the methodology may differ according to the situation.⁷⁷ They realise that it is inadequate to have a spiritual program without a correlative concern and compassion for the poor and oppressed. But the

⁷⁵ Sikitari 1990:13–21 also called these revival events Renewal Ministry and described three examples, i.e. in Timor (1964 onwards), in Bandung (1966), and in Serawak Malaysia (1973).

⁷⁶ Sikitari 1990:21–27.

⁷⁷ Konaniah 1995:110.

church cannot substitute another agenda for the Evangelistic work, and after comparing the Evangelicals with the Ecumenicals, Konaniah concluded, “The difference between Evangelicals and Ecumenicals is clearly illustrated by two important church organisations—the PII and PGI. These two organisations have different approaches in mission. The PII stresses the need for personal conversion to Jesus Christ. Thus its purpose is to build the Christian fellowship as the realisation of the body of Christ, which is holy and universal. The PGI emphasizes social justice. It pays attention to motivating local congregations to work together with other people who embrace other faiths in order to solve social problems and to struggle for justice and peace.”⁷⁸

Relationship with and Impact on other Churches and Religions

As has been mentioned, the relationship between the Evangelicals-Pentecostals and the so-called Ecumenical or mainline churches varied from quite close and friendly up to highly tense. Especially regarding the Pentecostals, but this can also be applied to some Evangelicals, one of the main causes of the highly strained relationship is that they do not respect the comity, that is a mutual understanding not to invade the other mission or church fields. Consequently, many—not to say most—of the members of the Evangelical-Pentecostal churches came from the mainline churches. From Evangelical-Pentecostal perspective it is quite naturally so, because they believe that they bring a set of Christian doctrines and practice that will fulfil or add to the Christian doctrine and practice brought by the former missions.⁷⁹

We cannot depict the whole story but we may take the development of the relationship between the YPPII and the DGI/PGI with its members as an example. As described by Sikitari,⁸⁰ in the early years of the YPPII (1964–1979) this Evangelical foundation developed a very close relationship with the DGI and its church members. The YPPII supported a number of churches—among others is GMIT (the Evangelical Christian Church in Timor)—to grow in numbers as well in spiritual and human resources. Later on there was a growing tension in their relationship and cooperation. Sikitari mentioned three of the causes,

Firstly, the problem of loyalty [dealing with] spiritual gifts and spiritual authority that accompanied the ministry of IMF (YPPII) evangelists and pastors. This affected the lives of some pastors, presbyteries and members of some of the congregations. As a result, they felt more loyal to the evangelists and to IMF whose

⁷⁸ Konaniah 1995:146.

⁷⁹ Van den End 2002:275.

⁸⁰ Sikitari 1990:34–45.

ministry has been such a help for their lives. Secondly, the consequences of the spontaneous ministry of those who had experienced the renewal. Though they did not have theological training to share with others, they did have their experience with the Lord and their spiritual gifts.... Their ministry became a threat to the authority of the local church leaders who often felt that their ministry, moral life and spiritual life were being criticized by these new converts. Thirdly, theological problems arose. In general, reformed denominations inherited a theological understanding contrary to what was taught by those who experienced the renewal. Theological emphasis on new birth and repentance, for example, was a major disturbance for pastors and other church leaders from the reformed church's traditions. Also lively liturgy became a problem for those who were used to the Dutch style of worship.⁸¹

Besides these three causes, Sikitari also mentioned three issues adding to the tension between the Evangelical and the Ecumenical streams, especially between YPPII and DGI.⁸² Firstly, the difference of work system; DGI handed over their ideas to be implemented by the member churches, whereas YPPII had to implement their own ideas. An example of this is the practice of calling people forward for repentance (altar calling). Secondly, the different understanding of Evangelism and mission. For the DGI and its members Evangelism is not for Christians, whereas for YPPII it is also for the Christians, to renew their lives. Thirdly, the idea of the church in relation to para-church movements. Those from mainstream congregations considered themselves as the church, and those from para-church organisations as less than the church. On the other hand, those from para-church organisations considered themselves to be spiritual and committed, whereas those from congregations were spiritually dead and therefore needed to be evangelised.

Sikitari does not forget to mention and acknowledge some activities of ministry used by the YPPII that insulted the member churches of the DGI.⁸³ The YPPII involved members without asking permission from the congregation. In addition, the YPPII performed Holy Communion, ordained missionaries, had its own chapel, and was involved in church planting. According to the church structures, none of these aspects of ministry could be performed by para-church organisations such as the YPPII, because it was not a church. These issues led the DGI to decide in 1984 to break off the relationship with the YPPII.

This bitter experience encouraged the YPPII to rediscover its own direction and to seek for a new *modus operandi*. Based on the consideration and options given by the *Direktur Jenderal Bimbingan Masyarakat Protestan* (General Director of Protestant Guidance) of the Department of Religious Affairs on

⁸¹ Sikitari 1990:39–40.

⁸² Sikitari 1990:40–41.

⁸³ Sikitari 1990:41.

behalf of the Indonesian government, the YPPII decided to support the new converts who wanted to establish a new denomination under the ministry of the YPPII. The new denomination was founded in 1984 in West Kalimantan and formerly called the Indonesian Evangelisation Church (*Gereja Pekabaran Injil Indonesia*; GPII) but then changed to become the Indonesian Missionary Church (*Gereja Misi Injili Indonesia*, GMII).

Dealing with the relationship with the people of other faiths, especially Muslims, as already mentioned, the Evangelicals-Pentecostals are also aware of the importance of dialogue with people of other faiths. But many of these dialogues show an atmosphere of apologetic and polemic on doctrine rather than seeking for mutual understanding and respect. Aspects of the process and content of this so-called 'dialogue' were openly published and distributed by both sides in books, cassettes, disks and internet websites, and not infrequently aroused tensions and conflicts. Certain Evangelical-Pentecostal Bible schools or seminaries also encourage their students to win or recruit people of other faiths as one of the requirements to finish their study. For this goal some of the students, like certain evangelists or missionaries, use 'tricks' like giving food, clothes or money. The revival and divine healing meetings are also directed to people of the other faiths and this also raises a hurt and disturbed feeling, especially among Muslim people.⁸⁴

The increase and development of the Evangelicals and Pentecostals in terms of quantity might be respected and saluted with astonishment and admiration. But the approaches and terminologies (such as newly born, repent, etc.) frequently used by some of them to their fellow Christians as well as to the people of the other faiths may also arouse an assessment that they want to show a kind of spiritual arrogance and superiority. No wonder that some observers concluded that while we can learn many good and inspiring things from them we also have to be critical, especially when we want to take into account seriously the inter-religious relationship. Singgih,⁸⁵ for example, drew attention to the Evangelicals' concept of ecumenism as the fellowship of the newly born Christians. He also criticized their concept of salvation as maintaining the old *adagium, extra ecclesiam nulla salus* that tends to see the people of other faiths as communities that should be saved by asking them to present themselves for baptism.

⁸⁴ For example, a revival and healing meeting—called *Festival 2003*—in Bandung on 13–14 August, 2003 led by an American evangelist Peter Youngren in cooperation with a local committee composed of some Evangelical and Pentecostal denominations, made Muslim people very angry and disturbed. They called this meeting an effort to promote apostasy and they strongly protested and asked the police to disallow the venue. See Herlianto, "Kesaksian (1) dan (2)," accessed from www.yabina.org on 18–20 August 2003.

⁸⁵ Singgih 1994:19–27.

The Evangelical-Pentecostal groups as well as the so-called Ecumenicals are aware that the tension between them will not bring any benefit and that the polarisation between these two wings is predominantly a western issue. Therefore since the 1990s quite a number of steps have been taken and ideas put forward to minimise the tension and polarisation. Theo Kobong in one of his writings (1991), offered an approach to find a solution by using an Asian idiom, “this as well as that,” rather than using a western idiom “either or.” Meanwhile there are a number of forums or gatherings initiated by both sides to discuss various national issues faced by all Christians and even by the whole nation (see chapter seventeen). More fruitful efforts and results are still to be expected in the future.

Meanwhile, it is quite interesting to note that after the tragedy of 11th September 2001 in New York there has been a remarkable reconciliation between radical and fundamentalist Evangelicals in USA in line with a strong antipathy against Muslims. The echo of this phenomenon was also felt in Indonesia, the country with the biggest Muslim population in the world, because most of the Evangelicals in Indonesia have affiliation and affinity with those in the USA.⁸⁶ This may bring a potential and continuing conflict between Christians and Muslims during the following years. But the cooperation and mutual alertness of all Christians in Indonesia is expected to eliminate this potential conflict.

Addendum about ‘new churches’

Besides those Evangelical and Pentecostal churches, there are also some other churches we can also categorize as ‘new churches’ in Indonesia, although globally speaking some of them are quite old churches. To mention some of them⁸⁷: *Gereja Masehi Advent Hari Ketujuh*⁸⁸ (GMAHK, The Seventh-Day Adventist Church) that has already been for more than 100 years in this country, *Gereja Ortodoks Indonesia* (The Orthodox Church in Indonesia). Actually there are two types of Orthodox Churches in Indonesia. *Gereja Ortodoks Indonesia*, currently led by Archimandrite Daniel Bambang Byantoro, was established in the beginning of the twentieth century and is affiliated to the Eastern Orthodox Church in Greece, whereas another one, led by Bambang Noorsena, started

⁸⁶ See *Gatra* magazine, June 21, 2003, with its main theme “Gerakan Penginjil Radikal” (Radical Evangelist Movement), esp. pp. 24–36.

⁸⁷ The general survey and description on these churches is also available in Aritonang 2003.

⁸⁸ The first Adventist missionary already arrived in Indonesia in 1900; starting in Padang, West Sumatra, among the Muslim communities, but then moved to Medan, North Sumatra, and since then covered almost all provinces in the country. This church grows steadily and runs a lot of schools (from Kindergarten to university), hospitals and a publishing house (especially publishes book, booklets and magazines on health).

from the 1990s, is affiliated to the Syrian Orthodox Church, uses Arabic, and call itself a study church which means only founded to do some study and research rather than recruiting anybody to be its member. The Orthodox churches are members of the WCC.

Other churches are *Gereja Pertama Kristus Ahli Ilmu Pengetahuan* (The First Church of Christ Scientist),⁸⁹ *Gereja Yesus Kristus dari Orang-orang Suci Zaman Akhir* (The Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-Day Saints),⁹⁰ and *Saksi-saksi Yehuwa di Indonesia* (Jehovah's Witnesses in Indonesia).⁹¹ All of these churches are also registered in the Department of Religious Affairs. There are also still a few churches not yet officially registered, like the quasi-church of New Age Movement. But the space limitation makes impossible to give more detailed analysis.

Jan S. Aritonang (main text) and Karel Steenbrink (Catholic Charismatics)

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⁸⁹ This Christian Science denomination was already established in Indonesia since the 1950s.

⁹⁰ This Mormon denomination started in Indonesia from 1970; in 1981–1985 it was inactive due to some restrictions made by the Indonesian government, but then from 1985 it recovered up to the present. It shows a remarkable growth in Indonesia as also happened globally, because among other things it distributes various kinds of aid to the community, including to the victims of the tsunami and earthquake disasters in 2004–2005, besides showing a special respect and honor to Islam and to the prophet Mohammad (see an article on this theme in one issue of their monthly *Liahona* in 2002).

⁹¹ This religious group also claims to be Christian although the mainline churches generally call it a cult. The missionaries started to work in Indonesia since 1950s. In 1976 the government banned it because its activity was considered as disturbing religious harmony. But since 2001 the government of the ‘Reformation Era’, led by Abdurrahman Wahid who is well-known as a proponent of democracy, cancelled the ban and gave this sect a new opportunity. During the ban period many of the followers were still active under a different name.

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CHAPTER NINETEEN

CHINESE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES IN INDONESIA

Chinese Christians are found all over the vast Indonesian archipelago: from strongly Muslim Aceh in the west to the mixed Muslim-Christian society of the Moluccas, in the outspoken Protestant Minahasa as well as in dominant Catholic Flores. In this chapter we will mostly concentrate on the distinct Chinese Protestant churches of Java, with additional notes about the presence of Catholic Chinese in Java. For areas outside Java we add comparative notes, stressing the discrepancy between the Chinese majority communities of West Indonesia as different from the much smaller groups in East Indonesia. Christianity in Indonesia has only in a few places (West Kalimantan, the islands of the Riau archipelago) a dominant Chinese face, but in most regions where the Christians are a minority, the Chinese are a significant segment of this community. This also has strengthened the idea of Christians in Indonesia as somewhat richer than the average Indonesian, because of the larger number of rich people among the Chinese in general and also among the Christian Chinese. Although a Chinese ethnic identity cannot be concealed, and ethnicity remains a very important factor in Indonesian society, there never was a development towards a truly contextual Chinese Christianity because church leaders did not like to stress this identity.

Javanese Chinese: from integration into a Muslim society to the preservation of an distinct culture

Relations of trade and partly also of religion have for a very long time been established between China and Indonesia. In the cultural and religious field Indonesia has been the receiver (as was also the case with influence from India and the Middle East). Chinese Buddhist pilgrims and even many more traders came to India through the Indonesian archipelago from the third century CE. Quite well documented are the Chinese Buddhist monks who came in the seventh century to the capital of Sriwijaya (now Palembang) to learn Sanskrit in the well-established monasteries before they continued their journey to India. One of the sources for the arrival of Islam in the archipelago, especially on the north coast of Java, was the Muslim community of southeast China. Most Chinese, however, who arrived in the archipelago were not Muslims, but until the beginning of the nineteenth century most of them converted to Islam if they stayed for any length of time. An eighteenth century Chinese traveller to Java, Ong Tae-hae, remarked:

When the Chinese have settled for several generations in foreign countries without ever returning to China, then they easily forget the teachings of their ancestors and Chinese sages. They adopt the way natives eat and dress, read their books. They do not object to call themselves Javanese and become Muslims.¹

There were several reasons why, from the nineteenth century on, conversion to Islam became less and less the rule. A majority of Chinese retained their own identity and a small but increasing number of them accepted Christianity as their new religion. This process was strengthened in the early twentieth century when Chinese women also migrated in larger numbers. After the independence of Indonesia in 1945 the massive migration of Chinese for trade, and for work as coolies in the mines and plantations of western Indonesia, stopped, but the communities consolidated. They remained an important factor in Indonesian Christianity.

During the colonial period the Chinese were often not identified as 'indigenous' and are to be found in the statistics on religion with the Europeans. After Indonesian independence all Christians, Catholics and Protestants alike, have stressed local Indonesian identity. But the Chinese could not easily gain this privilege of a local expression of their Christian identity. This was most difficult in the Catholic Church, as Boelaars states, "We may suggest that the Chinese communities were asked to be more outspoken Indonesian than the other ethnic groups of Indonesia."² The only example of inculturation for Chinese that he could remember was the use of a typical Chinese sign of reverence: to show the right hand as a closed fist, supported by the left hand. For the Protestants it was Hendrik Kraemer who wrote in the 1933 about 'the Chinese problem'

To them *masuk Islam* meaning "embrace Islam" implies become native, and that they do not want. They do not want it, because, being Orientals, they consider a change of religion a change of their socio-religious group. Thus, to embrace Islam means renouncing their Chinese identity for their Chinese identity and the socio-religious imprint they have received at birth are identical to them.³

The word 'Orientals' (Dutch: *Vreemde Oosterlingen*) as used here by Kraemer was the special legal category in the Dutch colony for Arabs and Chinese since 1854. The two groups were not identified with Europeans or with the indigenous Indonesians. They had a special status, some privileges, but also many limitations (like the prohibition to buy land in Java). On the whole their situation became uncertain with the rise of the nationalist movement after 1912. Their distinct position brought the Chinese in any case closer to

¹ Quoted in Ong Hokham 1982:278.

² H. Boelaars 1991:346-347.

³ Kraemer 1958:151.

the dominating colonial European class than to the indigenous. At least during the late colonial period this was an obstacle for them to embrace Islam. Also during the second half of the twentieth century, in the independent Indonesian Republic, there were few conversions of Chinese to Islam, but many more to Christianity.

On the whole, in all these periods Chinese preferred to remain somewhat independent from the leadership of their new religion when they converted to Christianity. In the Catholic Church they often established since the 1970s *kelompok doa*, charismatic prayer groups, under responsibility of lay people, as part of the charismatic movement. In chapter eighteen we have seen a number of difficult incidents between Catholic Chinese and the clergy during an earlier period. Also among Protestants we will notice that Chinese preferred to organise things by themselves. When possible this was done in harmony with the European missionaries, but eventually they took their own decisions, in full conviction of being Christians.

A quite strong example of this love for an independent direction was the foundation of THHK, *Tiong Hwa Hwee Koan*, the vibrant Chinese cultural organisation that since 1901 set up a large number of modern Chinese schools after the model of the schools of the Protestant mission. The first school was constructed in Batavia/Jakarta in 1901. Its founders had studied at Protestant schools and they loved this style of school, so different from the traditional Chinese system of learning. THHK schools introduced firstly, a new emphasis on Mandarin for all young people of Chinese descent (no longer Hokien, Hakka or other dialects that were used in the Dutch East Indies); secondly, a modern Western curriculum as it was in use in modern education in China and Japan; and thirdly schools for girls. In 1908 there were already 75 THHK schools with 5,500 pupils. These numbers rose to 442 THHK schools in 1915 with 19,636 pupils and 848 teachers, most of them educated in China and invited to the Dutch colony with a contract of labour.⁴ The government and the mission had to find an answer and opened the HCS, *Hollands-Chinese School*, a school for Chinese pupils, where the language of instruction was not Malay (as for the indigenous population), but Dutch as used for the Europeans in the colony and for the highest class of the indigenous population. THHK schools were direct rivals of the mission and government schools, but they were not exclusive in the field of religion. The first Methodist missionaries could make contact in Medan (and make a living) thanks to teaching positions in English at THHK schools (see chapter thirteen).

On the percentage of Chinese in general, and of Chinese Christians in particular, there are no hard figures. In the 1930 census the 1,233,214 Chinese

⁴ Groeneboer 1993:357.

of the colony counted for 2.03% of the population. Foreign minister Adam Malik mentioned in 1973 a number of 5 million (out of a total of some 125 million) in that year, and since then this has often been repeated with a percentage between 4–5%. Serious researchers, however, suppose a declining percentage close to the 1.5% in 2000 or somewhat more than 3 million. One of the uncertain factors is the definition of ‘Chinese’ that is often taken very broadly. Even if only one in four grandparents is a true and full ethnic Chinese, a person often is taken as such. Until the late 1950s there were still 120,000 children in Chinese-language schools. After the 1965 turn in politics these schools were closed, assimilation was required, and many received Indonesian citizenship. This was also the period when the new discriminative terminology of *non-pribumi* (non-indigenous) became common, replacing the Dutch ‘foreign Easterners.’ Somers Heidhues estimated that in the 1990s well under 10% of ethnic Chinese still lacked an Indonesian passport. When we look to the figures, of the 0.92% Buddhists and 0.82% Confucianists in the 2000 census (nearly all Chinese) we may ask how many of the ethnic Chinese are Christians? Or should we also here accept some kind of double loyalties?⁵

For the Catholic community Boelaars mentions that in 1980 the Chinese were 58.5% of the Catholics of the Archdiocese of Jakarta (down from 87% of the non-European Catholics in 1940). Out of the new converts in Jakarta of the period 1975–1980 even 67% were of Chinese descent. For the same period, of the new Catholics in Ambon 26.3% were also of Chinese descent. Adult conversions between 1975 and 1980 in all Indonesia were 16.2% or more than 42,000 new Catholics. For the whole of Indonesia Boelaars estimated that in 1980 7.3% of the Catholics were of Chinese descent. This would bring the figure for Chinese Catholics in 2000 to about 430,700 or slightly more than 10% of all Indonesian Chinese.⁶ If we would assume that about the same number of Chinese descendents have become members of one of the Protestant churches, this would mean that about 20–25% of the Indonesian Chinese has accepted Christianity. All these figures have to be taken cautiously. For the general public the modern Chinese are much more related to Christianity than to Islam. The movement towards Islam (with Yunus Yahya and PITI, *Persatuan Islam Tionghoa Indonesia*, The Union of Chinese Muslims of Indonesia) has been insignificant compared to those Chinese who converted to Christianity in Indonesia.

⁵ Somers Heidhues 1998:166; Suryadinata 2003:73–79.

⁶ Boelaars 1991:158, 169–180.

Chinese Protestants between missionary control and autonomy: 1620s–1945

The first Protestant missionary who addressed the Chinese population of Batavia was Rev. Justus Heurnius (1587–1652) after his arrival in Batavia in 1624. He prepared a Dutch-Latin-Chinese dictionary and translated the Heidelberg Catechism into Chinese. He also translated texts like the Nicene Creed and basic prayers into that language. After he moved to Ambon in 1632 he concentrated on Malay. It has to be regretted that his work was not continued. We do not know the results of his work. The Church Council of Batavia was in general only negative about Chinese and considered their faith as paganism, an attitude that still was common among missionaries in the twentieth century.

Niemeijer found in the archives of the Batavia Church Council a number of converted Chinese.⁷ Like the freed slaves (*Mardijker*) they had exchanged their Chinese names for Christian ones. It appeared that more women than men converted to Christianity, probably because conversion for them was an opportunity to leave the Chinese cultural bounds that constricted them, like the possibility of becoming a second wife or a concubine. In that time conversion to Christianity was an absolute rupture with Chinese traditional culture. It is no surprise therefore that no Chinese Christian community could grow, because the converts had lost totally their identity and had merged into the new Eurasian community in Java.

During the English interregnum (1811–1816) several European missionary societies sent evangelists to the Indies. Missionaries like Robert Morrison, William Milne and Walter Medhurst worked for some time in Malaysia and Indonesia but they were waiting for the final purpose of their mission: to enter China. Only Medhurst saw the fulfilment of his hope: with the opening of the first harbours in China after the First Opium War he moved to Shanghai in 1843 (see also chapter fourteen).

In the 1830s a series of new rules made the position of Chinese in the Dutch colony more and more difficult. In 1838 the principle of geography was established. All those who were born from parents that were residents of the Dutch Kingdom and its colonies would henceforth be considered as Dutch citizens. In 1854 a new constitution of the colony divided its population in three groups: Europeans, indigenous and *Vreemde Oosterlingen*. In 1892 the Chinese were, for many aspects of law, put on the same level with the indigenous people, while the Japanese were put on one level with the Europeans, but the division into three legal groups remained. The ethical policy that began in the late 1890s included many measures in favour of the indigenous

⁷ Niemeijer 1996:163–165.

population and restricted the right of the Chinese in respect to travelling, trade and the possibility to buy land. All these measures intensified the difference between the Chinese and the indigenous Indonesians. Most Chinese who did not return to their homeland, but found a spouse, married and had children, finally became integrated in their new home. They and their offspring are labelled as *peranakan* or integrated Chinese.

In the midst of the nineteenth century transport between China and Java became much easier and cheaper. This caused a new stream of Chinese migrants. Many of them arrived with their families, or at least a wife. This created the *totok* Chinese communities or those who did not integrate into Indonesian societies, but remained faithful to the Chinese language and traditions. They continued to foster good relations with their homeland and from time to time returned to China.

The mainstream Protestant Church of the Indies, or *Indische Kerk*, concentrated in Java on the pastoral care for the Europeans and Eurasians. The first to start a special missionary work for the Chinese after the VOC-period was Frederik Lodewijk Anthing (1818–1883), a member, and later vice-president, of the supreme court of the East Indies (see also chapter fourteen). He founded in 1851 a missionary society in Batavia, GIUZ, *Genootschap voor In- en Uitwendige Zending* and invited a Chinese Christian from Amoy, Gan Kwee, to work as an evangelist among Chinese in Java. Gan was an ambulatory type who never stayed long in one place, but travelled all along the island of Java until he moved to Singapore in 1873. The oldest congregation for Chinese in Batavia, Patekoan, as well as the Chinese congregation of Probolinggo in Central Java, are the result of his work. We do not have much information about the way Gan Kwee spread the Gospel, but we know that only after twelve years of work in Batavia (1856–1868) some results could be seen. Only in 1868 could the first twelve converts be baptised. This was the humble beginning of the congregation of Patekoan. The family of Gouw Kho became later quite important in this community. Gouw Kho was already a Christian when he arrived in Batavia in 1874 from China to start a trading business. He provided the facilities for the continuing evangelisation. In 1884 his house on Jalan Patekoan no 1 was donated to the congregation. This building was extended and in 1889 it was formally recognised as a church under the name *De Evangelische Gemeente tot Uitbreiding van Gods Koninkrijk* (Evangelical Congregation for the Expansion of God's Kingdom). Khouw Tek San became on the northern coast of Central Java the active successor of Gan Kwee as an evangelist, after he was baptised in Tegal in 1866. In 1867 already 68 people were baptised, the first fruit of his missionising.

An important event also was the conversion of Ang Boen Swie in Indramayu, 1858. The story of this event was stored in the mission archives in the Netherlands and published in the book commemorating the 50 Years

anniversary of the Synod of the (Chinese) Christian Church of West Java.⁸ Ang Boen Swie was about 40 years old when he experienced much trouble in his life. People suggested to him that he should embrace Islam, but he could not read the Qur'an and there was at that time no Javanese translation available. Therefore he rejected that proposal. The encounter with Christianity occurred through a meeting with an anonymous Dutchman who gave him the Old Testament in Javanese. He read it during ten days and then he started to understand and became aware of the proper answer to his difficulties. He communicated his understanding to his family and friends. He met a Dutch minister for the second time in December 1858 and during this meeting he was baptised, together with 13 other Chinese from Cirebon. He established the oldest Chinese Christian congregation in West Java and probably for the whole of Java. It still exists to this day.

The missionary society that became active in West Java was the *Nederlandsche Zendingsvereeniging*, the NZV. The first missionaries of the NZV arrived in Java on 5 January 1863 with the intention to preach the Gospel to the Sundanese, the indigenous population of West Java. In Batavia they met the missionary of the Chinese congregation in Patekoan. They could not start work, because they still lacked the special permit for missionising among the indigenous people of West Java issued only by the colonial administration.

In 1877 the first Sundanese were baptised in Bandung. Others followed later. In this region the first Chinese was baptised only in 1888. This was in Bandung, in the house of Thung Goan Hok, where the following year 27 Chinese were baptised. NZV later constituted congregations in West Java as the fruit of their work, in Bandung, Sukabumi and Tasikmalaya. The Chinese Christians became members of the mixed Sundanese-Chinese congregations.

Initially the missionaries concentrated mostly on the indigenous Sundanese. Only in the twentieth century did they give more serious attention to the Chinese of West Java. Their work resulted in two distinct churches: the *Gereja Pasundan* or Sundanese Church for the indigenous Sundanese and the THKTKH KH WD or *Tiong Hoa Kie Tok Kau Hwee Khu Hwee West Djawa*, the West Javanese Chinese Church.

The Chinese congregations remained very small until the last decade of the nineteenth century. Since then they have been growing steadily. Initially they were not formal congregations, and they received mostly minimal attention from the missionaries who were focused on the indigenous population. In the case of Ang Boen Swie in Indramayu the initiative was totally on the Chinese side. In Bandung we could see it as a phenomenon that started as an extension of Western missionary activities among the Sundanese. In the next phase the

⁸ Van den End 1990.

initiative was again more in the hand of the Chinese Christians themselves. This was also a process of ripening to create a kind of Christianity that would not destroy the Chinese identity of the converts. The Chinese who converted to Christianity did not move to special villages, as was the case with Javanese converts in many regions of Java, who in that way lost their roots. This was caused by the fact that the Chinese Christian communities were begun in urban areas, while most Javanese and specially the Sundanese Christians were from rural regions. In the villages the family ties, the connection between local customs and religion, were much stronger and the indigenous Javanese Christians were therefore in a more difficult situation. This does not mean that there were no problems for the Chinese Christians. They also had to experience a process of theological, social and cultural struggle in order to find their place.

The Chinese national feeling that flourished in the Chinese communities in Java in the first decades of the twentieth century gave birth to various Pan-Chinese organisations. The most prominent was the THHK, since 1900 as already mentioned above. It founded many schools. In the same atmosphere we must see the start of Chinese Malay newspapers and magazines for *Peranakan* Chinese, besides Chinese-language publications. *Totok* Chinese were certainly most passionate about the Chinese movement but others joined also. Schools were established from 1901 on and in 1908 the colonial government opened the first HCS as a reaction against this nationalist enthusiasm. The missionaries and the Chinese congregations also felt the rivalry of the Neo-Confucianist movement that started through THHK, especially its schools.

The Protestant mission had mostly worked in West Java among the poorer Chinese, while the wealthy Chinese supported THHK. The Methodist mission was an exception, because in the period 1910–1921 they could establish a good relationship with THHK in the care for the schools. The proposal of the Dutch missionaries to THHK to start a common organisation for poor Chinese was not accepted by the Chinese organisation. THHK was a much larger, dynamic and comprehensive organisation than the small missionary society.

In this period two new measures were issued that influenced the status of Chinese in the Dutch East Indies. The Chinese Empire announced a Law on Citizenship (1909) that declared all offspring of male Chinese to be Chinese citizens. The following year the Dutch colonial government issued a *Wet op het Nederlandsch Onderdaanschap* (WNO) that gave Dutch citizenship to all people in the East Indies, including the Chinese. In that year, 1910, the newspaper *Sin Po* had become a strong supporter of Chinese nationalism in the Dutch East Indies. Until 1919 this newspaper strongly protested against the ruling of WNO. The most practical issue was the obligation to enter the army in case of war. With the fall of the Qing dynasty in 1911 China entered a period of uncertainty that lasted until 1928. Notwithstanding the weak condition of

the Chinese state, there was still the hope that China would interfere in the Dutch colony, in favour of the supporters of its national pride. In 1918 there were ethnic clashes in Kudus (including the effort to make Chinese enforced converts to Islam). These conflicts did not spread widely to other places, but urged many Chinese to move to bigger cities.

Until the end of the nineteenth century there were Chinese Christian communities only in West Java (including Batavia) and Central Java, Tegal. In the first decades of the twentieth century new congregations started in the region of Mount Muria, east of Semarang (later to become the *Gereja Kristus*, the *Gereja Kristus Muria* and the *GKI Jawa Timur*).

The American Methodist Mission started its work also in the first decades of the twentieth century, in Batavia, Buitenzorg (Bogor) and East Java (Surabaya). Differing from the Dutch missionaries, they concentrated only on the Chinese, with more interest for the *totok*, the Chinese-speaking newcomers, than for the *peranakan*. They could establish a good cooperation with the THHK by the use of the English speaking missionaries as teachers in THHK schools. But in the late 1910s the Methodists retired from Java in order to concentrate on their work in North Sumatra (Medan), although Ms Mary Myers continued her work at the Batavia THHK school and in the congregation of Mangga Besar that was formally entrusted to the Dutch NZV missionaries.

The Dutch Mennonite Missionary Society *Doopsgezinde Zendingsvereeniging*, DZV, was present in Java since the mid-1850s. They worked in villages along the north coast of Central Java and like the other Dutch societies, they concentrated on the indigenous Javanese. Missionary Pieter Jansz in Jepara gave some attention to the Chinese, after he experienced that work among the Javanese was not successful. In 1873 there was in Jepara a mixed congregation of 800 baptised: Javanese, Malay and Chinese. They all spoke Javanese, mixed with Malay. Chinese-speaking Gan Kwee who came as an evangelist to this region could not do much here because of the language. The same was the case with China-educated evangelist Yap Boen Pho who came to Java on behalf of the DZV.

In this region one Tee Sien Tat from Kudus came into contact with the Salvation Army, Adventist preachers and the Dutch Salatiga Mission. In the end he decided that the Mennonites of the DZV were the most suited for him and he was baptised in 1918. From 1920 on the DZV worked in Kudus, where they counted already 103 members in 1926.

In East Java a central figure was Oei Soei Tiong. He was baptised in 1898 together with some other Chinese in Malang. Also in Sidoarjo a community started. They spread Christianity in their own environment and constituted in this way new congregations. Even after these conversions the missionary societies were not really interested in this process, the Methodists for a short period being the exception. Still, the missionaries sent very hopeful reports

to Europe about the zeal and devotion of these Chinese converts. Also they paid attention in their reports to the Pan-Chinese, Neo-Confucianist and later also Communist movements, but they found no way to be actively involved themselves in these internal Chinese affairs.

From the 1920s on the Chinese Christian congregations could be understood as fully grown-up and mature. In 1926 the first congregation of Mangga Besar in Batavia, installed a Church-Council and became known as the Methodist Church of Mangga Besar. One year later the Methodists withdrew from Java, leaving their congregations to the NZV and NZG (East Java). But the Chinese congregations had already established their own association by that time. In 1926 in Cipaku (Bogor) a *Bond Kristen Tionghoa* (BKT) had been founded, in Chinese the THKTKHTH as mentioned above. In 1927 a similar union started in Cirebon. Several meetings between the various BKT started, not to establish a union between the local Chinese churches but in order to support their individual work.

In this whole process the role of the congregation of Mangga Besar was very influential, because the chairman and secretary of the BKT, Pouw Peng Hong and Khoe Lan Seng, were from this congregation. The congregation of Mangga Besar was, until 1927, not directed by the Dutch missionaries, and after the mission was transferred from the American Methodist to the Dutch NZV missionaries, the Chinese Christians remained rather critical of their new supervisors. They could choose between independence and some relationship with the NZV missionaries. In 1928 they decided to become independent under the name *Tiong Hoa Kie Tok Kau Hwee Mangga Besar*. They had no minister of their own yet and therefore asked the NZV to provide a minister for them, to administer the sacraments and give them advice, without further obligations. This cooperation continued until 1935, when the Church Council of Mangga Besar could not accept the minister proposed by the NZV. Their need for a minister could be supplied by cooperation with other Chinese congregations. After the conference of BKT in 1928 this union was not further developed until 13–15 July 1934 when a Movement towards a United Chinese Church (*Gereja Serikat*) was established during a conference in Cirebon, bringing together congregations from West and Central Java. This development towards a united body revealed also the great differences between the Chinese congregations. The Batavia congregations of Mangga Besar and Tanah Abang opted for a centralistic model, rather top-down. But the other congregations in Batavia and West and Central Java wanted to start with districts that would be formed by the local congregations. Only later a synod and similar bodies would be needed. This difference of opinion separated Mangga Besar from most other congregations. In 1939 Mangga Besar did not join the West Java district, or *classis*, that was formally set up in 1940. But all congregations were quite hesitant to accept help and cooperation from the Dutch missionary societies.

The congregation of Kudus in North-Central Java was in fact the first to become independent, in 1925, and was recognised as an independent body by the colonial government. Their move was an incentive for other congregations to become independent from the Mennonite society, DZV. In 1927 this caused some tensions between the DZV and the Chinese Christians. The congregation of Kudus started the building of their own church without financial help of the DZV. In 1932 the Chinese church services were revived in Jepara and by the following year they could use their own church building. In 1935 Jepara also was recognised by the colonial government.

Chinese Christians in Jepara became excluded from their own community. They had to leave the THHK and could no longer send their children to these Chinese schools. They were also excluded from social organisations that arranged marriage ceremonies and burials. The Reformed missionary in Solo, A.K. de Groot, took an initiative to look for teachers, while the Mennonite congregation of Jepara provided a school building and other facilities. This young congregation was forced to be independent, with or without the help of the missionary societies.

The very dominant role of Tee Siem Tat, the charismatic leader of the Kudus congregation from 1918 until 1940, became the cause of stagnation in the process towards further maturity of the organisation of this church. Although the congregation of Kudus was the first THKTKH to receive government recognition, the formation of a district (*classis*) could only be realised in the 1940s. It was a quite common feature in the formation of the Chinese Christian communities that one strong person or one family would have a dominant role. They gave the facilities to the congregation to grow and sometimes this 'first family' operated in rivalry with other members of the congregation and with the European missionaries.

Outside the outspoken independent congregation of Mangga Besar in Batavia, most Chinese congregations in Java were somewhat undecided between loyalty towards the missionaries and implementation of their wish to become independent. In 1922 a *National Council of Churches* was established in China, followed in 1927 by a *Church of Christ in China* that became the example for the BKT and the Chinese Christians in Java, moving towards unity but within the Chinese ethnic boundaries. There were two great hopes: firstly they were conscious of the danger of denominationalism that was so disastrous for the western churches that were divided again and again. They hoped therefore for a true unity. Secondly, they hoped that Christianity would become another major religion in China, as the foreign Buddhism had become many centuries earlier.

In order to establish independence and unity the congregations outside Batavia opted for a bottom-up approach. The plans for a united church, *Thay Hwee*, as a union of all Chinese congregations, was proposed by the leaders of Mangga Besar and Tanah Abang at conferences in Cirebon (1934), Bandung

(1934) and the most vivid of all, in Purworedjo (1937). This was rejected by the Patekoan congregation of Batavia, by that of Senen and by the districts of Central and East Java, because it was considered to be too centralistic. The protagonists of the centralised church (Mangga Besar c.s.) in 1939 even changed their name in *Chung Hua Chi Tuh Chioa Hui* in order to stress their different position. This was the name of the United Church in China, although it was in a dialect somewhat different from that of the established THKTKH of the other congregations.

There was also a struggle about language in these congregations: some using Malay, other Chinese. In East Java the Mandarin-speaking congregation seceded as the *Gereja Kristus Tuhan*. The Mandarin-speaking congregation in the *classis* of West Java came together as a special district.

The schools that were founded by these congregations were quite important as a tool in the propagation of the new faith among the Chinese. The deciding motivation for parents to send their children to the Christian schools was that they wanted to give them a thorough and open-minded Western style of education. It has still to be researched how this all had worked, but it is quite sure that there was some kind of rivalry between the more westernised schools of the Chinese congregations and the missionaries, as opposed to the more China-orientated schools of the neo-Confucian THHK. If we look more closely at the curriculum of the schools, it has to be recognised that the THHK schools also concentrated on a rather modern and westernising content of learning. There was in the same style a quite clear rivalry, as we also could see in the reformist Muslim organisations like Muhammadiyah that established modern western-style schools to fight the 'danger of Christianisation' by the missionaries in Java. The Dutch missionaries themselves gave various reasons for their style of education. For the lower class Christians they defended this type of education as "the necessary opportunity for them to have possibilities for development in society. Otherwise they might be lost for Christianity." In another argumentation it was stressed that this was the proper method "to reach the higher social class."

In the late 1930s a quite important development took place with the arrival of the Chinese Evangelist John Sung (Song Shangjie). He preached for the first time in Medan, 1935. He made longer tours in July 1937 and September 1939. During these last tours he preached in many places in Java, as well as in Makassar and Ambon. He arrived at the invitation of the Pentecostal community of East Java and caused quite a transformation in the Chinese perception of Christianity. Until then the common opinion was that Chinese who converted to Christianity had to renounce their Chinese roots and were removed from their community. With his arrival it became slowly realised by the Indonesian Chinese community that Chinese Christians could no longer be considered people who had no respect for the traditions of their ancestors.

This also caused a new challenge for the Chinese churches themselves that had to redefine their position towards the traditional Chinese customs.

Since the commencement of the Chinese mission by Mr. Anthing and the Dutch missionaries it was always felt that it was very important that Chinese themselves should do the actual missionary activity. This started with the work of Gan Kwee. Also the person of Tee Siem Tat as the initiator of the congregation of Kudus and the spread of Christianity among Chinese in the Muria region is an interesting example. In Jakarta the Gouw family is still honoured as the founder of the Patekoan congregation. These founding families often were economically strong and they had a prominent social position in their communities. Most members of their congregations were rather poor and often dependant upon them. Well-educated Chinese ministers as leaders of the congregations only appear on the eve of World War II. Until then it were evangelists (*guru injil*) who helped the Dutch ministers. The first candidates for the ministry started their study in the first year of the Theological School (HTS, *Hogere Theologische School*) in Batavia in 1934. The first class graduated in 1940 and immediately was ordained for the district of West Java. The first three were Tjoa Tek Swat (Jakarta), Oei Bian Tiong (Indramayu) and Pouw Boen Giok (Sukabumi). Gouw Khiam Kiet (in the 1960s David Timothy Gunawan) had started as a local leader in Patekoan in 1926 and had been ordained a minister in 1934. During the Japanese occupation the first three graduates of 1940 were put in prison, but Tjan Tong Ho could be ordained for Jakarta and Gouw Gwan Yang for Bandung.

Until now not much has been written about the spirituality and theology that was developed by this first generation in order to combine Christianity with those Chinese cultural roots that could be maintained at the same time. How did they relate to traditional Chinese culture? How did they deal with the Christian western culture? This further research must ideally be based on private notes or the private correspondence of the first Christian leaders, and reports of meetings and activities in this early period. The difference between Patekoan and Mangga Besar were quite evident. Patekoan used Hokian and Malay, while Mangga Besar spoke Mandarin and English. Their difference, however, is much more complicated than that between the integrated second or later generation *peranakan* and the *totok* newcomers. They had also a different cultural policy, that later developed in independent Indonesia. This was the time of ripening for the Chinese churches that had to find their way in a free Indonesia.

A Church Union as a rare ecumenical event amidst a multiplicity of Chinese churches, 1934–1988

The 1934 conference in Cirebon was just one step in a quite complicated process of reorganising the congregations into greater units: from single congregations into a classis, from several classes into a synod and finally into one Chinese Church for the whole of Java. This development created in 1950 a Council of Chinese Churches in Indonesia with, as members, the Synod of Central Java with 14 congregations, the West Javanese classis with 14 congregations, the classis of East Java with 17 congregations, including one in Bali, a classis around Mount Muria in northern Central Java with 6 congregations, three congregations in Bangka and Belitung, two congregations in Makassar, three congregations in Kalimantan, two congregations in Ambon and Saparua. This list gives a good idea of the spread of members of the later GKI.

In 1954 this bottom-up project resulted in three churches with similar names, but different regional indication: THKTKH for West, Central and East Java. They all had relations with different Dutch missionary societies, who were related to Dutch Reformed churches of quite opposing views in the field of church order. This was not really helpful for their cooperation, but they founded, in 1954, an Assembly for Consultation about Church Union. It decided that the first steps should be: creation of a common liturgy, hymn book and catechism, research into the proper Christian attitude in the case of burials, and a publication on the history of all Christian (i.e. Protestant) Chinese in Java. In the 1950s the three churches also changed their Chinese names into *Gereja Kristen Indonesia* (GKI, Christian Church of Indonesia, but all three still with the addition of their region). In 1962 the three churches held a general synod. Then the activities were halted, because of political instability, until 1970. In 1971 the process was resumed with another general synod. After several other setbacks, at the *Seventh Synod of the GKI* in Ciawi, 24–26 August 1988, the union of the churches could be celebrated. In the following years still more work was to be done, like the writing of a new church order, that GKI should send only one representative delegation to outside contacts, the establishment of one common magazine and similar activities. At the general assembly of the Indonesian Union of Churches of 1994 the GKI was represented by one delegation. Its most important leader, Dr. Natan Setiabudi was even elected chairman of this Union for the period 2000–2004, but not all Indonesian Christians were happy with his policy in this period, as is described in chapter seventeen.

The GKI was, with 178,990 members in 2002, by far the largest Chinese Christian Church, although the name ‘Chinese’ has been removed since the mid 1950s. There are many smaller churches for people of (mostly) Chinese

descent. The congregation of Mangga Besar that had strong links with the Methodist mission developed into a church of its own, *Gereja Kristus* (1958) while in East Java a *Gereja Kristus Tuhan* (Church of Christ the Lord) split from the GKI over the language issue. The Chinese congregations in Makassar, Ambon and Bangka-Belitung also developed into distinct churches.

In the period 1965–1998 there was a rather strict ban on expressions of the Chinese language. No Chinese characters were allowed, all Chinese newspapers and magazines were forbidden, Chinese schools were closed and the buildings confiscated. After 1998 there was some kind of a revival of Mandarin among the Chinese community in Indonesia, including in some churches. At several places services in Mandarin have (re-)started, preachers from China were invited and there are plans to start a theological school in Mandarin somewhere in Indonesia. With approval the idea of some evangelical circles was quoted that, “if Jesus will not return earlier, the 21st until the 24th century will be the age of China!”⁹ In the Evangelical and Pentecostal Churches of Indonesia we find many Chinese. One of the larger Chinese churches of Java is the *Gereja Isa al Masih* that started in 1946 as a schism within the GPI, the largest Pentecostal Church of Indonesia. It has a flourishing theological school in Ungaran. Another theological school, mainly for Chinese, is SAAT, the *Seminari Alkitab Asia Tenggara* in Malang. On the whole, these churches spend much energy and money for theological education, whereas their social service (schools, clinics) is rather limited. More on these communities is presented in chapters fourteen (Java) and seventeen (Pentecostalism).

A quite peculiar Chinese Indonesian theologian is the Mennonite Yahya Wijaya. His 2002 dissertation (Leeds) does not concentrate on churches, but on economic and family issues. He wants to seek the middle position between the outspoken anti-capitalist Theology of Liberation and the pro-capitalist theories of Max Weber, Michael Novak and Brian Griffith. He makes an attempt to formulate a balanced theology on the position of the family in Christian theology and within the church, as well as to describe the political-economic implications of this theology. Wijaya is close enough to Reformed Christianity to reject an easy theology of success. He seeks connections to the family values of traditional Confucianism and the turn towards individualism in modern society. His theology is a sound reaction to traditional Reformed individualism and is at the same time a rare example of theologising in the difficult situation of the Indonesian Chinese diaspora of business families.

⁹ Tim GKBJ 2003:163.

*Catholic developments prior to independence with some notes
about recent decades*

There were (and are) three regions outside Java with a strong Chinese presence: West Kalimantan as the mining district for silver and gold (eighteenth century) and a fertile territory for plantations (nineteenth century onwards), Bangka, Belitung and the islands of Riau as mining areas for tin, and Deli, East Sumatra, a booming plantation region since the 1860s. In chapter twelve and thirteen we have sketched some of the features of the Chinese Catholics in these regions. We can find there some of the same features as in the case of the Chinese Protestant congregations of Java. Quite often the first initiative was with the Chinese converts themselves. The Chinese doctor Tsen On Njie was the leader of a congregation in Bangka, Sungaiselan, before a priest arrived, and he remained an important figure within that community. Within the Chinese communities the position of the catechist was much more prominent than elsewhere. In several places the *sensang* was a more or less independent leader of the congregation. In many cases he knew Chinese and the local circumstances much better than the priest who came visiting only occasionally. He therefore could be considered often as the proper leader of the congregation. Thirdly, initiatives for schools and clinics could come from the local community. Because in various places the Chinese were much wealthier than the indigenous population, they could pay for a school building, the salaries of the teachers and could organise this also by themselves.

Quite different from the Protestant churches was the policy of the clergy towards Chinese. The Catholic priests often took the trouble to learn proper Chinese. In early 1851 Jan Langenhoff went to Penang to study Chinese. Jesuits who served the station in Bangka later also learned some Chinese from local people. The most intense training took place between 1920 and 1940 when the Capuchin Friars and the Sacred Hearts Priests sent some 25 young Dutch priests to Malaysia (Ipoh and Penang) and later also to mainland China for the proper study of Chinese. The idea probably came from the Capuchin Father Aloysius van Heertum who studied Chinese at Leiden University with J.J.L. Duyvendak in the early 1920s. He received advice to go to Swatow (Shantou) for the study of Hakka, because that should be the best place for this dialect that could not be studied in Leiden. Van Heertum lived in the Vicariate Apostolic of Canton amidst 25 Chinese priests, while there was not yet a single Indonesian priest at that time. The Dutch priests realised that those Chinese who migrated to the Southeast Asian archipelago were not among the most civilised and well educated of their nation. These young priests learned, besides the language, also respect for the superior achievements of Chinese civilisation. Older students instructed beginners that they should earnestly learn their lessons, never take a seat before the teacher was seated, and offer the left side to the honoured person.

One of the strongest *peranakan* communities of long-standing, well-integrated Chinese was in Padang. The Capuchins of Padang began in 1934 the publication of a Chinese Catholic bi-weekly *Kong Po*. Its language was partly Dutch, partly Malay. Only in 1941 were some pages printed in Chinese. But there was not much interest for the Dutch East Indies in the magazine. There were many reports about Catholicism in mainland China. To give an example: much attention was given to the murder of the leader of Catholic Action in China, Lo Pa Hong, in late 1937. On 3 Jan. 1938 a mass was said for him in Padang. Events like this were elaborated in these magazines, but there was seldom any news about Christianity in other parts of Indonesia: even these well-integrated, Dutch and Malay speaking Chinese, were still culturally focused upon China, where the Catholics could also find their counterparts.¹⁰

In 1742 Pope Benedict XIV had forbidden all Chinese rituals for Catholics. Any public debate on this policy also was forbidden due to the internal missionary strife on this issue during more than a century. Therefore the answer by Bishop Luypen of Batavia was negative when in 1914 a Chinese convert from Semarang asked him whether he was allowed to burn joss sticks in respect for his ancestors at home. Only in 1936 did the Vatican come to a more indulging position for Japanese civil or quasi-religious rituals. This was elaborated for Chinese rituals in December 1939.¹¹ The higher clergy of the Indies knew of this development and at their regular 5-yearly meeting in August 1939 the Chinese identity was discussed. There was at that occasion a curious difference of opinion amongst the Capuchin Friars. Bishop L. Brans of Padang was in favour of an open and lenient attitude and he wanted to permit the practice of Chinese civic rituals to the urban, western-educated and integrated Chinese of his region. Father Caesarius (J.Th. Ram) of Singkawang protested against this openness. In the name of Bishop Tarcisius van Valenberg of Pontianak he expressed as his opinion that most Chinese of West Kalimantan fostered close relations to China and had a deep religious idea about ceremonies in honour of their ancestors that should be strictly forbidden for Catholics. The conclusion was that local differences could be admitted, that changes should be introduced slowly and that some individual freedom should be given to priests and to the Chinese Catholic laity themselves. The new policy was not universally accepted immediately!¹²

In October 1940 Jesuit L. Zwaans formulated detailed rules as guidelines for Catholics present at Chinese religious ceremonies in Batavia. The general policy was to define the boundaries between religion and culture. As long as practices could be seen as merely cultural they could be accepted. The

¹⁰ Steenbrink 2001.

¹¹ Steenbrink 2007-II:chapter II and Documents 36 and 39.

¹² Muskens 1974-IIIb:1457-1458.

guidelines were quite liberal. Bowing before an image of Confucius could be considered as respect for a great son of the Chinese nation in the same mood as bowing before a picture of Sun Yat Sen, the founding father of the new China. For photographs of a dead common person the same bowing and even unadorned kneeling down could be accepted. But this should not be done for a full *Sien Tjie* or statue of a deceased person. A true Catholic prayer (Our Father, Hail Mary) should accompanied the burning of joss sticks for the deceased and no suggestion should be given that the spirit of the dead was honoured. No food should be offered, but eating of food presented by other people should give no problems, as long as the Catholic Chinese should explain to other people that they participated in popular traditions without any deep religious meaning. A visit to a grave of ancestors should be seen as a good Catholic tradition and prayers for all deceased could be said in these places. A family altar could be maintained, but no visit to a formal Chinese temple of *klenteng* could be allowed.¹³

In regions outside Java there were parishes where sermons were delivered in Chinese and that were in fact considered Chinese communities, such as the church on Hakkastraat (now Jalan Pemuda) in Medan. In Java there were reservations against anything special for Chinese alone, because the Catholics should be united as one community. In the early 1930s there was much upheaval because the Malay-speaking Eurasians wanted separate organisations from the pure white Europeans. This caused much debate among the clergy and finally some kind of compromise was taken on the basis that there should be an undivided unity amongst the Catholics (see the debate about De Backere in chapter fourteen). In 1936 two Chinese ladies of Batavia asked recognition and support from bishop Willekens for their club of Chinese Catholic ladies, the *La Pa Hong Club*. Some clergy wanted to reject the idea absolutely. Jesuit H. Awick stated that the Catholic mission already had made a mistake in giving privileges for the Javanese language, putting the Javanese Catholics in an isolated position. Willekens consented in their idea of a group that should bring converts and should stimulate joint prayers and communion:

But how should this take place? It is certainly specific to the character of the Catholic Church that various ethnic groups should be brought together in the same building and to make them members of the same religious association, if possible.¹⁴

¹³ From a document in the archives of the Jakarta Archdiocese. Published in Steenbrink 2007-II:520–522, document 36.

¹⁴ Letter of Bishop Peter Willekens to Mrs. Sie Ing Hoen and Ms. Dr. Ong Ki Ong, Batavia 4 March 1936, from the archives of the Jakarta Archdiocese: Steenbrink 2007-II:74.

The final solution was only formulated on 28 May 1939 with the *Bondsinstelling voor Chineesche Aangelegenheden* or the 'Body for Chinese Affairs' within the *Katholieke Sociale Bond*, the Social Union of Catholics.

During the last year of the Japanese occupation there was a curious contact between a fervent Chinese Catholic and Bishop Willekens of Batavia. One Tan Giok Sie had some problems with the coincidence of Catholic Lent and the festive celebration of Chinese New Year in 1945, a fact that occurred every three or four years. He suggested to the Bishop that the Sunday sermon in this period should pay attention to this Chinese celebration and in order to help the bishop he had already written a sermon (with some Chinese phrases put into the Malay text). The bishop dated his answer 21 February 1945 (according to the Japanese calendar obligatory at the time) and replied that the Vatican in 1868 had given a permit to postpone the fasting, but the Catholic bishops of China had discussed the matter in 1924 and decided that the implementation of the universal Catholic rule should prevail. In this condition, with no possibility to consult the Vatican, there was no other way than to stick to common Catholic law.

In the first years of the New Order, General Ali Moertopo established the CSIS, the Centre for Strategic and International Studies, as the think tank for the new government. Among major businessmen and intellectuals behind this important policy forming body were some Chinese Catholics, the best known the brothers Jusuf and Sofjan Wanandi (Liem Bian Kie and Liem Bian Kun). Jusuf was a lecturer in the law faculty of the Universitas Indonesia of Jakarta in 1965 and founded the CSIS. Sofjan, a businessman, was one of the members of the board of CSIS. They became in Indonesian society the emblem of the cooperation of Soeharto's New Order with Chinese business in general and more specifically with the Catholic Church. As the spiritual father of the Wanandi's the Jesuit Joop Beek, a staunch anti-communist conservative, is mentioned, who organised *Kasbul*, or *Kaderisasi Sebulan*, quasi-military training sessions in the Catholic Centre of Klender, Jakarta until the later 1970s. Together with Benny Moerdani, the most prominent Catholic in the army in this period, they promoted the anti-communist and also anti-Muslim character of the New Order government. They came into trouble with more left-wing Catholics, among whom the Chinese who established the newspaper *Kompas* were quite prominent (see chapter twenty-one on the media). But to the general public these activities were seldom known under a Chinese label, because from the late 1960s all Chinese names were changed for Indonesian sounding ones.

After independence the Catholic Church was even more hesitant to give special privileges to the Catholic Chinese. Was this the reason for so many Chinese joining the charismatic movement and acting independently from

the clergy within this movement? As we have seen above in chapter eighteen, the leaders of the Catholic Church, and even the clergy in general, had since 1975 many problems with the Charismatic Movement that was often a haven for Chinese to develop a spirituality of their own. Only in May 1998, after the cruel attacks on Chinese quarters of the capital Jakarta (following the resignation of Soeharto as President) was there more specific attention from the side of the Catholic Church to the difficult place of this Chinese minority in the country.

One of the most prominent Catholic theologians since the mid-1990s is William Chang (Tshang Jit Meuw), a Capuchin Friar of Chinese descent born in 1962 in Singkawang. Chang wrote his doctoral dissertation in the Philippines on Pancasila, like that other important theologian of Chinese descent, Eka Darmaputera (for him see chapter sixteen). He continued as lecturer and soon as dean of the Graduate School at the Major Seminary Pastor Bonus in Pon-tianak. Chang is a modern Indonesian intellectual, who can express his ideas through the idiom of the social scientists, emphasizing for his region of West Kalimantan the multiplicity of its inhabitants. Not only Chinese, but also Malay, Madurese, Javanese and many other groups have joined the original Dayak. He is quite outspoken in labelling corruption as the major disease of modern Indonesian society and in promoting an ethics of responsibility, dialogue and solidarity as its only solution.¹⁵

Yusak Soleiman and Karel Steenbrink

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¹⁵ Chang 2000 and 2001:95.

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CHAPTER TWENTY

CHRISTIAN ART IN INDONESIA

In 1925 the Catholic bishops, apostolic prefects, and heads of the religious orders held a national conference in Batavia, presided over by a papal representative, the Dutch Dominican Friar Bernardus Jordanus Gijlswijk, Vatican Apostolic Delegate in South Africa. Following the instructions given to him by the Vatican, Gijlswijk put forward the problem of the national pride of natives (*nationaliteitsgevoel der inlanders*). He connected this with the characteristic culture of the various peoples of the archipelago. Bishop Aerts of Langgur bluntly reacted with a statement about his region of the southern Moluccas and Papua: "There is no native culture. Anything coming from the West is highly valued."¹ In that meeting only the Javanese culture was highly appreciated and the efforts to create a specific style of Javanese Christian art by a businessman in the sugar industry and scholar Dr. Julius Schmutzer were supported. The culture of societies in the outer islands remained underestimated until the mid-1960s, when the decisions of the Second Vatican Council became known. Until that time there were only minor adaptations to local cultures in the Catholic community, with few exceptions that will be discussed below.

In the Protestant mission and churches things were not much different until contextual theology became an important issue, starting in the late 1960s. Of course, since the beginning of Christian mission there was much research on languages and cultures, but first of all for the sake of Bible translations and for the expression of the basic teaching of Christianity. From the very beginning of Christianity in the archipelago also the singing of hymns and related music was very important. Ambonese Christianity is more or less identical with a spontaneously singing Christian community. Ambonese music has also in its secular expression a special mix of Portuguese music with Indonesian tradition, the *kroncong* style of singing and instrumental music, with a dominant role for the violin and the guitar. In other regions of Indonesia Christians have also developed a strong tradition of choir music. Batak, Minahasa and Toraja Christians are known for their joyful and very strong tradition of singing.

¹ 'Eigen cultuur bestaat daar niet. Wat van het Westen komt, wordt juist hoog gewaardeerd. De moeilijkheid komt van den kant der protestanten en mohammedanen, terwijl juist hier gevoeld wordt de rem van art. 123.' AJAK E 4-1.

This chapter will describe some expressions of Christian art in the twentieth century, most strongly under influence of the relative freedom of expression as was proposed by the second Vatican Council and by the global trend towards a contextual theology as promoted by international Protestantism within the Christian Conference of Asia (CCA).

The first expressions of Christian visual art, 1920–1940

The encyclical letter of Pope Benedict XV, *Maximum Illud*, published in 1919, was an important step towards the creation of indigenous clergy worldwide, first of all in China. This document was also an incentive for the development of expressions of visual art, taking into consideration the local cultural varieties in various mission areas. It was first visible in the mission of Central and East Asia. A quite impressive international stimulus for indigenous Christian art came from the international exhibition of Catholic mission that was organised in the Vatican in 1925. The Catholic mission of Java sent a number of artefacts showing the cultural and artistic style of Javanese handicraft. Out of the 111 objects that were sent to the exhibition 103 items showed copper, leather handicrafts, woodcarvings kitchen utensils and beautiful *batik* (traditionally painted cloths). This was more an anthropological exhibition and not yet a display of indigenous Christian art. As to the mission work there were some maps with statistics, the model of the buildings of the Muntilan mission and albums and standing displays with photographs. For some displays the Ursuline Sisters of Batavia had used Japanese folding screens as background.

The most beautiful objects for the 1925 exhibition were not given back, but remained in the mission museum attached the St. John of Lateran church in Rome. For later exhibitions the priests were afraid that again the best pieces would be kept in Rome, without the Vatican paying anything for these precious and fine examples of Christian art and for the 1950 exhibition there was only a modest contribution from Indonesia.²

One of the earliest specimens of Christian expression with Javanese conventional techniques is the image of the Trinity by Raden Mas Joesoef Poerwodiwirjo. This young man entered the primary school of the sugar estate Gondang Lipoero that was opened in 1920. After finishing primary school and conversion to Catholicism, he continued religious courses and became a catechist. According to one of the two directors of the estate, Dr. Julius Schmutzer, he drew the picture at his own initiative and came to Schmutzer to ask for his opinion. In this drawing the three figures are nearly identical.

² Letter by Jesuit priest B. Sondaal, Nijmegen 22 September 1948, to Bishop Willekens of Jakarta. AJAK, E 11–12–1.

In the centre the Father is known from his beard, while the Son is known from the symbol of the cross in his right hand and a small beginning of a beard. The small circle in the left hand is the human nature of the Son, while the larger circle represents the divine nature. All three rest with a hand on this larger circle and are placed at the same height, strengthening their equal status and nature. The lines of communication and generation are like stalks of a flower, also a life-giving connection. The image owes much of its detail to the traditional imagery of the hermit Vyasa in the classical shadow play of the *wayang*. In the traditional art of *wayang* the puppets must have been made of leather and painted. But they should be able to move with arms and at least one leg. This is all impossible here. It was quite interesting in this case that a recent convert made a drawing at his own initiative, while most of the examples that we see for this early period, 1920–1940, were made at the suggestion or even command of European promoters of Christianity and its enculturation through local Indonesian art.³

The most spectacular product of this European-guided indigenous art was the church and Sacred Heart Chapel in Ganjuran, on the premises of the Schmutzer sugar estate south of Yogyakarta. It started with Dr. Joseph Ignaz Schmutzer's encounter in 1924 with a gifted West-Javanese sculptor with the single name of Iko. Iko had been known since about 1900 as an artisan sculptor who made high quality wooden and stone statues and went from house to house in luxurious quarters to sell these himself. In early 1924 he addressed Joseph Schmutzer (then living in Bogor as a member of the provisional parliament of The Indies, the *Volksraad*). The impetuous Schmutzer immediately knew that he had found his man to create Christian art in Javanese style. His first order was for a Mary with child and the second was a great carving in *jati* wood representing the Trinity after the drawing by Poerwodiwirjo. Here the Father is sitting on the left, the Holy Spirit as the expression of the love between Father and Son, is seated in the middle. They wear Javanese dress on the lower body, with the *batik* motive of *parang rusak* (lit. broken knife) the basic striped pattern, in classical times used exclusively for the royal family. The *slendang* or wrapper on the shoulder is traditionally the sign for deities, hermits and teachers. The Father has a crown in his hands, symbol of supreme power. The persons have put their feet on an open lotus flower, symbol of divine sanctity. Outside the stalks there is first a circle of radiant light, because the Son is 'light from light', while the edge of the carving shows many tongues of fire, recalling the miracle of Pentecost.

³ Schmutzer 1928:62–68.

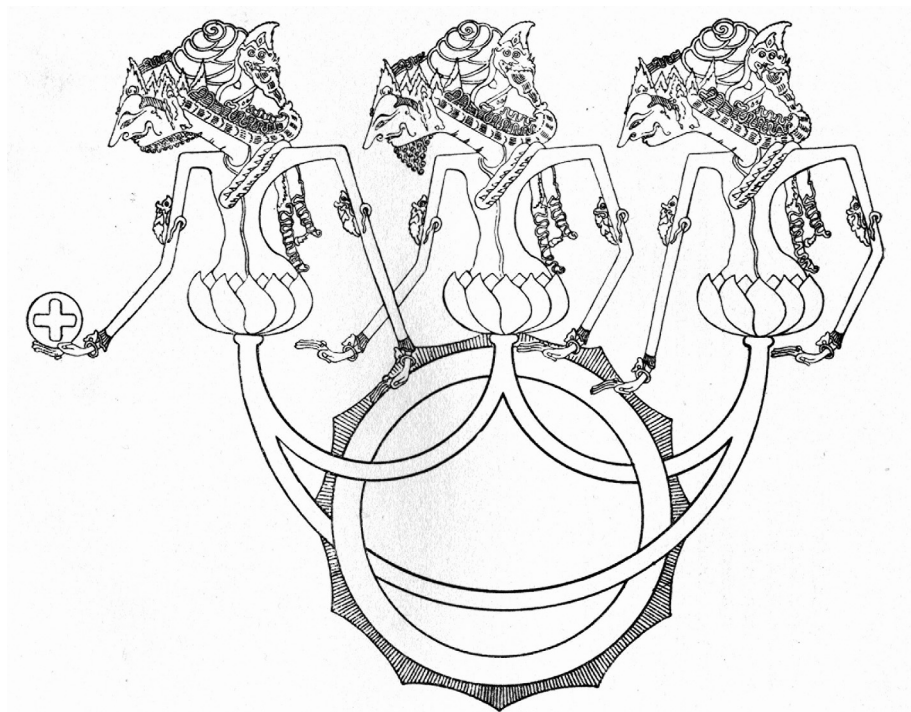


Fig. 1. Drawing of the Trinity by Raden Mas Poerwodiwirjo. Schmutzer 1928:90.



Fig. 2. Holy Trinity after design of Joseph Schmutzer, stone carving by Iko. Schmutzer 1928:90.

Joseph Schmutzer knew that the sculptor Iko was a nominal Muslim and that many other Muslims could be disturbed by the representation of the divine Trinity in the form of three human persons. He ordered also an example as just one person with several attributes of the Trinity, but in general he felt that Christianity would be closer to the Hindu past of Java (that ended about 1518 with the death of the last Hindu ruler of Majapahit) than to the present dominating religion of Islam.

The statue of the Trinity was used, with comparable statues of Jesus, Mary, angels and several others, in the church on the sugar-estate that was designed after the model of the fifth century temple of Arjuna on the Dieng plateau. Its altar was to be built in the centre. During the service the baptised faithful would face towards the east, but the catechumens were to be placed on the other side of the altar and would be orientated towards the west.

Another statue by Iko, representing Jesus showing his sacred heart, was in 1930 placed in the Sacred Heart chapel of the Schmutzer estate in Ganjuran. The chapel was built as a replica, about 10 metres high, of one of the major temples of the Prambanan compound. This classic compound, devoted to Lord Shiva, with minor shrines for Brahman and Krishna had been built in the ninth century and it is still considered (along with Borobudur) as the climax of classical Javanese religious building. In many details the Sacred Heart shrine imitated its Hindu predecessor. An unfinished statue of Jesus was even blessed and then incorporated in the basement as had been the habit with Hindu architecture of the classical period. This shrine has become a place of pilgrimage from that time until this day. Once a year, mostly in June or July on the Sunday near to the Catholic feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, a great celebration is held to honour the Eucharist with a procession where all functionaries must still be dressed according to Javanese tradition, and the gamelan plays accompanied by choirs that sing new words to the old music.⁴

The shrine of Pohsarang, near Kediri in East Java, must be mentioned again here (see also chapter fourteen). It was as daring and special as the compound of Ganjuran and would serve not only as the parish church for the small community of Catholics, the result of a little school in a plantation, but also as a place of pilgrimage, with an entrance (*gapura*) in classical style, an open church in refined bricks with many images, an elaborated way of the cross, a theatre for biblical plays and a graveyard. Henri Maclaine Pont who designed this compound was the architect who had worked for years in the archaeological excavations of the palace of the thirteenth century Hindu kingdom of Majapahit in Trowulan, in the northern region of East Java. With hundreds of local workers he had build a museum in the early 1930s, in the

⁴ Schmutzer 1928:79–84.

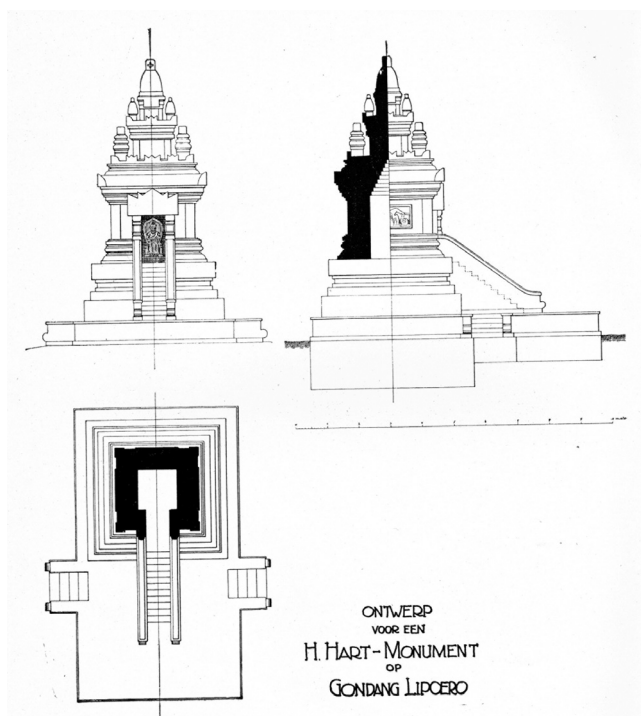


Fig. 3. Design for the Sacred Heart Shrine in Ganjuran. Schmutzer 1928:90.

style of the old palaces of the Majapahit period and in 1936–1937 this was applied to the Catholic compound of Pohsarang. After some decline in the period 1950–1990, this sanctuary was totally renovated and enlarged between 1993 and 2001 to become the most prestigious place of pilgrimage of East Java, with a *Mausoleum Pieta* where numerous Chinese have already found a place to deposit the ashes of their beloved dead, a replica of the great way of the cross of Lourdes, a very large construction imitating the cave of Lourdes (size: 40 metres across, 20 metres high), a building with pictures for the 15 mysteries to be meditated upon while praying the rosary, a house of retreat, a camping-site for the young people and a large religious shopping centre. Ganjuran and Pohsarang have given direction to a development that has become more and more popular among Catholics in Indonesia: the pilgrimage, a religious practice that may take several days.

Another important example for the architecture of the churches, in the ‘native style’ of the 1930s, was not a religious structure, but the great audience hall of the sultan’s palace of Yogyakarta, the *Bangsai Kencana* or golden reception room. It is an open building, with a grandiose roof, starting at some 2 metre from the floor. This was used as an example for the church

in Kenteng, Kalibawang, dedicated on 6 July 1936. A defence of this choice reads as follows:

Although the *Bangsai Kencana* is not the place where the prince uses to receive the homage of his people—as such the *Bangsai Witana* is used on the *Siti Inggil* (exalted place) situated outside the palace at the edge of the ‘aloon-aloon or the vast square in front of the palace—it is the place within the palace where he receives his friends, where he gives his banquets, where he meets his guests and strangers visiting him, in a word, it is the richly decorated part of his princely mansion where he appears as the hospitable ruler, the king who is nevertheless accessible to his *sentana* (his relations and most intimate servants).⁵

It was the founder of the Catholic Java mission, Frans van Lith, who coined the translation of ‘Thy kingdom come’ as suggesting the royal presence of the Sultan among his people. It is this mythical, nearly divine, royal power that was evoked in this style of architecture. The Jesuits of the 1930s imitated the classical Hindu style of the eighth century, or the court style of the nineteenth century, but not the architecture of the Muslim mosque.

A quite peculiar person among the earlier Javanese Christian artists was Franciscus Xaverius Basoeki Abdullah, born 1915 in a family of artists. His father Abdullah Soerio Soebroto and his brother Soedjono Abdullah (b. 1911) were well-known artists. As a young boy Basoeki fell sick and as a distraction he draw a picture of Jesus. While working on this drawing he was healed and decided therefore to embrace Catholicism. In the mid-1930s he had already painted many images of Mary and made sketches for stations of the cross. The great hope, expressed in 1938, that he would become ‘the founder of the first Christian Javanese school of painters’ did not come true.⁶ After independence he became the painter for the new Indonesian elite society and later for the international jet-set until he death in 1993, in Thailand.

Another great exhibition of mission and art was planned for 1940 in Rome. In 1938 the preparation for the Indonesian contribution was already set up. Fifty works of art would be sent, 42 of these from Java. From the Outer Islands the following selection was made: from Sumatra an altar in Batak style, with very rich woodcarving. From Kalimantan only some minor pieces were sent: traditional woven clothes suited for the decoration of statues of saints and bamboo cases for the preservation of incense. From Makassar a model of a church in the style of a Toraja house, while from Flores a church in the style of a Manggarai house was prepared for the exhibition. Not less than 42 pieces were gathered from Central and East Java. These were models of the

⁵ Unsigned English description of the church, in the Archives of the Archbishopric of Jakarta, AJAK E 11–12–4.

⁶ Schüller 1938:60.



Fig. 4. Station of the Way of the Cross. Painting by Basoeki Abdullah. Schüller 1938:59.

famous churches of Ganjuran and Pohsarang (see above), of the church of Yogyakarta-Pugeran in the style of a grand Javanese mansion; bamboo, stone and wooden altars, utensils for the liturgy like lamps and a monstrance, but the largest number were 16 statues of saints.⁷ Perhaps it was a relief for the owners of these beautiful objects that the exhibition was postponed until 1942, and then delayed again. For the 1950 exhibition the Indonesians sent a much more modest contribution.

The still modest beginning of the Catholic mission in Bali applied from its very beginning Balinese elements in its churches and chapels. They were stimulated by the SVD priests who liked this style of Christian art. On the Protestant side it was somewhat more difficult. As described in chapter fifteen, it was only during the Japanese occupation, when the Dutch ministers were put in prison and church life was not well organised, that Balinese Protestants started again to use traditional decorations from palm-leaf, coconuts and bamboo in the style of the decorations and offerings used by all Balinese at religious ceremonies. Only in the early 1970s Balinese Protestants developed a keen sense for a distinct Balinese style of Christian art.

⁷ Full lists and detailed descriptions in the Archives of the Archbishopric of Jakarta, AJAK, E 11-10-1.



Fig. 5. Altar in Batak style, designed for the Vatican exhibition of 1938, that was never held. Now in the Church of Porsea. © Dutch Capuchins.

It was not only in Java that some churches and chapels were built after models of traditional architecture. In the 1930s a church was built in Manggarai, West Flores, in the style of a traditional house. Most churches and chapels, however, followed the neo-gothic style that was common in Europe at the time.

1940–1970. The quiet interlude. The Balinese exception

Not much can be said about further development of Christian art between 1940 and 1970. The Japanese occupation and the struggle for independence were not the best periods for the development of an outspoken and forthrightly independent expression of Christian art. This was not a period of quick expansion, but rather of restoration and slow development. One special element that may have prevented the further development of specific Indonesian Christian art during this period, was the spirit of national unity, the result of the fight for independence. However, there was not yet any overall Indonesian

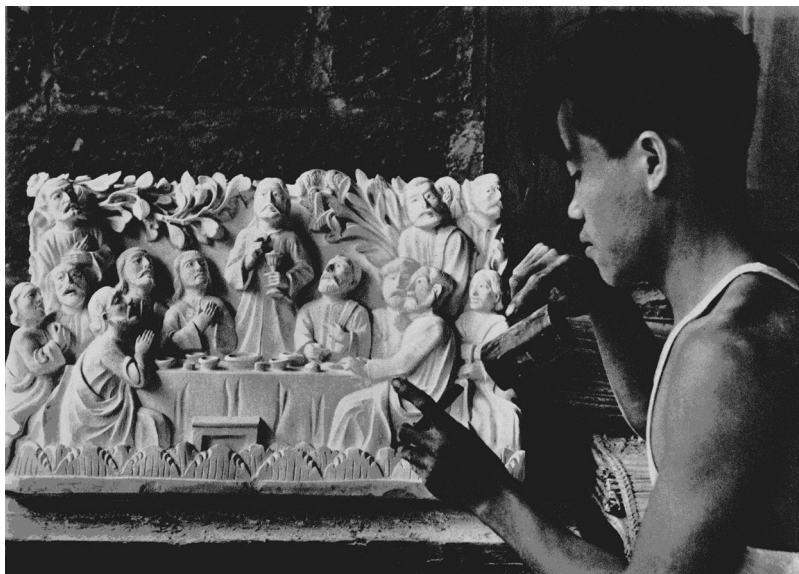


Fig. 6. Stone carving for the first Catholic Church of Bali in Tuka, 1937. Kersten 1940:225.

artistic tradition. The visual arts, but also expressions like theatre and poetry, were related to the various local traditions. That remains the situation even up to the present time. There is Javanese, Balinese, Sumatran and Sumbanese art and even many more traditions are continuing. Asmat woodcarving of Papua is still definitely related to one area alone. Because of this focus on regional rather than national art, the period of nationalist fervour may have been less suitable for the development of Christian Indonesian art.

The major religious building for this period was the Catholic church of Palasari, designed after the overall structure of a gothic cathedral but so richly decorated with Balinese ornaments and embedded in a garden with an elaborated entrance, pools, many plants and flowers, that the whole compound looks truly Balinese.

1970–2000. The new generation of lay artists

From the beginning of the development of Indonesian Christian art it was lay people who were active in the arts, although often at the instigation of the clergy. It was not always the most orthodox or pious who worked in this field. We have seen above the example of Iko in the 1930s, a Muslim artist who worked at the initiative of Joseph Schmutzer, and Basoeki Abdullah who

was active in religious art in the middle and late 1930s only and then turned into a society artist.

For the visual arts it was in most cases not the faithful of the first generation who created new Christian art. The new converts were people who had left their former religion, and they were not yet really able to create a new Christian artistic idiom. It was the generation succeeding the first converts who in most places started with individual development of Christian art. In 1993 the editors of the book *Many Faces of Christian Art in Indonesia* could give illustrations of the work of 40 individual artists. Some of them will be discussed below as examples. The two best known, Bagong Kussudiardjo and I Nyoman Darsane, will be discussed in somewhat more detail.

There are two centres for modern Indonesian Christian Art: Yogyakarta and the southern area of Bali. In Yogyakarta the most prestigious art school of the nation is established, ISI, *Institut Seni Indonesia*. In this town many tourists arrive for visits to the old Hindu temple of Prambanan and the Buddhist shrine of Borobudur. There is a Catholic Catechetical College, a department of the Sanata Dharma University, where much time is spent on the performing arts (music, dance, theatre). The Television and Radio Studio PUSKAT (after *Pusat Kateketik* or Catechetical Centre), started in 1969 by a Jesuit priest, Dr. Ruedi Hofmann, and initially located in the Saint Ignatius College of Yogyakarta, moved in 1995 to a large compound in Ngaglik, north of Yogyakarta, where amidst a large media village a unique house of worship was built. The four walls of the building are dedicated to the four great religions of Indonesia: Islam through a text from the Qur'an ("God does not love destruction"), Christianity not through the cross ("there is too much violence associated with the cross" as stated by founder Hofmann) but through a bird, after Mt. 6:25–27: "Do not worry. Look at the birds of the air: your heavenly father feeds them. Are you not more valuable than they?" Hinduism is represented with a swastika sign and the words: "I give life to everything growing," while Buddhism is represented by the OM-sign and the text: "Let all creation rejoice." For all religious programmes in Indonesia PUSKAT has played an important role. It was the first to start with religious drama and documentaries (in order to show something different from church and mosque services or only one person delivering a speech or sermon). This initiative was soon taken over by the other religions.

Since 1998 the Asian Christian Art Association (established by the Japanese Dr. Masao Takenaka) has chosen Dr. Judo Poerwowidagdo as its chair and the seat of the association moved to Yogyakarta. The great studio of the painter and dancer Bagong Kussudiardjo was also located in Yogyakarta.

Although the Christian community of Bali is relatively small, it has produced a good number of artists who sometimes fully, sometimes in part are

dedicated to Christian art. The most important, besides pioneer and leader I Nyoman Darsane (about whom more below) are I Ketut Lasia, Ni Ketut Ayu Sri Wardani, Komang Wahyu, Gede Sukana Kariana, I Gede Yosef C. Darsane and Tina Bailey. Many Javanese painters also moved to Bali to develop their artistic gifts and to find buyers in the many galleries of the island. Among these are Koni Herawati and Rev. Yatma Pramana (one of the very few ordained ministers active as an artist; Pramana was born in Purworejo but is now working in the GKPB, the Protestant Christian Church of Bali).

As a third vibrant centre for Christian art we must mention the Asmat area of Papua. The Asmat people are known worldwide as woodcarvers who make giant statues of their ancestors. In 1981 US born bishop Alphonse Sowada (in office as bishop between 1958 and 2001) started the Annual Asmat Art Auction that has attracted buyers and enthusiasts from around the world. An international panel of jurors select carvings from over 1,000 submissions representing nearly two-thirds of the Asmat villages. Since its beginning this intersection of Eastern and Western aesthetics, has attracted many admirers. Much of that work dates back to 1958 when the *Ordo Sanctae Crucis* or Crosiers of the United States responded to an invitation to serve among the Asmat people. The American members of this originally Dutch and Belgian-based religious order founded in the Middle Ages have tried to maintain the integrity and dignity of Asmat culture by insisting that all members of their order be trained in anthropology prior to engaging in work in the Asmat region, by incorporating indigenous art and symbolism into church structures, and by encouraging the Asmat to continue their carving traditions, and by collecting and preserving Asmat art.⁸ In fact, collecting Asmat tribal art was already started by MSC priest Gerald Zegwaard in the period 1947–1956.⁹ Notwithstanding the openness of Asmat artists to new ideas (besides the commercial replicas of traditional tribal art) they were not so creative in the field of Christian art. Therefore, our small selection of portraits of individual artists is restricted to Javanese and Balinese only.

A.B. Dwiantoro (b. 1953, Yogyakarta) did not initially follow a formal training in the arts, but learned from friends. Still, some time later he obtained a degree in the fine arts and became vice-director of the ISI, *Institut Seni Indonesia*, in Yogyakarta in the later 1990s. He has a very fine line bending style. In his 'Fall of Mankind' Eve is moving backwards, although she offers the apple to Adam, who is moving forward, with one extremely long arm. The snake is in a gentle curving approaching to her, but plays no decisive role. The lovely atmosphere of paradise is accentuated by the small animals

⁸ See also the site of the Museum <http://www.asmat.org/>.

⁹ Boelaars 1997:7–36.

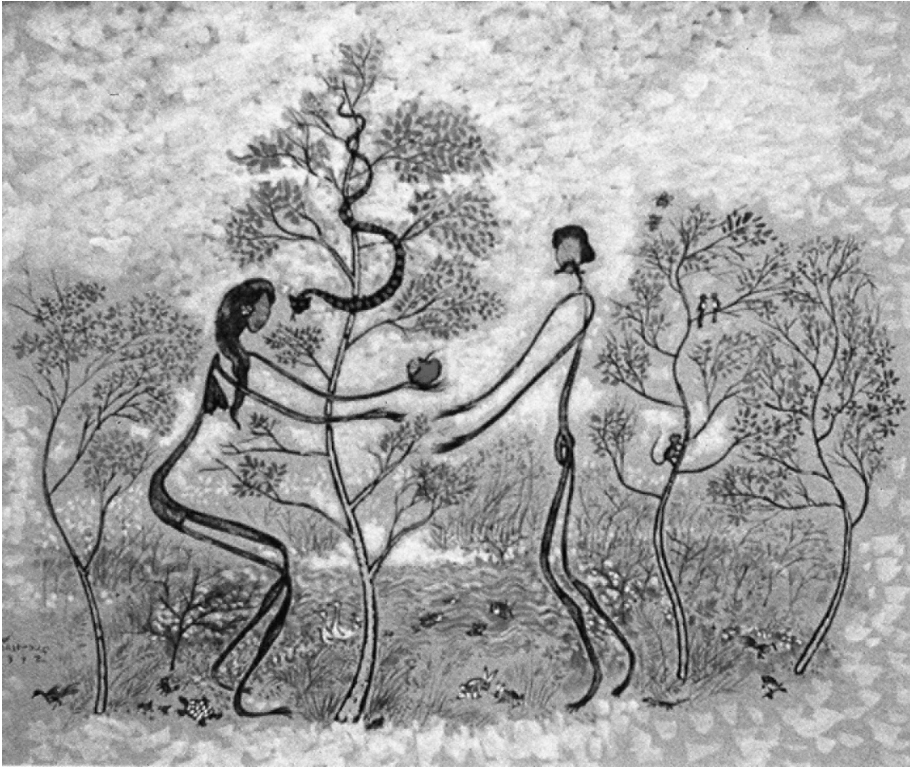


Fig. 7. A.B. Dwiantoro, *Kejatuhan Manusia* (Fall of Mankind). Supardan 1993:24.

all roaming around in the trees, many of them in couples. The thin objects, humans, trees and animals, all show an attractive world and there is no prefiguration of anything wrong or bad about to start here. Adam's male status is accentuated by a grand moustache and a curved penis. Original sin is not an important issue in Indonesian theology, as it is not in Indonesian traditional culture. The bad figures of classical shadow plays, the giants or *raksasa*, are not bad by permanent and inborn character but only for some time after bad deeds. The picture does not have the tragic depth of an eternal damnation, notwithstanding its title.

Dudut Panuluh is a member of the East Javanese Christian Church (GKJW) and is a very serious, not to say stern and strict, painter. He studied theology for some time in Yogyakarta, but did not finish his study and moved towards painting. He often follows European examples of Christian art, but introduces Javanese elements in his work. The Trinity is here depicted as an angel with three heads, like the Brahma statue in the Prambanan Temple. While the Brahma figure is usually supported by *Angsa* or the swan as the carrier animal,



Fig. 8. Dudut Panuluh, *Trinitas (The Trinity)*. Supardan 1993:115.

the Trinity is carried here by two dragons, breathing fire. The dragon (*naga*) of the Indonesian world is not the devilish beast that must be killed by the angel Michael or Saint George. It is the symbol of grounding, attachment to the earth and fertility, but also of royalty, temples and palaces and guardians of the sacred in general. The fire from the *naga* is not the fire of destruction but the purifying power as is also mentioned in Isaiah 6:6–7 and the four faces and four wings amidst lightning and fire of Ezekiel 1:4–6, here in the Indonesian-Chinese style. The lamb looks at first sight like a bearer animal or vehicle for the Trinity. We must understand it as a symbol of Christ, but its relation to the Trinity as symbol of the Divinity is unclear. Is it related to the rather vague and uncertain concept of the Divine Trinity among Indonesian Christians in general?

Andi Harisman is an artist living in the greatest harbour town of Indonesia, Surabaya. He works in a very realistic style, by some people compared to Paul Gauguin, because of his very naturalistic pictures of the native population. He wrote as a comment on the painting of 'the birth' (made for Christmas 1990): "Birth, for the Javanese, is a religious event. It is almost as important as the crucifixion is for Christians. Birth reflects something new. In this newly emerged life is new hope and a purification of life values, which have declined. Traditionally, those of Javanese culture believe a baby symbolizes good fortune." The Baby Jesus lies calmly, still with the umbilical cord. Jesus



Fig. 9. Andi Harisman, Kelahiran (The Birth). Supardan 1993:33.

lies on a carpet that looks like rays shining, although it may also just be an old carpet unravelling. The light in fact comes from three oil lamps, while a fourth is not lighted. It is mostly older and younger women sitting around the baby: only one young boy and one young man are joining this group that is really concentrated on the new life here.

Anton Sudiharto has no formal art education, but in many respects can be seen as someone who is influenced by various streams of European art. He lived for several years in New Zealand and Australia, before he settled as an artist in Bali. His painting of the crucifixion shows the influence of cubism, especially in its background. Jesus is a quite active figure, without blood marks. Although he is bound on the cross it looks as if he wants to leave his place for somewhere else. This is more active than passive surrender. The three women under or rather besides the cross are painted in a very stylized way. It is not even easy to notice that there are three women. The painting is not in dark but even rather bright colours. On the whole the Indonesian image of the crucifixion is not that of the long and bloody passion but of the joyful event of salvation.

Agnes Y. Kawuwung was born in Cimahi, close to Bandung, West Java. She is of Minahasan descent. She failed to enter the Fine Arts Department of the Technical University of Bandung and learned the technique of painting in a



Fig. 10. Anton Sudiharto, *Jesus Mati* (Death of Jesus). Supardan 1993:76.

small art studio under the guidance of the famous artist Jeihan (born 1938). She has a rather surrealistic modern Western style. Her painting 'Sleeping Faith' shows a young girl sleeping, while a fine small angel comforts or at least joins her. She lies between a sky with the moon (or is it the sun, shining in bright colours?) and a landscape of waves where a boat in the form of a duck is passing by. Is the girl sleeping herself on the waves and so fulfilling what Peter could not perform, walking while awakened (John 21:1–14), or should we see an identification of the believer with Jesus sleeping on the shore of the lake? Apart from the form of the boat, a typical fishing boat of many Indonesian regions, the picture does not show traditional local features.

Two major artists: Bagong Kussudiardja and Nyoman Darsane

Bagong Kussudiardja (1929–2004) was born into a family of Javanese Muslims (*abangan*) belonging to the local gentry (*bangsawan*) of the Sultan's palace (*kraton*) of Yogyakarta. He would stay his whole life in that town. Being married to a Christian wife he converted together with his children in 1968/69. Other families in the *kraton* followed his example. After his baptism by an



Fig. 11. Agnes Y. Kawuwung, *Iman yang tertidur* (Sleeping Faith). Supardan 1993:88.

American Baptist missionary Bagong started to paint Christian themes. As early as 1948 he had begun to study painting with leading artists like Affandi, Hendra Gunawan, Kusnadi and Sudiardja in the flourishing local art scene. He soon started to teach himself at the Indonesian Art Academy (ASRI). Before his conversion Bagong was experimenting with traditional styles and themes. Sometimes he got inspiration from his younger brother who was a man of letters (*sastrawan*). At the same time Bagong took lessons in traditional dance. Already in 1958 he established a Dance Training Center.

Bagong was not only painter and Batik artist—a technique he introduced in Yogyakarta in the 1970s—but became also a well-known choreographer. The artist himself once stated: “Art is part of my life. I feel that one needs art just as one needs food, clothing and shelter.” Many group and solo exhibitions, national and international, as well as a number of art awards testify to his high reputation as an artist. Christian motives only constitute a small part of his rich oeuvre. Around 2000 Bagong got remarried to a Muslim woman. He therefore had to formally reconvert to Islam. Even though it is said that he remained Christian in private, in his last years Bagong became estranged from Christianity. It was only on his death bed in Yogya’s Bethesda Hospital intensive care section when the former rector of the Christian University

(UKDW) Dr. Judo Poerwowidagdo, President of the Asian Christian Art Association (ACAA) and his predecessor in this function Prof. Dr. Masao Takenaka from Japan, who both provided Bagong with spiritual guidance for many years, prayed with him, that he found peace again. Following the Javanese way he greeted his family and friends and asked them for forgiveness for his failures and shortcomings. He was buried according to the Christian rites. "Bagong's legacy will be continued by his children, who have followed his steps to be dancer, musician and actor."¹⁰

Born and raised as a Hindu (*1939) Nyoman Darsane¹¹ converted to Christianity at the age of 17. Like many Balinese rice farmers, his father was also a musician who played in the orchestra of the ruler of Gianyar. Nyoman was brought up together with one of the princes and educated in the palace. That provided him with a deep knowledge of Hindu-Balinese religion and culture. It paved the way for him to not only become a painter but also a musician, dancer and puppet player. An academic training at the college in Semarang, Java, finally made him familiar with the western tradition as well. His early paintings are reminiscent of Gauguin, van Gogh and Nolde. Darsane thus belongs to the heterogeneous group of the so-called *academicians*, those artists who have studied at one of the country's art colleges. Although they are experimenting with western influence of style, they have continuously been searching for their own Balinese identity. In Darsane's case a special emphasis adds to this: since he converted to Christianity, he has been trying to mold this religion into a Balinese-Christian form.

As a result of his conversion, Darsane had been excluded from his family and ostracized by the village community. The Hindu-Balinese religion originated from the encounter between Hinduism and Balinese tribal religions, and until today it has many features of this primal religion. Religion and community are closely intertwined; whoever turns away from the common religion also renounces the solidarity of the community. Instead of the customary prearranged marriage Darsane made his own choice by getting married to a Christian wife of Chinese descent. Their only child Yossy has become an artist himself. His constant effort to give Christianity a Balinese shape finally convinced Darsane's family and the community that he still is one of them. Today he is again well respected and his advice even in religious matters is highly appreciated. Darsane and Bagong were befriended and certainly influenced each other. The latter even had a studio and gallery on Bali for some years.

¹⁰ Judo Poerwowidagdo, "In Memoriam Bagong Kussudiardja," *Image*, June 2004–99:10.

¹¹ Küster & Sundermeier 1991; Küster 1999.



Fig. 12. Nyoman Darsane, *Creation of Sun and Moon*. Küster 1991:83.

In his early batik *Creation of Sun and Moon* (1979) Darsane portrays Christ as the mediator of creation, who dances in front of the Father. The artist draws iconographically on the world of Hindu images. Shiva, the cosmic dancer, is at the same time creator, sustainer and destroyer of the universe; he can keep people in ignorance or lead them to knowledge. Depictions of this dancing god are omnipresent in Hindu art. Darsane has been stimulated by the notion of danced creation. However, the ambivalence of the figure of Shiva, who is creator and destroyer in one, does not fit his image of Christ.

As if at play, the dancing Christ lets the bright ball of the sun glide from his left hand. Spellbound he looks directly into the source of life. In his right hand the sickle of the waxing moon is already extracting itself from a lump of earth. The dancing figure is swinging with his whole body, on the verge of throwing the moon up high. There is no gravity in this movement—it is of great vigor. His white garment of light, a simple loincloth, and his hair blow in the breath of the Spirit. Everything is bathed in the gliding ray of the sun, which makes God's light radiate over his creation. Bagong has produced a number of depictions of the cosmic Christ as well. *The Crucified Lord* is portrayed as a wayang figure with raised arms floating in an ocean of colorful cosmic bubbles.

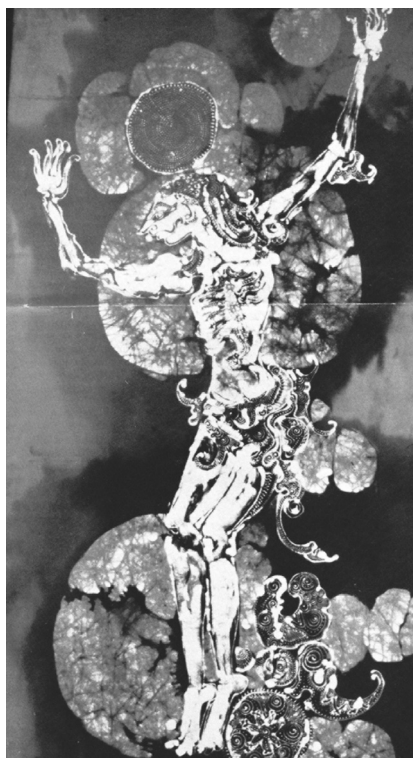


Fig. 13. Bagong Kussudiardjo, *The Crucified Lord*. Image no. 7, March 1981.

The idea that Jesus could have danced the message of the gospel remains strange to the western mind set. For the Balinese however dance is the ideal form of worship. They believe that the dancer performs in front of the gods and entertains them, but at the same time the gods are taking possession of the dancer to become present in the world. In Darsane's *Sermon at the Seaside* Christ dances in the center of the picture. All movements are directed towards him. Again he is only dressed with the white garment of light, a traditional sarong, as a sign of his divine descent. His right arm points toward the sky, the palm wide open. The left arm is bent, the open palm pointing toward the left foot raised upward. According to Balinese worldview the right hand belongs to the upper world and the left one to the underworld. In traditional Hindu-Balinese dance this gesture therefore signals redemption. Jesus has a lighter skin color that differentiates him from the people who flock towards him. As a stranger he has come to Bali beach. For preaching, however, he chose the traditional Balinese way, recognising the islanders in their cultural identity. The people who approach him in groups of two, three or four, join in his dance. Nobody dances alone, yet women and men are separate. The Balinese have firm family and village ties. Nobody is left on his or her own.



Fig. 14. Nyoman Darsane, *Sermon at the Seaside*. Küster 1991:93.

Christ and the Fishermen by Bagong marks a rupture with the classical accommodation and inculturation art. The traditional Indonesian fishing boats in the background are still reminiscent of it. They suggest that Jesus Christ has arrived at the beach of the Indonesian islands. Shadowy figures are on their way to go fishing like Jesus disciples did at the lake Genezareth 2000 years ago.

The group of people in the foreground evoke a quite different impression. Jesus with blue bathing suit and muscle shirt, shoulder long hair, full beard and hype metal-rimmed sunglasses has spread his arms to an all-encompassing gesture. He attracts the full attention of the fishermen standing and crouching around him. The contours of some of them remind the beholder of Indonesian shadow puppets (*wayang*). They are mainly dressed in shorts and T-shirts. The colour of their skin ranges from black, brown and red to the white of the person behind Jesus. Against the common habit to claim Jesus for the particular context the artist plays here with the universal dimension of Christianity. The leisure dress, signature of global youth culture, symbolizes at the same time the irruption of modernity into Indonesian society. There have already plural modernities developed, which integrated the western culture



Fig. 15. Christ and the Fisherman by Bagong Kussudiardja. Image no. 77, December 1998.

of consumer capitalism in a hybrid mix of different influences into their own culture. Jesus Christ is present amongst all this.

Darsane's *Rain of Blood* is dominated by the presence of the crucified. The cross does not really look like a wooden torture instrument but is more a vague silhouette in the background. From the cross red blood is rinsing down in small streams that painted in red of changing intensity. The background colours are varying from dark blue on the top and in the bottom corners to light pink in the lower part of the picture. Jesus does not hang so much on the cross than dancing it. His legs are disproportional long. The feet are crossed, putting one in front of the other. His face expresses compassion with the suffering of the world. To his left, the contours of two *wayang* figures, traditional shadow puppets, are visible.

Until recently Darsane has very rarely depicted suffering or poverty in his pictures. He was the painter of the "beautiful gospel." The experience of the



Fig. 16. Rain of Blood by Nyoman Darsane. Courtesy of the artist.

Bali bombings in the aftermath of 9/11 however made him change his mind. The balance between good and evil that is crucial in Balinese worldview seems to be distorted. Both Darsane and Bagong show a clear tendency to move away from the inculturation mode of Christian art in Indonesia to a more hybridized local-and-international style.

*Places of pilgrimage, houses of retreat, conference centres.
General considerations*

Christian art for public use is not only found in churches and chapels. As far as we know, there is not much that is specifically Christian in the architecture of the many schools, universities and hospitals built by the Christian communities. These functional buildings follow the general architectural developments of Indonesia. There are also no examples of burial places or cemeteries where Indonesian Christians have developed a distinct style. But architecture

for places of pilgrimage has been rather different. Quite important has been the work by the gifted architect, novelist and priest Yusuf B. Mangunwijaya who started the further development of the compound of Sendang Sono (Central Java, in the mountainous region west of the great Buddhist shrine of Borobudur) in the later 1960s. Instead of building a grand cathedral, Mangunwijaya designed a large number of small structures: chapels, tent-like buildings fit for eating, discussion or prayer or just being together with small groups. Traditional elements like the 14 chapels for the way of the cross and a copy of the Lourdes and Fatima statues of Mary are here standing side by side with buildings in the Javanese *pendopo* style: open buildings with large roofs, ending only about 1.50 m above surface, without walls. Above and in chapter fourteen we have already given an impression of the sanctuary of Pohsarang in East Java, also a mixture of traditional Javanese architecture with imitations of European Catholic devotion. Mangunwijaya has built some large churches in Javanese *Joglo* style in Klaten, Tambran-Ganjuran and Wonosobo, besides many smaller ones, often in a style closer to that of Balinese temples.

Although most Catholic and Protestant churches are still built in the tradition of the European neo-gothic places of worship, in all regions of Indonesia several newer churches were built in local or regional traditional architecture since the early 1970s (and in some cases even already in the 1930s). This practice came under severe criticism in the inter-religious debate of the 1980s and later. The government-initiated Council for Inter-religious Consultation (*Badan Musyawarah Antaragama*) in the province of Yogyakarta formulated in 1983 an Ethical Code for Inter-religious Harmony. One of its instructions was about the symbolism of religious architecture:

The new houses of worship must be in accordance with the local situation and the numbers of adherents to a religion who will make effective use of the new building. Apart from this, the shape of the building should clearly express the identity of different religions so that these buildings will not resemble each other.¹²

In practice this means that a Christian church should not imitate Indonesian architectural tradition, but European style. This is a strategy for inter-religious harmony that is first of all focused on a prevention of conflicts through a clear and unmistakable separation of the religions. Indonesia has not taken over the cultural policy of Malaysia where in Christian terminology all specific Islamic elements are forbidden (even the word Allah for God), but this ruling for places of worship looks like some kind of religious *apartheid* and could lead towards a stagnation of artistic creativity on the part of Christians.

¹² Steenbrink 1984:13.

Fortunately, like many government proposals and rulings, this Ethical Code was never implemented as to this aspect.

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CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

CHRISTIAN MEDIA

Christian press and media can be understood in different ways. There are internal publications in the churches, directed to the community of the faithful. There are publications with mainly a Christian content, directed to a broader public than only the church community. Finally there are media-companies run by Christians, who want to offer a contribution to the general public.

At the beginning of this chapter we will give a short overview of the Protestant and Catholic press in Indonesia starting in the seventeenth century. In a second part we will describe in short the history of Catholic publishers. We will take the history of the Catholic publisher and printer Kanisius as an example, and give in comparison a short description of the biggest Protestant Publisher in Indonesia, *BPK Gunung Mulia*. In the third part we will give some attention to an ecumenical project named *Kokosia*, a project that tried to make an inventory of the Christian activities in the field of communication in Indonesia between 1978 and 1986. In the last part of this chapter we will describe how the newspaper *Kompas*, started by Catholics in 1965 as a “daily newspaper” and as a “views paper,” continues to the present to give a peaceful but also a critical contribution to the developments in Indonesian society. We end with a few notes about *Sinar Harapan*, later renamed *Suara Pembaruan*, a newspaper started by Protestants in Indonesia.

Protestant press and media in the seventeenth until the nineteenth century

The VOC realised the benefit of the press in publishing laws and regulations of the government. But it was the Protestant Church in the Dutch East Indies that initiated the introduction of a printing press. They used the printing press to publish Christian literature in local languages for Christian interests. In 1624 church workers bought a printing press from the Netherlands, but the coming of this printing press to Indonesia did not automatically accomplish both the colonial government’s and church’s publication requirements. The first printing press in Indonesia was not used because the Dutch Indies had no skilled operator, to work with the press.¹

¹ This section is based on Adam 2003.

In order to solve this problem, the church proposed that the Dutch-Indies government in Batavia seek for and assign a skilled printing press operator from the Netherlands. The effort to effectively use the printing press came into reality in 1659, but the first publications did not deal with religious issues. A man named Kornelis Pijl had founded a printing enterprise by publishing a kind of almanac or “book of time” (*buku waktu*), but later the printing was managed by the colonial government joined by a private company, to publish documents, books and a colonial government newspaper.

For a long period the church communities did not have printing facilities. In 1743 the *Seminarium Theologicum* at Batavia had a one-unit printing press. The fate of that printing press is unknown but there is a report that it published the New Testament and several prayer books in Malay.² It had a short life because in 1755 it had been forced to fuse with the Benteng printing owned by the central government in Batavia, which printed the official government documents.

In 1819, a printing press arrived in the Moluccan Islands. It was owned by the missionary Joseph Kam, who had been appointed a minister in the Protestant Church and was entrusted with the care of the Christian populations in all of eastern Indonesia, from the Sangihe Islands in the north until Kisar and Wetar in the south. These Christians were the fruit of the Catholic mission during the Spanish-Portuguese era and, in some regions of the efforts of Protestant ministers during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, but had been badly neglected in the declining years of the VOC. Kam’s strategy in reviving local Christianity included the distribution of bibles, hymn books, devotional books, and also exercise books for the pupils of the elementary schools maintained by the church all over the Moluccas, and that was what he needed the printing press for. It was operated by his pupils, who after a few years of indoor training were sent to the villages to become school masters and congregation leaders (see chapter nine).

In the year 1819 in Bengkulu Nathaniel Ward, a British missionary who worked for the *Baptist Missionary Society*, founded a printing press to print religious and secular writings, but his activities stopped when Bengkulu was handed over to the Netherlands in 1826.

The seminary that was founded by Walter Henry Medhurst from the London Missionary Society, who came to Java in 1822, owned a well-known missionary printing press. In the next year he took over a British church at Parapatan, Batavia, founded by Rev. John Slater. Medhurst published many works in English, Chinese, Dutch, Japanese, and Malay. In 1828 this printing house started using the system of lithography. It became very productive

² Van der Chijs 1875:7 as cited by Adam 2003.

between 1823 and 1842, publishing as many as 189,294 various printed items, covering sermons, parts of the Old and New Testaments, a Chinese-English dictionary, and several non religious pamphlets. In the nineteenth century, missionary printing spread to areas outside Java, especially in Tomohon, Tondano, Banjarmasin, and Ambon. The printed publications were religious books, church literature, and books for mission schools.

Protestant media in the early years of the press in Indonesia

Up to 1856 all newspapers, magazines, and journals used the Dutch language, and before 1866 the publishers were Dutch (pure or Eurasian, besides the few British missionaries mentioned above). But the growth of the press in the nineteenth century would not have been possible without the support of the Chinese who were powerful subscribers at that time.³ The first newspaper using Malay in Indonesia, *Soerat Kabar Bahasa Melaijoe* was published on 5 January 1856 in Surabaya by the Dutch E. Fuhri. In the same year, H. Nygh in Rotterdam published the first journal using Malay, *Bintang Oetara*.

The second half of the nineteenth century saw the early growth of an Indonesian press using the Malay language. Some missionaries or lay Christians became involved and used the press for their own ends. *Biang-Lala* (1867) and *Tjahaja Sijang* (1868/1869), which will be discussed later, were magazines published by missionaries printing in Parapatan-Batavia and Tondano respectively. Although they were not the first newspapers in Indonesia, Christian media were part of the early press in Indonesia, especially those using the Malay language.

In the second half of the nineteenth century there were two kinds of Christian media, differentiated by their orientation, content and publishers. First were the commercially oriented Christian media, especially newspapers that had been published by private publishers including the missionaries, and second, the non-commercial Christian media published by the missions or church synods.

There were certain conditions that facilitated the growth of the press including Christian newspapers, in the second half of the nineteenth century. The growth of printing managed by the colonial government, the missionaries and by private-run companies, and also the use of the Malay language as *lingua franca* in the Dutch Indies, had increased the use of the press. Moreover,

³ In 1886 Chinese entered press activities especially by buying a bankrupted printing company named Gebroeders Gimberg & Co. together with the right to publish *Bintang Timoer* newspaper. For Chinese communities, the handing over of Gebroeders Gimberg & Co. was symbolically significant because it marked the involvement of Chinese in press life. Since then European and Eurasians were not the sole owner of newspapers. See Adam 2003:111.

there were significant changes of colonial policy on education for government officials between 1863 and 1871.⁴ In 1864 the colonial government announced that after that year the higher positions in the civil service would be widely opened to Eurasian and native born applicants. This policy encouraged *priyayi* to enter western education.

The opening of telegram networks in 1856 and the introduction of a modern postal service in 1862, followed by the opening of the first railway in 1867, had indirectly facilitated the growth of the press. The colonial government had also issued a Press Law in 1856. Although still repressive with regard to the freedom of the press, the Law at that time had been considered to be a positive development, an instrument to prevent arbitrary government action in controlling public opinion and criticism against colonial government. In the previous period, government regulations had refused the press existence and had the arbitrary authority to ban any printed matter. The governor general had absolute power to expel whoever might be considered a threat to the Dutch-Indies' security. Such a situation made anyone afraid of taking the risk of publishing anything without government permission.⁵

The commercial-oriented Christian media

In 1867 John Muhleisen Arnold, a minister at the Anglican chapel in Parapatan (Batavia), initiated a weekly missionary newspaper in Batavia named *Biang-Lala*. He approached a printing house in Batavia named Ogilvie & Co. to publish and print *Biang-Lala*. Arnold thought that the press could also be used as an effective mean of spreading Christ's teachings. The name *Biang-Lala* (Rainbow) was taken from a Dutch bulletin published by Lange & Co. in Batavia in 1852, a Dutch literary magazine that contained stories of journeys, Javanese legends, poems and educational writings. When *Biang-Lala* was first published on 11 September 1867 it was scheduled to be issued every Wednesday; it consisted of four pages and its subscription cost was 12 guilders per year. Like other newspapers at that time, *Biang-Lala* contained local and international news, but articles and stories of Christian religion or moral teachings were given priority and became a routine column. In the midst of the competition of the native language press in the second half of the nineteenth century *Biang-Lala* was one of the newspapers that survived a longer time,

⁴ In 1871 the colonial government issued the Education Law, among others deciding that teacher training schools must not be built in Java only but also in various parts of the Dutch-Indies. The Law also insisted that all educational expenses of state-owned schools be part of the government budget. Adam 2003:36.

⁵ Adam 2003:27-28.

although it did not hide its religious mission. This newspaper was not only supported by Christian communities, but also by the editors of contemporary popular newspapers such as *Selompret Melajoe* and *Bintang Timoer*, which always summarised and reproduced religious articles published in *Biang-Lala*. As a missionary newspaper, *Biang-Lala* was distributed all over Java as a means of spreading the Good News to Christians and to new converts as well, while at that time newspapers were facing major problems in distribution.

Biang-Lala was also recorded as the first newspaper since 1867 that used pictures in its columns and used illustrations made from woodcuts. The pictures illustrated scenes in China, the Netherlands, England, or Russia and were given free to its subscribers to attract them and to keep them as permanent subscribers.

In 1872, a commercially oriented newspaper named *Hindia-Nederland* was published in Batavia and was able to equalise the popularity of the well-known newspapers at that time, which had emerged earlier, such as *Selompret Melajoe* (Semarang, August 1860), *Bintang Timoer* (Surabaya, May 1862), *Bintang Barat* (Batavia, 1869) and *Biang-Lala*. Although *Biang-Lala* had only two pages, the emergence of *Hindia-Nederland* influenced its distribution and it was forced to stop publication temporarily, but was published again on 13 July 1872 under a new chief editor F.L. Anthing, the well-known missionary. On 1 January 1873, *Biang-Lala* changed its name to become the *Bintang Djohar* and also changed its format by providing a last page in Dutch. Their failure to attract Malay readers had forced *Biang-Lala* to shift to Dutch readers by attracting them to one page of Dutch language in its publication.

The second Christian newspaper was the *Tjahaja Sijang*, published in Minahasa at the end of 1868 and named by missionaries as the *Kertas Chabar Minahasa* (Minahasa newspaper). The newspaper was initiated by Nicholaas Graafland, a missionary sent by the *Nederlands Zendeling Genootschap*, and was published by H. Bettink. Its first samples were distributed in 1868 and it was launched in regular editions from January 1869. This was a missionary newspaper printed on the mission press and published not only to spread Christian teachings but also to provide reading materials for native Christians at the training school for teachers in Tondano and for students of the missionary school in Amurang and Tanawangko. So, the majority of its readers were (assistant) ministers and native Christians.⁶ Graafland published several books in Malay, but still could not meet the students' needs. He then tried to collect reading materials to educate Minahasa natives about Christian moral

⁶ According to Adam, the orientation of *Tjahaja Sijang* was commercial while *Biang-Lala* was religious. See Adam 2003:308. His analysis on the content of *Tjahaja Sijang* proved that this media had a religious mission as well.

values in a society were there was both good and evil. Graafland thought such a publication could provide reading materials for students and at the same time spread moral and religious ideas among the natives in Minahasa.

At the beginning *Tjahaja Sijang* was a monthly newspaper, but at the turn of the century it was published twice a week. It used the “lower” Malay. Its subscription was 4 guilders per year. *Tjahaja Sijang* was led by Graafland, assisted by some correspondents and contributors. The majority of them were missionaries-assistants and alumni of the mission schools. This periodical discussed mainly religious and educational issues such as essays on Christian religion, Psalms, various articles on the history of Babylonia, Phoenicia, and Minahasa, puzzles, and news from some parts of the world. Religious articles such as reflection on the gospels’ texts, meditation, on the death and the resurrection of Christ, and on sects were placed in the supplements because the missionaries considered that the Christians in Minahasa needed such supplements.

Although education had been more widespread in Minahasa than in Java at that time, schools still had not been introduced to the majority of the people because their spread was limited to urban areas. So, the distribution of *Tjahaja Sijang* was limited to areas where schools had been established and to the missionaries’ posts. At first, *Tjahaja Sijang* had only about 250 subscribers. Some of them read the newspaper borrowed from friends who were subscribers, so that publications were circulated from hand to hand or sometimes someone read for those who were illiterate. For ten years *Tjahaja Sijang* was the only publication distributed in Minahasa. After 1871 its readers increased and it could become financially independent and so it enjoyed a longer life than most contemporary newspapers. In 1902, when *Tjahaja Sijang* was 33 years old, its printing and publisher was moved from Tanawangko to Manado. Two years later a rival newspaper *Pewarta Manado* was published but because *Tjahaja Sijang* had a stronger position through funds from the church, and its subscription price was lower, its rival could not survive for long.

The main difference between *Biang-Lala* and *Tjahaja Sijang* was that the first was a weekly newspaper and provided more columns for news. In Batavia, where Muslims were the majority, the editors of *Biang-Lala* could carefully observe their reactions and comments. *Tjahaja Sijang* was more open in attacking Muslims, for example by publishing stories which humiliated Muslims and the prophet Mohammad. Under Arnold’s leadership *Biang-Lala* tended to criticize Muslim leaders but it never criticized the editors of contemporary newspapers, although that was a common practice at the time. Arnold also published a variety of articles and news but he gave Christian articles and stories based on the Bible a priority in *Biang-Lala*. In the *Biang-Lala* was also always information about the schedule of church services in Batavia. To keep the image of *Biang-Lala* as a Christian newspaper, J.M. Arnold regularly told

the readers not to send any news or reports on killings, robberies, violations against the law and articles on slander, and he stated that he would only publish articles or news on religious topics.

Ambon had also a Christian newspaper named *Penghentar* that emerged in October 1894 and was printed at first by the *Ambonsche Drukkerij* and then by Ong Kie Hong, a Chinese in Ambon. *Penghentar* was the successor of a previous journal named *Penabur*, founded by assistant ministers in Ambon.

The non Commercial-oriented Christian media

The Batak mission considered that the success of evangelisation could not be separated from an education system and the training of native church workers to improve their role and skill especially as teachers. Since 1883 the Batak mission made an entirely fundamental renewal including in the basic education system.⁷ As a link in the chain of education renewal there was a plan to increase reading material. The magazine *Immanuel* was first published on 1 January 1890 to meet such a need. J.H. Meerwaldt, one of the teachers in Pansur Napitu seminary, who then became its chief editor, founded it.⁸ This publication is the oldest magazine in Indonesia that has survived into the present.⁹ In the beginning *Immanuel* was a *surat kuliling* (circular letter) using the Batak language, and its target readers were missionaries/preachers, elders of the congregations, teachers, and ministers—those who had become literate in Latin script. There was no complete text of the Bible or other newspaper in the Batak language at that time. The contents of *surat kuliling Immanuel* were pastoral issues, reflections, Bible knowledge, theology including Christian dogma, teaching and history, mission news and popular knowledge.

In its development, *Immanuel* also included some homework for native teachers and seminary students consisting of algebra, geology, popular knowledge, Bible knowledge and pedagogic methods. Sometimes the magazine also published advice or admonitions for teachers and students of the seminary. Native church workers were also encouraged to write and publish their writings in this magazine.

In the beginning *Immanuel* was a hand-written circular letter, published monthly and reproduced by using hectograph.¹⁰ In 1895 it was printed in

⁷ Biro Informasi HKBP 1995:15–17.

⁸ J. Sihombing 1961:120.

⁹ In its cover is written, “The oldest magazine in Indonesia, published since 1 Januari 1890.”

¹⁰ Interview with Rev. Rahman Tua Munthe in November 2003 and Dr. Einar M. Sitompul in January 2004. See also Aritonang 1988:269.

Padang and since 1904 it has been printed in Narumonda.¹¹ Although in its early life it was a circular letter for a limited group of readers, particularly seminary students and native teachers, the RMG director had formulated its long-term objectives since its beginning, “to deepen and spiritualise the life of the congregations.”¹²

The Catholic press, media and magazines 1890–1942

Petrus Jacobus van Santen, Superior of the Jesuits in the mission and head of the parish in Batavia, took the first initiative to publish a Catholic newspaper. For this purpose co-operation was sought with a small advertiser, *De Express*, distributed twice a week for free in Batavia. Starting with the first week of June 1891, each issue had some specific Catholic articles. A small fee of fifty cents per month was charged. The newly arrived Godefridus Jonckbloet SJ and later also Antonius Dijkmans SJ took care of the content. The general themes were very seldom related to the religious situation in the Indies, where Islam was the dominant religion and Christianity only a minority. The background of the Batavia polemics did not differ from the European background of Batavia society. For the Catholics the partners in debate were Freemasonry and Protestantism. The enterprise was no big success. After one year the co-operation with the owner of *De Express* ended, because of the heavy financial losses for the Catholic party.¹³ Jonckbloet then continued the publication of Catholic articles in the *Bataviaasch Handelsblad*, from 1 July until 31 December 1892. At that moment the publisher asked f13,000 for a continuation of this co-operation.

Since 14 March 1903 *De Java-Post* was published as a Catholic weekly, but with the neutral subtitle *Weekblad van Nederlandsch-Indië*. W.H. Boogaardt was its first editor until late 1905 when he was elected as member of the Dutch parliament. The articles in this weekly showed the growing self-consciousness of the Catholic community. From 11 November 1905 Boogaardt was succeeded by the Jesuit W. van den Heuvel and since then it were always Jesuits who lead the weekly until it was halted in December 1927. On 1 April 1926 a group of Catholic laymen in Bandung were able to take over the management of a neutral, local newspaper *De Indische Telegraaf* and published it as a Catholic paper. Because it was too expensive to take over this newspaper fully, the group started in 1927 with *De Koerier* as a new Catholic daily news-

¹¹ According to Rahman Tua Munthe, the first edition of *Immanuel* was printed in Singapore. Although some said that *Immanuel* was published in Padang, I think these were the later editions. See Aritonang 1988.

¹² Aritonang 1988.

¹³ Van Aernsbergen 1934:164–165. Otterspeer 1995:148–149. Steenbrink 2003–I:42–44.

paper. In order to make the daily newspaper a success, the weekly *Java-Post* was stopped. From the very beginning the basic weakness of *De Koerier* was the lack of a good professional journalist. On 1 April 1937 the office and the printing of *De Koerier* were moved to Batavia. The Catholic leaders estimated that a Catholic newspaper was very important as the voice of the Catholic community to the government and to other groups. To achieve that purpose they spent much money on *De Koerier*, because in that way they entered into the public debate. But at last increasing debts caused that *De Koerier* was discontinued, in June 1940.

On 1 June 1909 the Jesuit A. van Velsen started in the Minahasa the monthly *Geredja Katholik*, in Malay. From 1910 onwards a supplement *Iman dan Ilmoe* was added in the form of a series of brochures. From 1920 until 1958 this magazine was published by the MSC order. They embellished the appearance and changed the name of the supplement to *Ibadat, Iman, Ilmoe*. This magazine was spread all over Indonesia. The articles were varied and gave much information about the development of Catholic life all over the world and Catholic doctrine was treated without rigid polemic.¹⁴

The SVD printer Arnoldus in Ende, published from 1926 until 1938 another monthly, *Kristus Ratu Itang*, in the Sikka language. Arnoldus also published the monthly *Bintang Timur* from 1928–1937 in the Malay/Indonesian language. This monthly carried articles about the Catholic religion, family-life, education, and gave some regional news.

On 28 March 1909 a *Bond van Katholieken* was established in Surabaya. This Surabaya Catholic Union commenced in 1910 with the magazine *Onze Bode*. Also in Semarang there was founded a local society, that joined with the union. In June 1912 *Onze Bode* changed into a bi-weekly *Orgaan van den 'Bond voor Katholieken'* in Surabaya. It treated questions of a religious, social and political nature. After a few years it became a monthly and was published until 1919. On 12 May 1913 the *Katholieke Sociale Bond* (KSB) was founded in Batavia, in 1915 a branch of the KSB in Medan. In 1920 there were 18 local KSBs. In 1919 the Batavia branch of the KSB published a monthly, *Sociaal Leven*. The branches of Surabaya, Semarang and Yogyakarta followed this initiative by publishing a monthly *Sociaal Streven*. In 1922 both monthlies were united into a weekly with the title: *Sociaal Leven en Streven*. All members of the Catholic Social Union were automatically subscribers. In 1930 the weekly changed into a monthly. Until the late twenties there was almost no contribution from the clergy. That changed in 1930 when Father Victorius Beekman OFM became, for a longer period, its editor. In 1938 the name was changed in *Toorts van het Sociale Leven*, but it stopped in mid-1938.

¹⁴ See G. Vriens in: Muskens 1972–II:175–176; M. Stigter in: Muskens 1974–IIIa:471.

The Central Javanese counterpart of the KSB, the *Poesara Katolika Wandawa*, also erected in 1913, published from 1920 the Javanese bi-weekly *Swara Tama* to replace *Djawi Sraya* (1914–1920). Since 1928 *Swara Tama* also published an edition in the Malay language called *Soeara Katholiek* (which became a weekly in 1930). These publications promoted the realisation of the Catholic social teachings. In the beginning *Swara Tama* was rather neutral, but from 1924 on it showed clearly its Catholic identity. For the children they had a kind of supplement: *Taman Poetra*. The *Pakempalan Politik Katolik Djawi*, lead by I.J. Kasimo could use *Swara Tama*, but the magazine never was limited to politics alone. In 1918 European Catholics in Indonesia erected the *Indische Katholieke Partij*. In 1933 Kerstens, who was then the president of the party, started a special bi-weekly magazine, *De Nieuwe Tijd*, for IKP members, because he did not agree with the articles in the Catholic Newspaper *De Koerier*. Before the Japanese occupation several unions and associations also had their own magazines: *De Katholieke Onderwijzersbond* (established 1917) published the bi-weekly *Het Katholieke Schoolblad van Nederlandsch-Indië*. The Catholic Trade Union for the Army, called Saint Ignatius, started in 1924 a monthly magazine, called *St. Ignatius*; *De Katholieke Jongelingenbond*, *Katholieke Meisjesbond* and the Catholic Scouting (*Padvinderij*) had their own monthly magazine started in 1922: *De Indische Voorhoede: maandblad voor Indische jongens en meisjes*. The Catholic Students' Union Bellarminus had their magazine, started in 1928 *De Bellarminiaan*. Besides that there were weekly magazines for parishes in Central Java and a monthly magazine for primary schools, *Hallo Jonge Kracht*. Kanisius in Yogyakarta printed *Poesari Dewi Maria* (1926), which afterwards became a monthly magazine in the Javanese language of the Maria Congregation with the new name *Tamtama Dalem Dewi Maria* (1928–1941), published in Muntilan. Its goal was the deepening of the faith.

From 1928 a monthly, *Veritas*, was published in Padang that with great perseverance defended the interests of Catholic schools. W. Dekkers MSC started in 1936 in Makassar another apologetic Catholic monthly, *De Waarheid*, which was continued by Dr. G Giezenaar CICM and circulated on a wide scale in Sulawesi and the whole of Indonesia till 1942.¹⁵

Protestant press, media and magazines 1910–1945

In Protestant circles there were also many magazines. Most of these were not national Indonesian magazines, but were published by regional missionary

¹⁵ Van den Eerenbeemt in: Muskens 1974–IIIa:451 and D. Verhelst en H. Daniëls (eds.) 1991:250. See also Steenbrink 2007–II:27–66 and 269–270.

societies, missionary associations, synods etc.¹⁶ Although some observers saw *Biang-Lala* and *Tjahaja Sijang* as Christian newspapers (see above), E.J. Hoogerwerf claims that the Protestants did not succeed in publishing a national-scale newspaper in the Dutch East Indies in the years before World War II.¹⁷ Much depends here on definition. The earliest publications as discussed above were not entirely devoted to Christian doctrine and practice.

During the twelfth Conference of the NIZB (*Nederlandsch-Indische Zendingsbond*, Netherlands-Indies Mission Union) 18–26 August 1906, a commission for the distribution of Christian reading material on Java was proposed. This working group, in 1917 called the “commission for the paper missionary,” was for a long period not really active and because of that was reorganised in 1922 as the “literature commission of the NIZB.” On 1 May 1927 it was completed with a central office for literature.¹⁸ According to H. Kraemer, who became the chairman of this commission shortly after his arrival in Java (1922), there was a need of diverse literature for different groups. For Christians with a good education a history of the Bible was needed besides a book to give a ‘portrait’ of Christ. Besides that an overview of church history by presenting biographies of leading persons of the biblical and later periods would also be needed. For people with lesser education biblical literature modelled on popular Javanese stories would be required. For non-Christians polemical and apologetic literature was needed. This literature was not intended to fight Islam, but to show how Christians might answer the questions that were rising in a struggle between different opinions.¹⁹

One of the initiatives of the literature commission was the edition of *Zaman Baroe* (New Era) between 1926 and 1931, a follow up of *Bentara Hindia* (The Indian Herald) that in 1925 had come to an end, as was the case also with *Tjahaja Sijang*. *Zaman Baroe* was a weekly, circulated among 2,000 readers. In this magazine prominent Indonesians could write about all kinds of actual developments in church and society. The weekly could not be continued after 1931 due to the financial weakness of the missionary organisations. But this was not the only magazine that appeared around 1925. Besides all kind of Dutch-language magazines such as *De Banier* and *Het Algemeen Protestantsch Kerkblad*, which had almost no significant contributions by Indonesian writers, there were more than a hundred periodicals that served the Christians in Malay, Javanese, Batak or other regional languages. A proportion of these

¹⁶ Most of the titles of Dutch language Protestant missionary periodicals about Indonesia from the nineteenth and twentieth century can be found in Jan A.B. Jongeneel 1990. A.G. Hoekema 1994:341–350 made a list of Christian periodicals in the Indonesian languages up to ca. 1960. See also: Van Randwijck 1981:461–464, 716–721.

¹⁷ Evert-Jan Hoogerwerf 1990:113.

¹⁸ Van Randwijck 1981:462.

¹⁹ Hoekema 1994:103–104.

were directed to certain groups (youth, women, teachers unions) or only spread regionally or locally. Most of them were written and edited by missionaries. In Central Java some of them were printed in very high numbers, for instance *Mardi Rahardja* reached a peak of 80,000 copies. It may have been distributed free of cost.

There were also weeklies and monthlies with an Indonesian editing. These magazines especially played an important role in the stimulation of the development of independent mature churches. Already in 1910 a magazine for Christian teachers was started in East Java, *Oedyana Among Siswa*, later continued as *Pniël*. From 1915 onwards there was the monthly *Taman Soewara*, the magazine of the *Perserikatan Kaoem Christen* (The Christian Union). A few years later, from 1925 on, *Kristen Djawa* was published in East Java in the circles of the GKJW (East Javanese Christian Church) and from 1935 on the official church magazine of the GKJW became *Doeta* (Messenger). In the Minahasa, Northern Celebes, there was the magazine *Pangkal Setija*, from an organisation that wanted to start an independent church. In Northern Sumatera, the Batak region, there were several magazines: besides *Immanuel* already described, there were also *Soara Batak* (Voice of the Batak people) that appeared for at least 12 years after 1919, *Siadji Panoetoeri* (magazine of the Christian teachers union), and *Sinalsal*, from 1931 on was used by J. Wismar Saragih to gain acknowledgment for the language and culture of the Simalungan-Batak people. The mission publication, *Merga Si Lima* (*The Five Clans*), played a similar role among the Karo Batak people also, in the years leading up to the Japanese invasion.

These magazines stimulated Indonesian Christians to share their thoughts and to formulate their ideas clearly, so that they reached a kind of maturity. For the discussion with Dutch people and with the elite among the Indonesian Christians, who spoke the Dutch language, *De Opwekker* was used and sometimes *Eltheto* and *Random ons Zendingsveld*.²⁰ Just before the Japanese occupation (1942–1945) there were still new publications such as *Theologische Stemmen* (Theological Voices) of the Theological Seminary in Jakarta that appeared six times in 1941. In December 1940 the magazine *Semangat Baru* (New Spirit) appeared, with content similar to the former *Zaman Baroe*. The magazine intended to become a trumpet of the Protestant Christians in Indonesia, without affiliation with the Christian party. During the Japanese occupation it was very difficult, almost impossible, to publish magazines but an exception is a special edition of the (*Badan*) *Persiapan Persatoean Kaoem Kristen* (Body for the preparation of the unity of Christians), Christmas 1942.²¹

²⁰ Hoekema 1994:105–106.

²¹ Hoekema 1994:165. Cf. Jan S. Aritonang 2004:226.

Catholic press, media and journals 1945–1990

After the Japanese occupation (surrender 15 August 1945) there appeared all kind of Catholic magazines, but never a daily newspaper that really could be characterised as Catholic. In Ende were published *Bentara* (1946–1958) together with *Anak Bentara* and *Pandoe Pendidikan* (1946–1959). In Yogyakarta Kanisius published the weekly *Praba* (in the Javanese language) that became *Peraba* (in the Indonesian language) as the magazine of the Archdiocese of Semarang, a kind of follow-up of the magazine *Swara Tama*, between 1949 and 1972. Kanisius is still publishing the following magazines: *Basis* since 1951 started as a monthly cultural magazine by Prof. Dr. N. Driyarkara SJ, L. Subiyat and G. Vriens SJ. A long time contributor Dick Hartoko SJ was responsible for the magazine between 1957 and 1995. It is now, as a bi-monthly, the oldest cultural magazine of Indonesia with Jesuit priest G.P. Sindhunata as chief editor. *Rohani* started in 1954 as a monthly for members of religious orders and congregations. The content of the magazine is directed to dealing with themes that are relevant for the faith and the spiritual and religious life within society and the realisation of these themes in the daily life of these religious people. Since 1975 the theology students of the Jesuits, assisted by a few sisters and lay people, have been responsible for the magazine, guided by an experienced Jesuit Father. For teenagers, pupils of the secondary schools, the magazine *Semangat* (in the beginning called *Spirit*) was published. In the years 1968–1973 it was the first magazine in Indonesia that was printed in full colour, until it ended in about 1974; *Trubus*, published since 1969 as a monthly by the social organisation *Tani Membangun*, is a magazine published to give information about agriculture and horticulture to farmers; and since 1975 *Utusan*, which started as a magazine for the spiritual life of the Catholic Community with all kind of reflective articles. It has changed a little since the Jesuit Sindhunata became the editor. *Familia* is a more recent magazine that is directed to the maturation of the faith of Christian families. Between 1946 and 1969 in Jakarta a bi-weekly, *Penabur*, was published under the leading of the Franciscans. It discussed all kinds of social questions.

The weekly Catholic magazine *Hidup* started in 1946 as *Kerkelijik Weekblad*. In 1948 the name was changed to *Katholiek Leven* and since 1958 the Indonesian language was used for the magazine, and the name became *Hidup*. The *Hidup* Foundation of the Archdiocese of Jakarta is responsible for the magazine and the Archbishop of Jakarta appoints the members of its board of directors. The magazine supplies information, gives food for reflection and other readings about the life of the Catholic community in Indonesia and in the whole world. It has gradually extended its readership over the whole of Indonesia. Local Catholic magazines are *Porbarita* in the Batak language (1936–1941, since 1956), *Tifa Irian* (since 1955) a bi-weekly in Papua and the weekly *Dian* in Ende, Flores. Magazines that are directed to a special public

are, among others, *Bimas Katolik*, *Busos*, *Orientasi Baru*, *Pastoralia*, *Patuh* and *Salus-Warta PK Sint Carolus*. Since the obligation to have a permit to edit and publish magazines was abolished by the government in 1998 a new Catholic magazine, *Sabda*, appeared to counter fanatical Islamic magazines such as *Sabili*. In the beginning it was published every week, afterwards it was published irregular, and mostly distributed free on Sundays at the doors of the churches.

The Indonesian Bishops' Conference (KWI) has several divisions. Most of them have or have had their own magazine. The official magazine of the KWI since 1971 has been *Spektrum*. In addition most of the dioceses and a number of parishes in Indonesia also have their own magazines, which vary greatly in circulation, number of pages, and frequency of publication.²²

Protestant magazines and journals 1945–1990

After the Japanese occupation only a few Christian periodicals in Indonesian or local languages could continue to be published. The best known is *Immanuel*, the magazine of the *HKBP* (Batak Church), published since 1890 as already mentioned above. A Dutch magazine, *De Zaaier* (The Sower) that was published from 1923 on, was published again from 1945 until 1957. In 1946 the conference of missionaries pleaded for a periodical, which began as the *Pedoman Goeroe* and in 1949 was continued as the *Pedoman Masyarakat Keristen*, but it was not successful. In 1945 the magazine *Pedoman* of the Christian Indonesian Party *Parkindo* appeared. B. Probowinoto was the editor of several periodicals, such as *Warta Salam* and *Sadulur* (later on called *Sabda Rahaya*) in the Javanese language and the *Richtlijn* in the Dutch language. The Indonesian Council of Churches, DGI/PGI has, like the KWI, several divisions each with its own publications. From 1952 on there appeared the *Berita D.G.I.* (News of the Indonesian Council of Churches). The most important publication of the DGI/PGI was research journal *Peninjau*, published from 1974 until 1995.

Further it is noteworthy that a number of Catholic and Protestant Faculties of Theology, or Theological Seminaries, have their own scholarly magazines. For instance the monthly *Penjadar*, *Madjalah Theologia* that appeared from 1954 in Central Java was filled almost entirely by teachers of the Duta Wacana Seminary.²³

²² A. Heuken SJ 1989–3:322–326 and passim, with slight additions from the 4th edition (1993).

²³ Except for the magazine *Peninjau*, the main source of information is: Hoekema 1994:200.

The Catholic Kanisius, the Protestant BPK Gunung Mulia and other publishers

As seen above, missionaries had begun to publish already in the nineteenth century, in several places in Indonesia and in several local languages, official church doctrine in the form of catechisms, published prayer and liturgical books and parts of the Bible, in order to strengthen the missionary work of the Catholic Church. One of the most important missionary activities was education, and Catholic publishers flourished through the continuing stream of books the needed for primary and secondary education.

Kanisius started in fact in Yogyakarta as a foundation of Catholic schools in 1918. In 1987 this foundation managed 87 kindergartens, 157 primary schools, 38 junior high schools and 8 senior high schools in the Archdiocese of Semarang. Since 26 January 1922 this foundation also managed a publishing house and a printing office. This day is now remembered and celebrated every year as the official foundation of the publisher and printer *Kanisius*. They have published already many prayer books, religious course-books, schoolbooks and theological books. From 1954 on the foundation also has operated a wood factory as a training place for pupils of the high school for the wood industry in Semarang.

The historical development of *Kanisius* can be divided into three periods on the basis of the responsibility for the operational management of *Kanisius*: 1° The practical operational management of printer and publisher *Kanisius* was between 1922 and 1966 controlled by FIC Brothers together with lay people (general managers: 1922–1927 Brother Bellinus FIC, 1928–1933 Brother Bertinus FIC, 1933–1942 and 1949–1965 Brother Baldewinus FIC); 2° between 1967 and 1993 *Kanisius* was controlled by the Jesuit priests together with lay people (general manager: J. Lampe SJ); 3° after 1993 the whole responsibility for the practical operational management of *Kanisius* was in the hands of lay people (general manager: E. Surono). Seen from the Catholic viewpoint, within *Kanisius* a double process took place: *Indonesianisasi*,²⁴ because all general managers before E. Surono were non-Indonesians, and the transformation of responsibility from religious people to lay people.

The publisher *Nusa Indah* in Ende, East Indonesia, run by the Indonesian Province of the Society of the Divine Word (SVD), followed the SVD tradition of serving church and society by mass media, established since the foundation of the SVD in 1875 by Arnoldus Janssen. The publication centre in Ende nowadays consists of the printer Arnoldus (started in 1926), the bookshop *Nusa Indah* (started in 1956) and the publisher *Nusa Indah*, started in 1970.

²⁴ See for the process of *Indonesianisasi*: Boelaers 1991. Indonesian translation 2005.

The initial vision was the formation through the mass media of constructive human beings who are well-educated believers. This vision was given concrete form through the publishing of religious books and magazines as guides for praying and as instruments for the faith education of the Catholics; and also the publishing of books, magazines and newspapers to support the process of society building. The realisation of this strategy was mainly influenced by three external factors: finances, the interest of the people to read and the buying power of the people. In the province of *Nusa Tenggara Timur* (NTT) *Nusa Indah* is the only publisher, which is a member of the Indonesian's Publishers' Association (IKAPI). To be able to serve society as well as possible many publications were subsidised after the commencement of *Nusa Indah* in 1970 until about 1985. In this period, with publications such as the prayer book "Our Father,"²⁵ the translation of the Bible and also some non-religious books, *Nusa Indah* had a great influence on the whole of Indonesia. It published about 32 new titles each year. NTT itself is one of the poorest provinces in Indonesia and because of that the level of literacy of the population is not particularly high, so that the interest in reading, and also the possibility of buying books is low. Although after 1986 the Director, Henri Daros SVD, and the Vice-director, Frans Ndoi SVD, started to modernise the publishing process, *Nusa Indah* experienced a crisis, because there was almost no further subsidy available and there were several natural disasters, so that in the period up to 2002 only an average of 10 new publications were published each year. But *Nusa Indah* is still committed to serving society and to become a partner in endeavours to upgrade the quality.²⁶

In 1951 several Dutch Catholic publishers and the missionaries of four missionary orders established the publishing firm *Obor*. This publisher took over the bookshop *Glorieux*, founded in 1949 by the Brothers Budi Mulia, in Jalan Gunung Sahari, Jakarta. At the beginning the purpose of *Obor* was to publish, to import and to distribute books about Catholic doctrine as well as schoolbooks, especially for schools outside Java. Since 1957 the *Ekapraya* foundation, set up by the Jesuits, SVD and 4 Vicariates Apostolic became the owner of the publisher and bookshop *Obor*. From the 1960s on *Obor* was less active as a publisher. To intensify again the original purpose the whole *Obor* enterprise was transferred to the KWI (Indonesian Bishops' Conference) in

²⁵ This book was being used by the Simon Rae, Protestant university chaplain in Bandung, West Java, in the 1970s; appreciated both for the quality of its content and its liturgical forms and as a guide to prayer in the Indonesian language. Subsequently it has been used ecumenically in New Zealand.

²⁶ Especially for *Nusa Indah* there are two main sources: a folder, named: "Penerbit Nusa Indah: Membangun INDONESIA dari TIMUR," probably from the year 2004, and a speech from P. Lukas Batmomolin, SVD, *Penerbit Nusa Indah*, Ende 2 December 2003. P. Lukas Batmomolin SVD is the present manager of *Nusa Indah*.

1979 and publishing (especially the KWI and other Catholic documents), the bookshop, the distribution of books and devotional articles increased again. In April 1991 the completely renewed *Obor* building was officially opened.

Cipta Loka Caraka is a non-profit foundation. Since 1970 this foundation has continued the work of the National Sodality of Mary (*Kongregasi Maria* 1963). This activity changed its name in 1967 to 'Christian Life Communities' (CLC). The staff of CLC, headed by Jesuit priest Adolf Heuken, writes, translates, publishes and distributes brochures and books, which contain information for the Catholic community about the Church and her doctrine, materials for faith education and for the lay apostolate. Although the publications are directed in the first place to the educated Catholic community in the whole of Indonesia, many other groups also use them. Hundreds of people in the whole of Indonesia are members of the CLC Book Club and that makes it possible to publish books of high quality for a reasonable price, to be dispersed all over the country.

Dioma (abbreviation of the Diocese of Malang) is a Catholic publisher that since 1987 has published a series of religious books called 'Karmelitana.' These are books about the lay apostolate and the most important pastoral questions. Only a limited number is printed.

It is interesting to compare the history of the major Catholic publisher Kanisius and some others, with the history of the greatest Protestant publisher and printer in Indonesia, *Badan Penerbit Kristen Gunung Mulia* (BPK GM).²⁷

As noted above, most Protestant missionary organisations had their own publications. With the rising nationalism in Indonesia before 1942, several Protestant groups already developed a desire to become more co-operative. During the Japanese occupation most of the Dutch citizens, including the Protestant ministers, were interned in camps. There they met one another and planned to work together. After the Japanese occupation some of them directly acknowledged Indonesian independence and within the churches a process for ecumenical cooperation started, with the wish that this should have its impact also on the publications of the churches. Before the Japanese occupation most of the publications of the mission organisations and churches were in Malay, Dutch or in regional languages. In 1946 there was a feeling that the churches together had to start with publications in the Indonesian language. In October 1946 (the date is not precisely known, but was declared afterwards to be 31 October, Reformation Day) a temporary commission for

²⁷ We are grateful to Bapak Wirjo and Bapak Adi Pidekso of BPK Gunung Mulia who provided the following main source about the history of PT BPK Gunung Mulia: Aritonang 1996. Besides that we received some complementary information from Adi Pidekso by e-mail on 22 June 2005. See also J. Verkuy 1983:202–213; Hoekema 1994:197–200.

the literature of the churches and missionary organisations was set up. This is seen as the beginning of BPK Gunung Mulia, although the foundation of a corporation for a Christian publisher was only established in December 1949/January 1950 and it became a legal organisation only on 31 August 1951. Perhaps 31 October was chosen as the foundation date to demonstrate the hope that the spirit of renewal would also inspire all the activities of BPK as a corporation which wanted to serve the churches in Indonesia.²⁸ The great man behind the founding of BPK was Dr. J. Verkuyl, but he did not work alone. The emergency commission for literature was supported by the *Indische Kerk* or the partly 'white' Protestant Church in the Indies, other Reformed Churches, YMCA, missionary organisations and several prominent Indonesia Christian figures, among others Dr. J. Leimena, A.M. Tambunan, Rev. B. Probowinoto and Rev. W.J. Rumambi. In 1950 Alfred Simanjuntak became a full time employee of BPK. From the beginning the goal of the corporation was to serve society, especially the church and the Christian community in the whole of Indonesia, by supplying books in the Indonesian language. When the Indonesian Council of Churches (DGI) was established in May 1950, BPK became an official body of the DGI. The first chairman of the DGI was Prof. Dr. Todung Sutan Gunung Mulia. It is very likely that he had a big influence in BPK and because of that from 1971 on his name was associated with BPK, so that the name became BPK Gunung Mulia.²⁹

BPK as an official body of the DGI was also founded as a legal body with the following three main tasks: (1) "to increase the production of Christian literature in the Indonesian language;³⁰ (2) to publish Christian readings; and (3) to distribute Christian literature."³¹ Because the political and economic situation in Indonesia, up to 1949 the temporary commission could at the most publish 25 books per year, most of them tiny booklets. Since 1950 the number of books and the quality of the books increased, due to an inquiry held among the churches about the books they needed. The result was that 17 categories or series would be published. In that time the average number of copies of each book that was printed was between 5,000–10,000 copies. In the beginning most of the books were written by Europeans or books from other languages that were translated into Indonesian. In the midst of the writers one Indonesian theologian emerged, Dr. J.L.Ch. Abineno, who was blessed with a great ability to write. By his death on 22 January 1995 more than 70 of

²⁸ Jan S. Aritonang 1996:2.

²⁹ Aritonang 1996:6–11.

³⁰ Not to compete with other Christian publishers who used regional languages. In the same time, for instance, the *Taman Pustaka Kristen* (TPK) especially for literature in Javanese language, was founded as a kind of twin of BPK and they shared in the beginning the same bookshop, Jalan Kwitang 22 Jakarta, until TPK moved to Yogyakarta in 1963. Aritonang 1996:13.

³¹ Aritonang 1996:11.

his books had been published by BPK. Indonesian writers who followed his example are among, others, O. Notohamidjojo, R. Soedarmo, W.B. Sidjabat, T.B. Simatupang, Eka Darmaputera, and Andar Ismail. BPK tried to serve, among others, the theological seminaries and faculties, the churches, inter-religious relations, universities, schools, and certain professional groups.

Another characteristic of BPK GM is the co-operation with several institutes, which strengthened the ecumenical and international identity of BPK. Immediately after World War II in Asia, BPK participated in several ecumenical meetings in Asia and especially in Southeast Asia: in their own country, the World Council of Churches, the East Asia Council of Churches (founded in Bangkok, December 1949) and after that the Christian Conference of Asia (founded in Parapat, North Sumatera 1957). BPK also published several books written by Asian theologians such as V.S. Azariah, Choan Seng Song, R.S. Sugirtharajah and Tissa Balasuriya. On the global level they participated in the Christian Literature Fund (CLF), which in 1971 became the Agency for Christian Literature Development and since 1975 united with the World Association for Christian Communication (WACC). In 1990 the WACC held several consultations and workshops in Indonesia.

Since 1970 Kanisius became partner of BPK in publishing books together and both participated in the WACC. Another strategic cooperation since 1970 is the publishing in Indonesian of the popular magazine *The Upper Room*, from Nashville, America, with the title *Saat Teduh* (A Quiet Time). After the publication in English and Spanish, the Indonesian edition is their third largest one and several employees of BPK also followed in-service training at the *Upper Room* in Nashville. BPK cooperates further with the Board for Church Cooperation in World Mission of the Lutheran Church of Australia, the Lutheran Publishing House in Adelaide, South Australia, the *Bina Kasih* (the Overseas Missionary Fellowship, since 1955, which already has an foundation of its own in Indonesia) and with several churches and missions in Europe, especially in the Netherlands.

BPK GM also began to publish books, which anticipated present developments in Indonesia, starting from four theological concerns: appreciation of pluralism, violence, gender, and science and religion. The goal of these books is to help the churches to handle these issues in the daily life. Because these topics are shared by other religions, there is also a more intensive cooperation between BPK GM and other religious institutions. For instance on 10 April 2002 a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the State Islamic University (UIN) Syarif Hidayatullah in Jakarta and BPK GM was signed. The content of that memorandum is that there will be cooperation to publish special books and articles about religious pluralism, cooperation to raise human potential in the field of the publishing of books and cooperation in the field of education and printed media.

Further ecumenical co-operation: Kokosia

On 1 August 1978 the Minister of Religious Affairs in Indonesia published a decision about a directive on the propaganda for religions, which on 2 January 1979 became part of a joint decision of the Minister of Religious Affairs and the Minister of Internal Affairs about the rules concerning the propaganda for religions and the about help from abroad for religious organisations in Indonesia. The last decision formulated rules about religious propaganda. It banned “propaganda for religions to people or groups of people who already embrace/confess another religion in the following ways: . . . To spread pamphlets, magazines, bulletins, books and other published printed goods to people or groups of people who already embrace/confess another religion.”³² In the context of these decisions it is quite understandable, that the Christian institutes for communication started an ecumenical process to reflect together what to do in this new situation.

Two weeks after the above-mentioned decision of the Minister of Religious Affairs, 22–25 August 1978, the first meeting of Kokosia or Coordination for Christian Communication in Indonesia was held at the Baptist Theological Seminary in Semarang.³³ In this meeting the aim was formulated by co-ordinator M.S. Anwari as follows, “to create the possibility that Christian communicators in Indonesia can be united, to pray together, learn together and to share together their experience in the field of services.” This was expressed in the hope that the co-ordination between different mass media might become better so that the media used to evangelise will become more effective. With this co-ordination the reach of the service can become more far ranging so that, seen from the perspective of evangelisation, there will be more results. The hope is also that through this meeting the several communicators will come to know one another better and the mutual relationships will become more intimate, and more harmonious.³⁴ With members from all Christian denominations Kokosia became a truly Christian union with the main focus on Christian service in the own community, and also services to develop society, the country and the people.³⁵

In fact the first two meetings of Kokosia had a rather exclusive character: a reflection on the possibilities of how the Word of the Lord could be preached

³² Weinata Sairin 1996–2:66.

³³ Kokosia is an abbreviation for KOnsultasi KOMunikasi kriSten Indonesia = Consultation on Christian Communication in Indonesia, that was changed in the third meeting and became KOordinasi KOMunikasi kriSten Indonesia = Co-ordination of Christian Communication in Indonesia.

³⁴ Report “Kokosia 1 Konsultasi Komunikasi Kristen Indonesia Semarang, 22–25 Agustus 1978,” p. 1.

³⁵ Alfred Simanjuntak, in: Y.B. Priyanahadi 2003:490.

and how churches and Christian media could propagate the Gospel.³⁶ The second meeting was held in Batu, Malang, 27–29 February 1980. During the third meeting of Kokosia, held in Jakarta 7–10 September 1982, not only was the name changed slightly, Consultation becoming Co-operation, but also the aim was re-formulated, no longer primarily in the direction of the evangelisation task. The main topic of this third consultation was the formation of a coordinating institution. In three groups (printed media, electronic media and group media) the proposal was discussed. The results of the discussions in the three groups were studied by a team of three persons: Ir. Samuel (YASKI), Y.B. Priyanahadi (Kanisius) and Harry Nugroho (Yakoma), who made the final draft. The result was as follows, “The name of the co-ordinating institution remains the same, Kokosia, but now as an abbreviation of *Koordinasi Komunikasi Kristen Indonesia*. The Institution has the duty to co-ordinate the consultations, to realise joint programmes (joint decisions) and account for these in the next consultation.”³⁷ It has to be an independent institution that also will respect the independency of its participants. With this result Kokosia became, instead of a more or less informal body for consultation, an official institution for consultation and co-operation between Christian media institutes in Indonesia. In the next meeting, Kokosia IV, 6–9 September 1984 in Yogyakarta, this decision was implemented by the formulation and publication of the statutes and the regulations. There were 75 participants from 45 communication institutions. There was an exhibition of the products of Indonesian Christian communicators and the presence of several communication groups (vocal group, theatrical troupes, art of music).

With the same enthusiasm and the same theme the fifth meeting of Kokosia was held at the Wisma Pratista, Bandung 2–5 September 1986. This time there were 99 participants from 52 communication institutions. There were several presentations of Christian traditional art and Christian music for young people (Jazz and a vocal group).³⁸

Although the number of participants and the good relations between them grew, the fifth meeting of Kokosia was the last one. It is clear that in the first two meetings the main point was the evangelising task of Christian communicators. In the following three meetings this point changed more in the direction of how to communicate in a good way the good news and how Christian communicators can learn from each other to offer a good contribution to the rise of the Kingdom of God within Indonesian society, or in other words how Christian communicators can make a contribution to the

³⁶ Priyanahadi, 2003:317.

³⁷ Priyanahadi: 5–6.

³⁸ “Buku Laporan KOKOSIA V Koordinasi Komunikas Kristen Indonesia Tanggal 2–5 September 1986 Bandung. Tema: Kristus Komunikator Agung”, p. 5.

development of Indonesian society. This last point is also clearly one of the main points of the vision and mission of Kanisius, as we have seen above. Both Y.B. Priyanahadi and Alfred Simanjuntak regretted the break up of Kokosia and they are still hoping that this ecumenical co-operation will resume again in the future.³⁹

Kompas-Gramedia, Sinar Harapan

In the field of press and media in Indonesia Christians also made a contribution to society in general. Both Catholics and Protestants succeeded in making this structural and important contribution, not by giving “Christian news” but by giving news and views that are helpful to build a better Indonesian society, characterised as a civil society, a society that appreciates pluralism with as its base the respect for every human being.

In 2005 the daily newspaper *Kompas*, which has a Catholic background, celebrated its 40th anniversary.⁴⁰ For Javanese people this anniversary was an important and very special one, because it was 5 times 8 years, 8 years called *windu* and 5 years as in the West called *lustrum*. In those 40 years Kompas-Gramedia became the biggest media company of Indonesia and the newspaper *Kompas* was by then the most widely read Indonesian Newspaper. The first time *Kompas* appeared was 28 June 1965, a few months before the 30 September movement that caused the end of the Old Order of President Soekarno and the beginning of the New Order of President Soeharto. *Kompas* was founded by Jakob Oetama and P.K. Ojong and subsidised by the Catholic Party, at that time headed by I.J. Kasimo and Frans Seda. According to the latter, who was Minister of Plantations at that time, they wanted to call the new daily the ‘People’s Herald’ (*Bentara Rakyat*) to oppose the Communists, who had a newspaper called the ‘People’s Daily’ (*Harian Rakyat*) but President Soekarno himself suggested the name *Kompas* for the new newspaper, because it had to give direction in a difficult Indonesian situation.⁴¹ To show that they, just as the Communists, also had a perspective and hope for the common people they gave *Kompas* the subtitle Communication of the Conscience of the Common People (*Amanat Hatnurani Rakyat*).⁴² P.K. Ojong had already much experience with newspapers⁴³ and he became the general manager of

³⁹ Priyanahadi 2003:317; Simanjuntak 2003:490.

⁴⁰ The main source for this description is Kees de Jong 1990. I am very grateful for the critical remarks I received from St. Sularto, Vice General Manager of the Kompas-Gramedia Group, by e-mail on 27 June 2005, one day before the big celebration of the 40-year jubilee of Kompas!

⁴¹ De Jong 1990:91.

⁴² De Jong 1990:109–110.

⁴³ Before the Japanese occupation, when P.K. Ojong was a teacher, he wrote articles in the

Kompas. Jakob Oetama, who was a teacher of history at a secondary school and editor of a Catholic social magazine, *Penabur*, became the general editor. After the death of P.K. Ojong on 31 May 1980, Jakob Oetama became also the general manager of the Kompas-Gramedia Group. In fact Jakob Oetama and P.K. Ojong had started their cooperation already in 1963 with a kind of Readers Digest, a monthly, called *Intisari*.

Catholics started *Kompas* as a general newspaper, not to give Catholic news, but to give as Catholics a contribution to the development of the Indonesian society. From the beginning *Kompas* tried to translate the Catholic social teachings within the national Indonesian philosophy, the *Pancasila*. With the growth of *Kompas* its employees became a mirror of the pluralistic Indonesian society, which has as its motto: *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*, Oneness in Diversity. The employees of *Kompas* represent the different religions, races and cultures of Indonesia. *Kompas* wants to build a mini-Indonesia, an Indonesian Republic, which is pluralistic but also united. The philosophy of *Kompas* as developed by Dr. Jakob Oetama can be sketched in three terms: transcendental humanism, the translation of the *Pancasila* philosophy for the Indonesian society and *Kompas* as a forum for dialogue.⁴⁴

This philosophy of *Kompas*, started by Catholics, makes clear that it gives a meaningful contribution to the development of the Indonesian society in the direction of a democratic, just, and humanitarian society, where people believe that God will sublime all their great efforts.

Sinar Harapan (Ray of Hope) appeared for the first time as an afternoon newspaper on 27 April 1961 under the responsibility of *Sinar Kasih* Ltd (Ray of Love). The motto of *Sinar Harapan* was "to struggle for freedom, justice and peace on the basis of love." In the beginning *Sinar Harapan* was closely affiliated with the Christian Indonesian Party (Parkindo) and in the early years it had an expressly Protestant tone. However, "...the Church-affiliates declined in influence under the challenge of those with greater professional journalistic experience."⁴⁵ So *Sinar Harapan* developed to become an independent, general newspaper. Its Christian background did not disappear totally, for instance there was still the column "Sunday Meditations" by renowned

Java Bode. After 1945 Ojong became editor of the Newspaper *Keng Po* (definitively banned on 1 August 1957) and the weekly *Star Weekly* (since 1951, when Ojong finished his study as Master of Laws, he was the editor in chief of the magazine until it was definitively prohibited in 1961 by President Soekarno). In addition to his editorial vision, characterised by the use of good Indonesian language and the building of a just Indonesian society, he became also a businessman who cared for the many (sometimes little) things that make a company able to flourish. Because of this experience he became one of the founders of Kompas from the beginning and, until his death the general manager of Kompas-Gramedia. De Jong 1990:92–96.

⁴⁴ We follow the general line of the article of Kees de Jong in: St. Sularto (ed.) 2001:26–35.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 86.

Indonesian Protestant ministers.⁴⁶ Because the management was in the hands of Christians of North Sumatera (Batak) and North Sulawesi (Menadonese) backgrounds they dared to write explicit, assertive and sometimes combative articles about controversial political issues. This critical style (Javanese people like a more refined critical style) was the reason that this newspaper was temporarily forbidden by the authorities in 1965, 1973 and 1978 and at last definitively banned on 8 October 1986. Since the 1970s *Sinar Harapan* was generally Indonesia's second highest selling daily, after *Kompas*.

Four months after *Sinar Harapan* was closed down the *Sinar Kasih* group started a new afternoon newspaper, *Suara Pembaruan* (Voice of Renewal) a revised incarnation of *Sinar Harapan*. The motto of *Suara Pembaruan* is "Struggle for the Hope of the Common People in the National Development Based on the Pancasila." In 1991 it became the fourth largest selling daily in Indonesia. There are now many discussions in Indonesia about the Christian character of *Kompas* and *Suara Pembaruan*, but the fact is that these newspapers, started by Christians, made a great contribution by their information on how a better Indonesian society could be developed.

As said in the beginning of this chapter, we could only give a short and far from complete overview of the history of Christian press and media in Indonesia. It is clear that the Christian press and media have tried to give, a structural contribution to the development of church and society in Indonesia, sometimes in a context of good ecumenical cooperation.

Kees de Jong and Rainy M.P. Hutabarat

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⁴⁶ An example is: Eka Darmaputera 1990.

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INDEX

- Aarsen, C. 351
Abadi 222
 ABCFM, *American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Mission* 142, 600
 Abdurrahman Wahid (Gus Dur) 208–209, 217, 446, 718, 900
 Abednego, Benyamin 692
 Abednego, D. Tjong 657
 Abednego, Martinus 191, 205, 227–228
 Abels, B. 331
 Abineno, J.L.Ch. 301, 308, 309, 339, 454, 637, 770, 774, 794, 805, 813, 832, 861, 968, 977
 ABMS, *Australian Baptist Mission Society* 371, 373
 Abu Salih al Armini, Shaikh 5–6
Adat/Hadat 141, 148, 151, 172, 263, 266, 281–283, 289, 298, 317, 385, 468, 469, 481, 488, 499, 516, 525, 526, 531, 532, 538, 541, 542, 556, 559, 560, 577, 578, 581, 582, 595, 598, 603, 604, 607, 615, 617, 637, 652, 656, 662, 684, 729, 730, 749, 751, 757, 759, 760, 764, 765, 768, 781, 791, 803, 804, 895, 959
 Adi Sasono 664
 Aditjondro, George 413, 414, 417, 694
 Adriani, N. 154, 456, 457, 460, 466–468, 764
 Adventism 140, 142, 168, 298, 399, 428–437, 584, 646, 739, 850, 857, 899, 911
 Aerts MSC, Johannes 357, 407, 925
Agama Ambon 109, 151, 383, 385, 390, 397, 409
 Agustina Nunuk Prasetyo Murniati 279, 790, 818
 Agustina Lumentut 798, 865
 Ais, Agustinus 416
 Akademi Leimena 803, 842, 855, 879
 Alamsjah, Ratu Perwiranegara 212
 Alaudin, King of Gowa 61
 Albers, O.Carm, A.E.Y. 724
 Albers, C. 653
 Alfuros, Alifuru 110
 Algadrie, Sharif Abdurrachman bin Abubakar 318
 Ali Moertopo/Ali Murtopo 205, 782, 921
 Ali Sadikin 208, 256
 Alm, Ragnar 588
 Alo Pendito 287
 Alphen, A. van 307
 Alphen, J.J. van 320–323, 326
 Alsmeier, B. 330
 Alsmeier, H. 330
 Alvares, Francisco 53
 AMA, *Association of Mission Aviation* (see also MAF) 363
 Alvares, Fernando 57
 Ama Mandranga 602
 Amaterasu 552
 Ambarawa 428, 695
 Ambon ix, 17, 19, 23–25, 28, 30–51, 56–57, 60, 67–70, 86, 100–120, 126–133, 141, 151, 157, 178–180, 185, 195, 214, 221, 224–225, 284–286, 289–291, 300–303, 321, 324, 348, 350, 355, 357, 359, 376, 379, 383–418, 421, 427–430, 447–449, 453, 465, 475, 519, 694, 708, 709, 750, 752, 755, 761–764, 770, 781, 807, 836, 837, 847, 848, 857, 906, 907, 914–917, 925, 953, 957
 Ament, J. 700
 Amien Rais 225
 Amurang 422, 423, 427, 955
 Anak Agung Gde Agung, Ide 251
 Andel, H.A. van 677, 679, 683
 Andel-Rutgers, J.C. van 679, 730
 Andrada, Luis de 82, 84, 96
 Andria, Antonio 76–77
 Ang Boen Swie 653, 908–909
 Anunciação, João 84
 Ansari 802, 813
 Anthing, Frederik Lodewijk 642, 651, 654, 657, 659, 671, 673–676, 682, 696, 754, 908, 915, 955
 Anwari, M.S. 894, 970
 Ap, Arnold 367
Apartheid 103, 393, 629, 948
 Apaserai, N. 369
 APCM *Asia Pacific Christian Mission* 371–373
 Arguni Bay 357
 Ariks, Johan 366
 Armenian 5, 7, 100, 669–670, 672, 729, 884
 Arminius, Jacobus 102
 Arndt SVD, Paul 170, 268, 280–282, 339, 765, 814
 Arnold, John Muhleisen 954
 Artha Wacana Christian University xii, 268, 284, 293, 299, 308, 332, 339, 341–344
 Aru 23, 115, 224, 228, 387, 390, 404, 729

- Asa Kiman 671, 753
 Asas tunggal 214, 787
 Asmat 346, 347, 362, 363, 934, 936
 Asselt, G. van 533–534
 ATESEA xiii, 773, 799
 Athanasius 436
 Atmadja-Hadinoto, Nieke 798
 Atok Serani, Joseph 315
 Augustinian Order 38, 54, 348, 362, 363, 366
 Awakening (see also *Réveil*) 603, 605–609
 Awendu, Timotheus 352
 Awick SJ, H. 920
 Awom, Herman 369
 Ayal, Louis 302
 Ayamiseba, Yan 353
 Azariah, V.S. 696
 Azra, Azyumardi ix, xi, 803
- Baabullah, Sultan 19, 29–31, 34, 43, 44, 51, 56, 57, 62
 Baack SVD, Wilhelm 245
 Baal, J. van 347
 Baarlink, H. 330
 Babar archipelago 404, 407, 418
 Bacan 23, 24, 27–31, 42, 46, 49–53, 57–59, 105, 117, 415–416
 Backere CM, Th. de 720–723, 920
 Badaru, Simon 485
 Bakhu, A.M.L. 287
 Bakker, D. 679
 Bakker SJ, Jan W.M. 6, 800–801, 814
 Bakry, Hasbullah 802, 814
 Balasuriya, Tissa 969
 Bale Wijata 682, 690–691, 770, 757
 Banawiratma, J.B. 217, 778, 796, 797
 Banda 23, 25, 30–36, 45–48, 65, 74, 100–105, 110–115, 117, 120, 123, 128, 133, 348, 355, 384, 391–393, 404, 408, 414, 416
 Bandung 207, 507, 566, 583, 645, 647, 651, 653–657, 663, 664, 678, 709, 771, 776, 777, 870, 874, 879, 880, 884, 887, 892, 895, 898, 909, 913, 915, 939, 958, 966, 971
 Bangka 141, 230, 496, 503–507, 527, 584–587, 622–624, 638, 644, 916–918
 Banjarmasin 218, 219, 467, 493, 494, 499–503, 508, 514, 518, 523–525, 709, 953
 Baptist 140, 143, 168, 203, 371, 373, 379, 384, 386, 494, 529, 530, 640, 669, 687–688, 691, 795, 838, 850, 857, 867–871, 941, 952, 970
 Baretto, Gregorio 93, 94, 230, 336
 Barlage SVD, Henry 277, 278, 340
 Barnstein, J.H. 499
 Baroek, Alexander 241, 289
- Barong Tongkok 512, 515
 Baros (also Fansur/Fansur) 5, 6
 Barretto/a, Gregorio M. 93, 94, 230, 336
 Barth, Karl 195, 461, 550, 679, 785
Basis 775–776
 Basoeki Abdullah, Franciscus
 Xaverius 931–932, 934
 Batak 99, 119, 141–142, 147–158, 166–167, 172, 173, 175, 177, 182, 192, 285, 290, 306, 347, 396, 432–434, 472, 479, 498, 501–502, 513, 523, 525, 526, 527–638 passim, 650, 659, 664, 665, 711, 716, 717, 727, 731, 751, 756, 759, 762–764, 791, 795, 796, 801, 803, 804, 813, 815, 816, 825, 880, 925, 931, 933, 957, 961–964, 974
 Bataona, Yosef Gowing 273
 Batavia/Djakarta, see also *Jakarta* 93, 100–101, 120–125, 155, 176, 230, 281, 301, 321, 327, 352, 357, 429, 432, 435, 437, 477, 506, 554, 586, 603, 622, 640, 642–648, 651, 669, 681–683, 698, 754, 824, 825, 828, 829, 907, 909–915, 919, 920, 952, 956, 958
 Baud, J.C. 643
 Bavinck, J.H. 591, 667, 743
 Bawazir, Fuad 413
 Becker, Johann Friedrich 500
 Beek SJ, Joop 782–783, 921
 Beekman OFM, Victorius 959
 Beijer SVD, Nicolaas 259
 Beira SJ, Juan de 55, 56
 Bekkum SVD, Willem van 241, 259, 269–272, 281, 284
 Belksma, J. 467, 469–471
 Belo, Carlos F.X. 336–338
 Ben Mang Reng Say 252
 Bene Daghi 297
 Bengkulu 527, 528, 594, 596, 615, 626–627, 632, 868, 876, 877, 952
 Bentsana, Isabella 113
 Benua Martinus 504, 509
 Benyamin Pandy 291
 Benzie, J.M. 622
 Bérard, Jean-Laurent 599
 Berg, René van den 486
 Bergema, Hendrik 324
 Bervoets, H. 681
 Berwouts SJ, Rogier 58
 Bettink, H. 955
 Betz, W.F. 533, 534
 Biak 346, 348, 352–355, 361–362, 366, 370, 374–378
 Bieger, P. 696
Biji Sesawi [Mustard Grain] 394
 Bijlefeld, W.A. 801
 Bika or Rumah Nazareth 510, 516–517
 Bikker, A. 475, 490

- Binkhuizen, A.N. 306
 Binsbergen, P.A. 477
 Bintuni Bay 347, 357, 361, 363, 374
 Bird's Head 346–348, 355, 357, 362, 366
 Birkhoff, M. 403
 BKP *Banua Keriso Protestan* (Batu Christian Protestant Church) 610, 614, 616–617
 Blimbingsari 735–741, 809
 Blijdenstein, A.W.C. 722
 BNKP *Banua Niha Keriso Protestan* (Nias Christian Protestant Church) 607–617
 Boelaars OFMCap., Huub 248, 250, 267, 508, 904, 906
 Boelaars MSC, Jan 166, 167, 380, 515, 764, 936
 Boetzelaer van Asperen en Dubbeldam, Baron C. van 99, 104, 111–115, 120, 123, 126, 128, 129, 305, 430, 648, 669, 670
 Bogor (= Buitenzorg) 193, 270, 297, 414, 437, 586, 590, 647, 651, 658, 703, 704, 709, 734, 740, 757, 783, 826, 855, 857, 911–912, 927
 Blindow, Hana 610
 Bolaang-Mongondow 62, 420, 452
 Bollen SVD, Heinrich 260
 Bombong, Sem 476
 Bonay, Eliezer Jan 366
 Bong Sjoen Khin= Pacificus Bong OMCap 506–507
 Boogaardt, W.H. 958
 Borneo see *Kalimantan*
 Borrong, Robert 792, 855
 Borutta, Ludwig 606
 BPK Gunung Mulia 774, 812, 858, 951, 965, 969
 BPUPKI xiii, xvi, 187–189, 201, 205, 851
 Brans OFMCap, Leonardus 629, 919
 Braun MSC, Phil. 355
 Braun SVD, Fritz 270–271
 Braun OFMCap, Silvester 613
 Breukel O.Carm, Paschalis 720
 Brigade Manguni 446
 Brink, H. van den 478–479, 481
 Broeck, Matteus van den 300
 Broeders van Voorhout (CSD) 362
 Broek OFM, Theo van den 376, 377
 Broek, Paludanus van den 49
 Brotoedirdjo, R.M.S. 723
 Brouwer CICM, Kees 483
 Brouwerius, Daniël 127
 Brückner, Gottlob 640, 669, 713, 870
 Bruijn, C. de 322
 Bruyn, J.V. de 358
 Bruyn, Reynt le 301, 302, 389
 Buddingh, S.A. 449
 Budi Mulia 966
 Budi Susilo, Y. Eko 787
 Budiman, Arief 694
 Buis SVD, Simon 736, 742, 765
 Bunyanto, Mario John (Jan Boen Thiam Kiat) 623
 Burton, Richard 529–532, 870
 Buru 41, 43, 46, 107, 110, 387, 391, 401, 404, 416, 708, 750
 Buton 19, 112, 224, 347, 414, 483, 485–488
 Byantoro, Daniel Bambang Dwi 689, 899
 Cabral OP, A. 86
 Caesarius OFMCap (J. Th. Ram) 919
 Caisutti, Tonino 619, 620
 Calvin, John 101
 Calvinist 52, 90, 129, 142, 145, 167, 169, 176, 436, 467, 468, 470, 472, 475, 543, 554, 649, 656, 776, 867, 874
 CAMA 142, 168, 183, 363, 364, 371, 474, 479, 510, 518–522, 716, 732, 733, 734, 872
 Cammiga, Gellius 118
 Campbell-Nelson, Karen 279
 Camphuys, Johannes 124
 Candahl, J. 625
 Cannizaro, Aurelio 619
 Canon Law 164, 236, 251, 709
 Capellen, G. van der 420, 449
 Cappers MSC, E. 357
 Capuchin Order (OFMCap) xv, 170, 244, 498, 504, 506–510, 517, 518, 613, 614, 619, 623, 625, 628–631, 918, 919, 922, 933
 Carey, Jabez 142, 384, 386, 870
 Carey, William 386, 870
 Cargo cults 150, 363
 Caroline Islands 352
 Carri SJ, P. 707
 Carmelites (O.Carm. and OCD) 267, 268, 270, 275, 339, 665, 720, 723–725, 783, 887, 889
 Castro SJ, Alfonso de 40
 Catechist: see also *guru agama* 40, 65, 68, 76, 183, 249, 250, 262, 268, 272, 305, 355, 362, 392, 407, 426, 483, 503–510, 512, 515, 517, 600, 613, 614, 629, 696, 697, 700, 709, 750, 751, 755, 756, 758, 771, 918, 926
 CCA, *Christian Conference of Asia* 926, 969
 CEBEMO 260, 264
 Celebes see *Sulawesi*
 Cenderawasih Bay 346, 348, 353, 377
 Cenderawasih University 367, 371
 Cephass, Kassian 674
 Chaay, Silas 366
 Chagas OP, João das 78, 81, 82, 95

- Chang OFM^{Cap}, William (Tshang Jit Meuw) 772, 787, 922
- Chastelein, Cornelis 650
- Chijs, J.A. van der 124–125, 392, 952
- Cho, David Yonggi 807, 892
- CICM, *Scheut Fathers* 482, 485–486
- CIDES 218
- CIJ, *Serikat Suster-suster Pengikut Yesus* (Sisters of the Imitation of Jesus) 247, 273–275
- Chinese xiii–xvi, 4, 25, 31, 51, 51, 73, 83, 89, 90, 91, 109, 112, 121, 124, 125, 126, 130, 137, 141, 161, 165, 168, 179, 205, 218, 219, 221, 230, 242, 286, 288, 289, 291, 296, 297, 299, 318, 335, 338, 347, 406, 409, 430, 435, 482, 484, 485, 493–496, 499, 502–510, 514, 519, 521–523, 527, 585–590, 599, 609, 613, 615, 621–626, 629, 632, 640, 645–647, 651, 653, 654–659, 664, 667, 682–688, 693, 695, 696, 716–719, 721–723, 732, 733, 760, 772, 782, 792, 804, 826, 831, 838, 872–875, 880, 887, 903–925 *passim*, 930, 938, 942, 952, 953, 957
- Christoffel, H. 238
- Claessens, Bishop Adamus 311, 405, 429, 622, 623, 627
- Claessens, Maria Joseph 245
- Claesz, Gerrit 121
- Clarenbeek, Michael 114
- Cleerens, J.B. 391
- Cloux, G.J. du 626
- Cluts OFM^{Cap}, Liberatus 629
- CM, *see Lazarists*
- Cocq d'Armandville SJ, Cornelis le 355, 357
- Coen, Jan Pieterszoon 102, 111–112, 128, 131
- Coke, Thomas 585
- Colenbrander, F.J. 323
- Colijn, Hendrik 178, 239, 240
- Communism xiii, xiv, xv, 163, 178, 192–196, 200, 203–206, 216, 252, 253, 255, 260, 281, 297, 308, 330, 335, 368, 394, 402, 439, 441, 447, 451, 462, 470, 513, 521, 523, 563, 580, 582–583, 594, 610, 613, 633, 660, 668, 691, 692, 706–708, 717, 733, 778, 783, 785, 844, 870, 874, 893, 912, 921, 872
- Conceição OP, Jacinto da 91
- Confreria da Rosario* 93, 95, 231
- Constable, Eric 212
- Conterius SVD, Adrianus 250, 251
- Conterius, Wilhelm Djulei 260, 261
- Conti, Nicolo 11
- Coolen, Coenraad Laurence 640–643, 672, 713, 714, 752
- Cooley, Frank viii, ix, 109, 110, 301, 309, 398, 692
- Coolhaas, Willem 241
- Coolsma, Sierk viii, 154
- Cornelis Senen 123
- Cornelissen SVD, Frans 247, 254, 263–265
- Cosmas Indicleustes 4
- Costa, Captain Domingo da 89–91, 93
- Costa Lopes, Martinho da 336
- Costa, V.B. da 198, 199, 252
- Couvreur, A. 239
- Cremer, J.T. 573
- Cremer, A. 362
- Crosier Fathers and Brothers, OSC 362, 366, 936
- CSIS xiii, 205, 210, 218, 335, 779, 921
- CssR *see Redemptorist*
- Cultuurstelsel* 140, 420
- Cunha, Abdon Longginus da 269
- CWM 616
- CWME 561
- d'Almeida, João Ferreira 127
- d'Hornay, Antonio 87, 89, 93
- d'Hornay, Francisco 90, 91, 93
- d'Hornay, Jan 82, 91, 93
- Dachlan, M. 207, 852
- Daendels, Herman Willem 385, 448
- Dakwah* 10, 207, 576, 619, 852
- Dam, P. van 92
- Damanik, Renaldy 223, 224
- Dampier, William 89
- Danckaerts, Sebastiaen 105, 106
- Dara, S.H. 328
- Darmaatmadja, Julius 704, 710, 887, 888
- Darmaputera, Eka 226, 568, 776, 786, 792, 809, 848, 861, 969, 974
- Darmawijaya, Stanislaus 795
- Darmojuwono, Justinus 706–711, 727
- Daros SVD, Henri 966
- Darsane, I Nyoman 935–936, 940, 942–947
- Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart 357
- Daughters of the Queen of the Rosary (*Tarekat Puteri Reinha Rosari*) 274
- Daughters of Carmel 889
- Davelaar, A. van 391
- Dayak 154, 168, 198, 225, 493–526 *passim*, 533, 600, 772, 796, 922
- Dayalo, Sultan 27
- Dayman, J.Th. 82
- Dekkers MSC, W. 960
- Dekuanan, S. 306
- Deli *see Medan*
- Demmeni, H. 234
- Demon-group 77–78, 81, 88
- Denninger, Ludwig Ernst 600, 601, 614

- Denyes, John Russel 585–587
 Departemen Agama see *Kementerian Agama*
 Depok 157, 176, 352, 553, 603, 650, 716,
 756, 757, 768, 824, 825
 DGI (also PGI) xiii, xv, 143, 183, 190, 194,
 196, 197, 200, 201, 206, 207, 209–214,
 368, 399, 554–555, 558, 560, 562, 563,
 686–689, 757, 762, 689, 757, 762, 763,
 770, 773, 774, 776, 780–782, 785, 803,
 823–901 passim, 964, 968
 Dhakidae, Daniel 268, 719
Dhimmi 198
 DI/THI xiii, 192, 195, 196, 851
 Dias SJ, B. 60
 Dibjarkarjana, A.J. 723
 Diemen, Antonio van 122
 Diepen OSA, Petrus van 363
 Dijk, Tjalling van 323
 Dijk, W. van 323, 325, 326
 Dijken, Hendrik van 400–402
 Dijkmans SJ, Antonius 958
 Dijkstra, Benjamin 629
 Diponegoro 667, 753
 Dirks, Heinrich 535
 Ditatrana, Abisai 641, 670, 714
divide et impera 258
 Djago Mandi Sama Loisa 618
 Djagom SVD, Mgr. Donatus 249, 269,
 270, 276, 277, 287
 Djajaseputra SJ, Adrianus 704
 Djawa SVD, Hendrik 254, 263, 275, 805
 Djawanai, Stefanus 268
 Djebarus SVD, Mgr. Vitalis 269, 278
 Djina, Titus 321
 Djojodihardjo, Soehadiweko 682, 685,
 727
 Djuang Vitalis 264
 Doera, Isak 254, 515
 Doko, I.H. 292
 Dokuritsu Zyunbi Tyoosakai see BPUPKI
 Doloksaribu, Humala 590
 DOM (Daerah Operasi Militer) 345
 Dominggus Haba 291
 Dominican Order (OP) 51, 61, 65, 73–97,
 103, 232, 250, 274, 749, 925
 Domsdorff MSC, A.M. 431
 Don André, Raja 235
 Don Lorenzo Diaz Viera Gondinho,
 Raja 170, 233–235, 237, 242
 Don Thomas da Silva, Raja 244, 251–252
 Donatus [Johannes] Dunselman
 OFMCap. 170, 498, 499
 Dongen, C.J. van 627
 Donselaar, W. 301–304
 Doorn, C.L. van 177, 179, 761, 763, 826
 Doormaal SVD, Jan C. van 258, 259
 Dordrecht Synod 100, 102, 113, 114, 680
 Dörmann, Friedrich 610
 Douwes, D. 302
 DPI, *Dewan Pantekosta Indonesia* (Council
 of Indonesian Pentecostalism) 214, 219,
 859, 868, 882
 Drabbe MSC, Pieter 764, 765
 Drake, Francis 30
 Driessche SJ, Henri van 677, 701, 702,
 Driyarkara SJ, N. 772, 777, 786–789, 888,
 963
 Drost, Meeuwes 373
 Duker, W. 330
dukun 63, 282, 443
 Duma 149, 400–402
 Dumai, A. 520
 Dura, Isaak 254
 Durkstra, E. 307, 308
Dustur Islamiyah 197
 Duyvendak, J.J.L. 918
 Dwiantoro, A.B. 936–937
 DZV, *Doopsgezinde Zendingsvereniging* 142,
 672, 681, 682, 684, 911, 913
 EATWOT 812
 Ebedjesus of Nisibis 6
 Eechoud, J.P.K. van 357, 361
 Ekris, A. van 388
 Elsham 377
 Eluay, Theys 367, 375, 376, 379
 Embuiru SVD, Herman 271, 284
 Emde, Johannes 640, 641, 643, 712–714
 Ena Umpanawany 293
 Ende SVD, Anton van den 258, 262, 263,
 265
 Enggano 527, 547
 Ennis, Jacob 531
 Eredia, João de 60
 Erkelens, Jacob 323
 Esser, Isaac 233, 303, 319, 320, 650
 Esser, J.P. 715
 Eucharist (see also *the Lord's Supper*) 122,
 270, 271, 315, 362, 425, 433, 630, 795,
 806, 807, 929
 Eustochia, Sr. 279
 Fabri, Friedrich 533, 536, 542
 Fakkak 352, 355, 357, 362, 370
 Faria SJ, M. de 65
 Fatie, Ambrosius 374
fatwa 211, 212
 Ferianto, Gregory Djaduk 791
 Fernandez SJ, Antonio 40
 Fernandez, Francisco 81–83, 89
 Fernandez, Hendrik 256
 Fernandez SJ, Luiz 47, 51
 Ferrari SJ, Bernadino 44, 58
 Festersen, A. 627

- Fidja Wanaetu 615
 Filemo 605
 Filemon 672
 Fisk, George E. 519, 872
 FKKI, *Forum Komunikasi Kristen Indonesia* 219, 220
 FKKS, *Forum Komunikasi Kristen Surabaya* 219, 220
 Franciscan Order (OFM) xv, 45, 51, 61, 63, 65, 87, 88, 236, 274, 339, 348, 357, 358, 362, 363, 366, 370, 376, 509, 510, 695, 697, 963
 Franz, Augustine 403, 763, 827
 Franssen, Caspar 232
 Freitas, Captain Jordao de 28, 36, 50
 Fretes, Christoffel de 302
 Fretes, Louis de 302
 Frickenschmidt, C.W. 615
 Fries, Eduard 603, 605, 606
Front Solidaritas Bangsa Israel 446
 Fuad Hassan 215
 Fuhri, E. 953
 Furima, Mathias 374
 Furtado, Andreas 35
- G-30-S/PKI 203
 Galvão, Antonio 27, 28, 50, 54, 67, 348
 Galela 56, 57, 400–401, 415
 Galuci, John 297
 Gama, Vasco da 12
 Gan Kwee 682, 908, 911, 915
 Ganjuran 702, 703, 722, 808, 927, 929, 930, 932, 948
 Garralda OFM, Lorenzo 63
 Gayo-Alas 99, 527, 572
 GBI, *Gereja Bethel Indonesia* 878
 GBIJ, *Gereja Baptis Irian Jaya* 373, 870
 GBIS, *Gereja Bethel Injil Sepenuh (Full Gospel Church)* 399, 400, 881, 882
 GBKP, *Gereja Batak Karo Protestant* 527, 558–559, 577–584, 590, 591
 Gebroeders Gimberg & Co 953
 Gedong Bagoes Oka 743
 Geissler, Johann 350
 Gekindo 868
 Gekisia 868
 Geleijnse, M. 475
Gereja Kristus Ketapang 221
 Gericke, J.E.C. 669, 672, 715, 750
 Geurtjens MSC, Henricus 170
 GGRI, *Gereja-gereja Reformasi di Indonesia* 374
 Giay, Benny 348, 376, 377, 873
 GIDI, *Gereja Injili di Irian Jaya* 372
 Giezenaar CICM, G. 960
 GIKI, *Gereja Injili Karo Indonesia* 583
 GJPI, *Gereja Jemaat Protestan di Indonesia* 373
- GKA, *Gereja Kristen Anugerah* 868
 GKE, *Gereja Kalimantan Evangelis* 225, 500–503, 523, 524, 867
 GKI, *Gereja Kristen Indonesia* xiii, 203, 478, 502, 584, 591, 592, 658, 659, 687, 690–692, 695, 717, 885, 911–923 passim
 GKI, *Gereja Kristen Injili (Papua)* 360–381 passim, 863, 867
 GKII, *Gereja Kemah Injil Indonesia* 365, 371, 372, 376, 377, 872, 873
 GKII, *Gereja Kemenangan Iman Indonesia* 577
 GKII, *Gereja Kristen Injili Indonesia* 868
 GKI Sumut 591–592
 GKJ, *Gereja-gereja Kristen Jawa* 285, 290, 590–596, 678–693, 695, 835
 GKJW, *Gereja Kristen Jawi Wetan* 180, 687, 688, 716–717, 734, 937, 962
 GKKK, *Gereja Kristen Kalam Kudus* 868
 GKLI, *Gereja Kristen Luther Indonesia* 202, 558
 GKN xiii, 142, 145, 169, 172, 176, 477–478, 596, 597, 677–681, 683–690, 770
 GKPA, *Gereja Kristen Protestan Angkola* 558
 GKPB, *Gereja Kristen Perjanjian Baru* 868
 GKPB, *Gereja Kristen Protestan Bali* 736–741, 936
 GKPI, *Gereja Kristen Protestan Indonesia* 202, 557–559
 GKPM, *Gereja Kristen Protestan Mentawai* 203, 617–621
 GKPS, *Gereja Kristen Protestan Simalungun* 202, 555–559
 GKS, *Gereja Kristen Sumba* 259, 285, 287, 290, 300, 308, 317–318, 327–335, 756
 GK SBS, *Gereja Kristen Sumatera Bagian Selatan* 592–598, 633
 GKSS, *Gereja Kristen Sulawesi Selatan* 476–482
 GKST, *Gereja Kristen Sulawesi Tengah* 223, 224, 463–464, 863
 Glinka, Jósef 268
 GMAHK, see *Adventism*
 GMI, *Gereja Methodist Indonesia*, see *Methodism*
 GMIM, *Gereja Masehi Injili Minahasa*, see *Minahasa*
 GMIST, *Gereja Masehi Injili Sangir Talaud*, see *Sangir and Talaud*
 GMIT, see *Kupang/Timor*
 Go, Piet 783
 Godhindo, Francisco 40
 Goens, Rijkloff van 102
 Golkar, *Golongan Karya* xiv, 204, 205, 215, 219, 220, 255, 256, 263, 286, 293, 369, 375, 440, 463, 523, 662, 779, 782, 801
 Gomes SJ, P. 65

- Gomes, Sebastião 337
 Gomez, Gonsales 90
 Gonçalves, A. 43
 Gonçalves, Balthasar 86
 Goossens, S.J.P. 323, 333
 Goro Hujisaki 461
 Gossner, Johannes 142, 304, 305, 349, 400, 448, 449
 Gouw Gwan Yang 915
 Gouw Khiam Kiet 915
 Gouw Kho 908, 915
 Gouweloos, M.J. 489
 GPI, *Gereja Protestan di Indonesia* (see also *Indische Kerk*, also GPIB) xiv, 193, 197, 285, 289, 290, 477, 479, 480, 502, 577, 584, 649, 659, 717, 739, 831, 835, 876, 885
 GPM, *Gereja Protestan Maluku* 285, 290, 354, 357, 360, 391, 394–400, 416, 831
 Graaf, Herman Jan de 18, 19, 40, 122, 388, 666
 Graafland, Nicolaas 157, 427, 955, 956
 Gramberg, K.P.C.A. 682
 Gramberg, Th. 734
 Grand, G.J.H. le 305
 Grand, K.L.F. le 597
 Griffith, Brian 917
 Grimm, Mgr. Gratian 613
 Groen van Prinsterer, G. 349
 Groesbeek, L. 879–880
 Grooff, J. 429, 622, 623, 644
 Groot, A.K. de 913
 Grube, Arnoldus 642
 Gudi SVD, Hilarius 275
 Guigné, De 629
 Guikers OFM, A. 358
 Gultom, Johannes 589, 590
 Gunarto Darmowigoto 596
 Gunawan, David Timothy 915
 Gunawan Wibisono, S. A. 723
 Gunung Mulia, Todung Sutan 191, 194, 759, 762, 763, 774, 768, 784, 812, 827, 832, 833, 858, 860, 951, 965–968
 Guru agama (see also *catechist*) 248, 250, 262, 272–276, 751, 756
 Guru jemaat 156, 361, 392, 394, 396, 398, 403, 407, 426, 435
 Guru midras 392
 Gus Dur, see *Abdurrahman Wahid*
 Gutbrodt, Carolina Margaretha 540
- Haas, Dirk de 106
 Haba Kore, Abraham 305
 Habibie, Baharuddin Jusuf 217, 218, 221, 375, 377, 412, 779
 Hadat see *adat*
 Hadisumarta O.Carm, F.X. 724
 Hadiwijono, Harun 667, 690, 692, 776, 795, 804, 812
- Hadiwikarta, Y. 644, 721, 724
 Haga, H. 427, 428
 Haghen, Steven van der 35, 47–49, 104
 Hairun, Sultan 19, 27–29, 41–44, 50, 51, 55, 56, 57, 62
 Halmahera 23, 68, 101, 142, 149, 150, 167, 171, 173, 180, 181, 351, 355, 362, 379, 399–404, 415, 416, 445, 782
 Hama, Kering 328
 Hamazaki, Jiro 437
 Hamengkubuwono IX 668
 Hamengkubuwono X 668
 Hamilton, Alexander 90
 HAMKA (= Haji Abdulmalik Karim Abdullah) 210–212
 Hämmerle, Johannes 614, 615
 Hanasbey, David 366
 Harahap, E. St. 764, 768
 Hardawiryana, Robert 783
 Hardeland, August 154, 172, 500
 Harefa, *Ephorus* Atöföna 609, 611
 Haripranata SJ, H. 327, 367
 Harisman, Andi 938–939
 Harjadi, F.S. 195
 Harjono, Ismail 723
 Harjowasito, J.S. 593, 594
 Hartig, F. 303
 Hartoko SJ, Dick 775, 963
 Haruku 33, 35, 42, 107, 108, 386, 387
 Hasanusi, R. 415
 Hasibuan, Albert 219
 Hasibuan, J.P. 502
 Hasselt, Frans J.F. van 150, 354, 380, 457
 Hasselt, J. L. van 351, 354
 Hasulie SVD, Huberto Thomas 279
 Hasyim Yahya 212
 Hatve 33–38, 41, 42, 48, 412
 Hatsarani, Willem 305
 Hatta, Mohammad 188, 189, 192, 194, 199, 470
 Hauben CICM, J. 483
 Hayon, Yosef Suban 794
 Hazaert, J.A. 301
 HCS, *Hollandsch-Chinese school* xiv, 430, 905
 Heekeren SVD, Henry 268, 271
 Heemskerk, J. van 34
 Heertum OFMCap, Aloysius van 918
 Hege, Yuliana, Elisabeth and Martha 291
 Hehanusa, I.L. 306
 Hehanusa, W. 309
 Heidelberg Catechism 123, 126, 450, 471, 535, 680, 907
 Heijmering, G. 302–304
 Heijthuizen, Franciscan Order of 236, 695, 697, 699
 Heine, C.W.S. 534
 Heldring, Ottho G. 142, 349, 351, 449, 450

- Hellendoorn, G.J. 421, 449
 Henckens O.Carm, Linus 720
 Hendrik, Hendriks 300
 Hendriks, Gillis 104
 Henry the Navigator, Prince 26
 Hens, A. 243
 Heringa, J.W.Th. 549
 Hermanszoon, Wolfert 111
 Herwerden, H.H. van 394
 Heselaar SJ, F. 711, 807
 Hesselle, Caspar de 93, 428
 Heurnius, Justus 79, 101, 105, 127, 388, 907
 Heusdens, H.C. 685
 Heuts, Jan (= Yanuar Husada) 625
 Heutsz, Joh. B. 701
 Heuvel SJ, L. van den 887
 Heuvel SJ, W. van den 958
 Heuvelmans CM, J. Th. 720
 Heyting, D. 405
 Hidayat Rebellion 499–500
 Hidayat Sasmita 660
 Hindom, Saul 366
 Hinduism 25, 73, 141, 216, 291, 317, 347, 412, 473, 493, 496–498, 513, 525, 539, 568, 570, 579, 584, 648, 660, 663, 666, 667, 693, 695, 703, 708, 712, 717, 731–745, 754, 757, 767, 778, 792, 802, 809, 810, 852, 853, 893, 929, 931, 935, 942–944
 HIS, *Hollandsch-Inlandsche school* xiv, 158, 164, 177, 406, 430, 451, 452, 460, 468, 505, 625, 629, 655, 732, 743
 Hitiahubessi, Markus 302
 Hizbullah 192
 HKBP xiv, 180, 201, 203, 285, 289, 290, 396, 434, 523, 525–598 passim, 612, 616–620, 630, 631, 659, 664, 716, 717, 775, 835, 846, 852, 863, 884, 957, 964
 Hoekendijk, J.C. 805, 829
 Hoëvell, G.W. van 405
 Hoëvell, Wolter Robert van 648
 Hoevenaars, Peter 696, 700, 701
 Hozoo, W. 670–672, 714, 753
 Hofmann SJ, Ruedi 711, 810, 935
 Hokeng seminary 249, 258, 266, 273
 Hollandia (= Jayapura) 357–359, 361, 362
 Holthenius, Wilhelm 114
 Hong Teen 586
 Hoogerwerf, E.J. 595, 597, 632
 Houtman, Frederik de 48, 104
 HTS, *Hoogere Theologische School*, see also *STT* xiv, 554, 682, 757, 758, 833, 915
 Hueting, Anton 150, 171, 172, 401
 Hulsebos, Adriaan 102, 112, 120
 Hulstaert, S. 351
 Hulten OFMCap., Herman-Jozef van 509, 512
 Hutabarat, Luther and David 588
 Hutabarat-Lebang, Henriëtte Tabita 799
 Hutagalung, Sutan M. 557, 800
 Hutaauruk, J.R. 547–549, 555, 569
 Huteuli, Joseph 302
 Hutuhuli, David 320
 Ibn Khurdadhih 4
 Ibrahim Tunggal Wulung 156, 642, 653, 671–675, 753, 754
 ICMI xiv, 217–218, 779
 Ida Bagus Oka Puniatmadja 498
 Ida Bagus Tugur 741
 Idenburg, A.W.F. 239, 240, 313, 431, 648, 677
 Ihromi 794, 800, 815, 853
 Ijsseldijk SJ, A. 237
 Ikatan Buruh Pancasila 252
 Iko 927–929, 934
 Imhoff, Gustaaf Baron van 123, 181, 684, 769
 Inanwatan 355, 361
Indische Kerk xiv, 302–307, 310, 328, 353–354, 384, 385, 390, 391, 393–395, 403, 407, 423–429, 433–437, 451, 453, 465, 474–479, 482, 487, 502, 518, 640, 647–648, 659, 675–676, 713, 716, 734, 749, 754–755, 768, 824, 829, 831, 880, 908, 968
Indonesianisasi 271, 272, 276, 513, 517, 624, 965
 Indrakusuma, Yohannes 665, 887–889
 Indratno, Suryo 810
 Iranzo OFM, J. 63
 Irving, Edward 642, 651, 675, 696
 Isaak SVD, Servulus 257
 Ishak Christian 218
 Ismail, Andar 969
 Iso'yabh III 6
 Istanto, I. Sugeng 704
 Jacinto OP, Antonio de San 85, 86, 119
 Jackstein, August 305
 Jacobus, J. 434
 Jaesrich, G. 351
 Jafar Umar Thalib 414
 Jailolo 23, 26–29, 50–55, 402, 403
 Jakarta viii, ix, x, 157, 168, 171, 173, 177, 178, 180–182, 185, 191, 201, 203, 206–208, 212, 217, 220, 221, 225, 247, 250, 254, 255, 262, 268, 272, 278, 284, 295, 309, 335, 336, 366, 372, 396, 412–414, 432, 438, 444, 462, 507, 509, 557, 559, 561, 585–586, 621, 639–665

- passim, 689, 698, 704–705, 709, 710,
719, 737, 756, 770–772, 775, 777, 780,
813, 828–834, 838, 852, 862, 871–874,
880–888, 894, 905–906, 915, 921, 962–974
- Jakarta Charter see *Piagam Jakarta*
- Jänicke, J. 669
- Janssen SVD, Arnoldus 965
- Janssen, Paul H. 771
- Janssen SVD, Wilhelm 289
- Jansz, Pieter 154, 672–673, 678, 681, 750,
753, 758, 911
- Jansz, Willem 113
- Japanese 111, 176, 179–187, 189, 192–195,
203, 243, 247–249, 280, 306, 307, 319,
324, 326–329, 358–359, 363, 395–399,
402, 407, 409, 436–437, 451, 461–462,
471, 475–476, 486–489, 494, 498, 502,
507, 511–512, 520, 521, 551, 552, 556,
572, 575, 576, 579, 593, 609–613, 616,
649, 658–660, 684–685, 705, 721, 723,
736–737, 739, 759–761, 765, 767, 769,
770, 791, 800, 804, 811, 828, 829, 851,
907, 915, 919, 921, 926, 932, 933, 935,
952, 960, 962–964, 967, 972
- Jellesma, E.J. 425
- Jellesma, Jelle 642, 670–673, 714–716, 752,
758
- Jemaah Islamiyah 196
- Jesuit Order (SJ) xvi, 23–71 passim, 88,
94, 95, 103, 139, 141, 166, 168, 170, 171,
233, 236, 244–245, 314, 326, 334–335,
339, 348, 349, 355, 405, 406, 429, 430,
482, 484, 504, 506, 627, 631, 644–646,
697–699, 702, 711, 720, 755, 775, 777,
801, 810, 918, 931, 958, 963, 965, 966
- Jihad* ix, 46, 223, 379, 413–415, 694, 800
- Jiwa, M. 330
- JMJ Sisters 431, 485, 486
- João Juang 78
- Johannes, W.S. 191
- Johannsen, Peter Heinrich 172, 529, 540,
541, 544, 545, 756
- Jok Apuy 520
- Jolle-de Wildt, Elisabeth Jacoba le 670,
672, 675, 676
- Jonckbloet SJ, Godefridus 719
- Jongeneel, J.A.B. 804, 815, 961
- Joosten MSC, J. 356
- Juk Kavung 511
- Jung, Käte 610
- Jusuf, John 287, 290
- Kabanga, Andarias 796, 815
- Kaharingan 497–499, 513, 520, 525, 744
- Kaheing/Caheins, Zacharias 118
- Kai islands 23, 115, 170, 181, 183, 236,
237, 244, 349, 355, 357–358, 398,
404–410, 415, 702, 890
- Kalam Djanoeli 766
- Kalle, N.S. 289
- Kaimana 357
- Kaligis, O.C. 219
- Kalimantan/Borneo 99, 139, 141, 142,
154, 168, 170, 172, 175, 179, 183, 184,
196, 211, 218, 225, 244, 254, 266, 270,
317, 338, 473, 493–526, 533, 557,
584–588, 600, 623, 628, 630, 639, 702,
731, 739, 744, 749, 761, 772, 828, 850,
870, 872, 873, 880, 898, 903, 916,
918–919, 922, 931
- Kalla, Yusuf 223, 226
- Kam, Joseph 142, 384–391, 393, 421, 447,
448, 669, 712, 952
- Kamarian 107–109
- Kamma, Freerk 348, 360
- Kanalewe, Hendrik 286, 287
- Kang, A. 506
- Kapaur 355
- Karsten SVD, Simon 245
- Kartawidjaja 653, 766
- Kartosuwirjo, S.M. 195, 196
- Kasimo, Ignatius Joseph
Endrawahjana 178, 191–193, 198, 199,
697, 704, 705, 711, 755, 763, 960, 972
- Kato, Ryoichi 185
- Katoppo, Marianne 798–799
- Kaunang, Robert 291
- Kawuwung, Agnes 939–941
- Kéan, Abraham 108
- Keijzer, SJ, Julius 696
- Kelling, Friedrich 450
- Kementerian/Departemen Agama 190,
497, 498, 665, 743, 851
- Kemp, J.Th. van der 139
- kepercayaan* 498, 660, 662
- keramat* 401
- Kersten, Gottlieb J. 615
- Kersten, J.C. 627
- Kersten SVD, J. 733, 735–736, 742
- Kerstens, Piet 960
- Kesui islands 414
- Ketapang in Jakarta 221, 222, 224, 412
- Ketapang in Kalimantan 508, 514, 515
- KGPM, *Kerapatan Gereja Protestan
Minahasa* 428, 433–435
- Khoe Lan Seng 912
- Khouw Tek San 683, 908
- Kijne, Izaak Samuel 360, 368
- Kim Tjai, Mrs (Encik Giok) 218
- KINGMI xiv, 371, 372, 520–522
- Kirchberger, Georg 805, 816
- Kiristokyo Rengokai 183, 399, 828

- KKS, *Kongregasi Suster-suster Dina Keluarga Suci* 624
- Klaassen, Th.F. 351
- Klamer C.M. 720
- Klammer, J.C. 534
- Klassis* (also *classis=presbytery*) 284, 285, 287, 293, 295, 307, 354, 366, 398, 451, 591, 593, 658, 681
- Kleden, Ignas 268
- Kleine, Hans de 551, 552
- Kliff, Hendrik van der 488, 489
- Klinken, G. van 178, 425, 562, 566
- Klinkert, H.C. 154, 826
- Klooster CM, J. 723
- KNIP xiv, 190
- Kobong, Theo 796, 899
- Kokonao 356, 357, 371
- Kolk MSC, Jos van de 356
- Komnas HAM 377
- Kompas* 196, 217, 253, 415, 704, 772, 775-778, 789, 857, 921, 951, 972-974
- Konstituante* 197-201, 205, 252, 843, 851
- Kopong Keda SVD, Stefanus 249, 284
- Koreri* 150, 348, 365, 374, 377
- Koster, Akbert 533, 534
- Koxinga 100
- Koyeidaba 348, 364
- Kraaijvanger SJ, Jacob 311
- Kraemer, Hendrik 172-176, 360, 393, 424, 425, 428, 431, 433, 435, 441, 550, 568, 652, 657, 668, 679, 692, 716, 732-734, 737, 753, 760-764, 767, 811, 825, 827, 904, 961
- Krijger, L.P. 323, 324
- Krisetya, Mesach 807
- Krol SVD, Jan 259
- Kroncong* 130, 925
- Kruyt, Albert C. 148, 150, 171, 172, 456-461, 466, 468
- Kruyt, Jan 458
- Kruyt, Hendrik C. 751
- Kupang/Timor 84-95, 119-120, 126, 130, 170, 221-222, 233, 234, 238, 243, 247, 250, 257-258, 265-268, 270, 272, 275, 278-316, 319, 325, 326, 331, 332, 371, 389, 755, 770, 771
- Kussudiardjo, Bagong 809, 935, 940-947
- Kusters SJ, Jan 405
- Kutai 493, 498, 510, 512, 519
- KWI/MAWI xiv, 209, 211-214, 226, 774, 780, 782-784, 787, 806, 807, 811, 839, 845, 849-850, 963-967
- Kwee Tiang Hoe, Andreas 693
- La Dee, Lambertus 485-486
- La Mboki, G. 486
- Labuan Bajo 226, 289, 290, 298
- Ladjar OFM, Leo Laba 371
- Laham 493, 504, 510, 511
- LAI, *Lembaga Alkitab Indonesia* 776, 826
- Lakawa, Septemmy Eucharistia 799, 816, 861
- Lalawar, Herman 315
- Lambooi, P.J. 333
- Lame Uran SVD, Lambert 81, 245, 249, 265, 342
- Lamongi, Yuliana 291
- Lampe SJ, J. 965
- Lampung 527, 593-596, 631-633, 681, 695, 731, 876
- Landgrebe, P. 550
- Landwehr, August 615
- Lange & Co 954
- Langen, Adolf 405
- Langenberg, M. van 553
- Langenhoff, Jan 623, 918
- Langgur 349, 355, 358, 398, 405, 406, 408, 702, 890, 925
- Langkat 527, 577-578
- Lanjak 504, 509
- Lanta, G.A. 366
- Laoh, Herling 194, 851
- Lapian, B.W. 434
- Larantuka 62, 73-95, 119, 170, 229-245, 248, 251, 257-299 passim, 311-313, 315, 321, 355, 429, 623
- Laskar Jihad* ix, 223, 379, 413-415, 694
- Laskar Rakyat* 446
- Latuconsina, Muh. Saleh 415
- Latuharhary, Johannes 188-190, 194, 843
- Latuihamallo J.E. 475
- Latuihamallo Peter D. 475, 770, 784, 785, 853, 861
- Latumahina, A. 768
- Lawang, Robert 268, 278
- Lazarists (CM) 720-725
- Ledalero 246-251, 255-259, 266-269, 272, 279, 293, 299, 757, 760, 771, 772, 775, 777
- Leeuw, Cornelius de 109, 118
- Lega, Datus 371
- Legio Mariae* 249
- Lehmann, Martin E. 529
- Leijdecker, Melchior 126, 127, 153, 154, 389, 750, 826
- Leimena, Johannes 177, 190, 192, 194-195, 201, 656, 763, 784-785, 803, 825, 827, 842, 851, 879, 968
- Lela 93, 242, 243, 264, 266, 273, 294, 327, 702
- Lemos, Jorge de 17
- Lett, August 618
- Letteboer, J.H. 303
- Leven SVD, Henricus 246, 273
- Lewar, Piet Nong 276

- Liem Cu Kim 693
 Lijnen, Jozef 428
 Liliato, Kaicil 41
 Lim Hong Lip 519
 Linden, D.J. van der 653
 Linden, Johannes Coenraad ter 301–303
 Linemann, F.G. 423
 Linggarjati Agreement 191
 Lion Cachet, Frans 642
 Lith SJ, Frans van 171, 178, 695–703, 711, 931
 Livingstone, David 349
 Lo Pa Hong 919
 Lombok 141, 160, 269, 496, 731, 734, 741, 872
 Lombok, Marthen 519
 Long Cihang 511
 Long Iram 510
 Looijmans SJ, Henricus 241
 Loosdrecht, A.A. van de 467, 468
 Loppies, J. 394
 Lord's Supper 121, 124, 158, 383, 392, 393, 423, 436, 449, 459, 461, 464, 465, 488, 605, 714, 735, 736
 Louwerse, Jan 373
 LMS, *London Missionary Society* xiv, 139, 386, 640, 669, 952
 LPKUB, *Lembaga Pengkajian Antar Umat Beragama* 411–412
 LPPS-NTT 259
 Lucas SVD, Bernard 258
 Luckman Sinar, H. Tengku 572
 Luijendijk, P.J. 323, 328, 330
 Lukman Harun 206
 Lumbantobing, Andar 536, 540, 551, 557, 561, 770, 804
 Lumbantobing, Ferdinand 553
 Lumbantobing, Henoch 547
 Lumbantobing, Johannes 615
 Lumbantobing, Lamsana 587
 Lumbantobing, Raja Jacob 751, 764
 Lumbantobing, Raja Pontas 535, 538, 541
 Lumira, Ahmen Mylthis 800
 Lünemann, Erika 433
 Lutheran 100, 122–123, 126, 138, 140, 153, 285, 384, 405, 535, 542–543, 554, 558, 611, 615, 617, 630, 647, 651, 824, 867, 870, 969
 Luypen, E. 239, 243, 701, 919
 Luzia, Jorge de S. 74
 LWF xiv, 554
 Lyman, Henry 529, 530, 532, 545, 600

 Mackie, Jamie 712
 Maclaine-Pont, Henri 722, 929
 MacMootry Richard James 642–643

 Madrais 660–663
Madrasah 409
 Madre Dos OP, Simão de 83
 MaE, S. 303
 Maetsuycker, Joan 121, 124
 MAF, *Mission Aviation Fellowship* 371, 520, 521
 Magdalena OP, Augustinho da 80, 83
 Magelang 678, 683, 688
 Magelhaes SJ, Diego de 41–42, 44, 62–63
 Magnis-Suseno SJ, Franz 783, 788–789, 795, 801
 Mahar, M. 497
 Majapahit 6, 73, 666, 712, 722, 929–930
 Makalo, Aris 315
 Makalo, Z. 315
 Makassar 33, 34, 36, 59–62, 73, 78, 82, 84–88, 99, 117–118, 126, 127, 130, 184, 205–208, 222, 224, 237, 246, 251, 287, 310, 328, 438, 455, 460, 461, 465, 466, 472, 474–490, 519, 733, 770, 776, 781, 830, 831, 835, 845, 851, 852, 872, 873, 884, 914–917, 931, 960
 Maku SVD, Piet 249, 271, 282, 284, 804–805
 Malang 202, 217, 274, 479, 578, 647, 665, 682, 690, 709, 712, 715–725, 733, 734, 757, 770, 771, 775, 874, 875, 879, 887, 889, 911, 917, 967, 971
 Malik, Adam 335, 906
 Malino Declaration 193, 223–225, 251, 328, 438, 479, 480, 482, 761, 830, 831
 Malo, H.M. 328
 Malole, J.T. 289
 Mamluk 11–13
 Mamoribo, J. 361, 369
 Manado/Menado 44, 62–64, 117–119, 185–186, 223, 284, 303, 347, 390, 419–454 passim, 482, 504, 506, 519, 696, 956
 Mandagi, Daniel 428
 Mandia, Guru 615
 Manehui 357
 Manek SVD, Gabriel 251, 254, 269–272, 274, 284
 Manganitu 450
 Mangumbahang, H.K. 205
 Mangunwidjaja, Y.B. 338, 633, 694, 704, 763, 776, 783, 789–790, 793, 794, 797, 808–809, 948
 Manihuruk, A.E. 567
 Manipa, J. 402
 Manokwari 350, 352, 357, 358, 361, 363, 366, 370, 371, 375
 Manoppo, Cornelis 452
 Manseren Mangundi 150, 348
 Mansilhas SJ, Francisco de 39
 Mansur Shah, Sultan 17

- Manullang, Mangihut Hezekiel 177, 548, 763
- Manurung, Tuan Nagori 587
- Mapalus* 442
- Mapia Islands 352
- Maramis, A.A. 188, 189, 192
- Marantika, Chris 890, 893
- Marantika, Simon 182, 200, 201, 396, 770, 860
- Mardijker* 35, 44, 52, 117, 121, 122, 650, 907
- Marelin, Sr. 273
- Marignolli OFM, J. de 6
- Marind-anim 346, 347, 356
- Marinyo* 114, 119
- Marko Mahin 524
- Marsden, William 528
- Marta SJ, Antonio 45–46, 56, 58, 63
- Martin, Byam 386
- Martinus Lase 612
- Martodiredjo, Martinus 696
- Martohadmodjo, Raden Samuel 680
- Martoredjo, Roebin 682
- Mascarenhas OP, Jeronimo 78,
- Mascarenhas SJ, Pero 43, 62, 64
- Masonio SJ, Lorenzo 46–48, 51, 68
- Masyumi xiv, 190–192, 194, 195, 197–199, 204, 252, 514
- Matelieff, Admiral Cornelis 49, 104
- Matteus, Johannes 302
- Matthes, B.F. 477
- Matthes, P.A. 427
- Mattheus, Jerobeam 177, 680, 761, 762, 766
- Matuanakota, Milton 412
- MAWI see KWI
- Max Havelaar* 160
- Max Nambu 287
- Mbani, Mbaki 243
- Mbay, H. 328
- Me of Paniai 168, 346, 348, 357–358, 362–365, 370, 377
- Medan 203, 411, 504, 527, 549, 554, 557–558, 564, 565, 567, 576, 577, 585–589, 591–592, 621, 625–626, 629–631, 709, 884, 899, 905, 911, 914, 920, 959
- Medhurst, Walter Henry 499, 640, 907, 952
- Meekes SVD, Vincentius 245
- Meerwaldt, J.H. 957
- Megawati Soekarnopoetri 220, 223, 225, 226, 694
- Meilink-Roelofs, M.A.P. 10, 14, 18, 19
- Mendut 696, 699, 700, 704, 722
- Menese, Captain J. de 26, 27
- Mennonite 100, 142–143, 154, 309, 384, 464, 535, 593, 672, 673, 681, 684–690, 715, 753, 758, 867, 911, 913, 917
- Meno Radja, Rudolf 303
- Mensing, Abraham 115
- Mentawai 203, 527, 547, 615–621
- Menufandu, Angganita 358
- Merauke 347, 352, 354–358, 362, 370–371, 373
- Merentek-Abram, Sientje 799, 817
- Mesquita Pimentel, A. de 89
- Mesquita, Captain D.L. de 29
- Mesquita SJ, J. de 43
- Messa, Benyamin 300
- Messa, Poura 300
- Messianism see also *Koreri* 150, 348, 349, 363, 374, 520, 673, 797
- Mèster* see also *guru* 105–109, 118, 119, 123
- Mestoko, Mas Dryo 716
- Methodism 140, 142, 206, 506, 518, 560, 578, 584–591, 658, 679, 683, 721, 838, 867, 868, 876, 905, 910–912, 917
- Metz SJ, Gregorius 233, 235, 429
- Meulaboh affair 206
- Meurs SJ, J. van 627
- Michel SJ, Thomas 801
- Mickelson, Einar 363
- Middelburg, Jan Bouillion van 113
- Middelkoop, Pieter 172, 304, 307, 309
- Mijer, P. 429, 653
- Miles, Douglas 498, 501–502
- Militia Christi* 446
- Militia Waraney* 446
- Milne, William 640, 907
- Mimika 347, 354, 356–358, 362, 367, 370
- Minahasa 23, 63, 68, 116–119, 140–142, 146, 149–152, 157, 161, 165, 166, 168, 170, 172, 175, 178, 180, 182, 185, 198, 222, 236, 285, 290, 303, 307, 315, 325–326, 360, 387, 389, 393, 396, 398, 414, 416, 419–456, 460–465, 477, 504, 573, 647, 649, 659, 687, 696, 702, 716, 750–752, 761–762, 766, 825, 828, 880, 903, 925, 939, 955–956, 959, 962
- Minangkabau 188, 347, 419, 438, 527, 531, 599, 615, 617, 626
- Mingneau CICM, M. 486
- Misereor 260
- Mission Sister of the Precious Blood (*Sisters of Tiemray*) 362, 370
- Missions Etrangères de Paris* 80, 622, 625
- Miyahira, Shusho 184, 185, 461, 489
- MNZG 750, 751, 759
- Modigliani, Elias 628
- Moerdani, Benny 336, 921
- Mofu, Baldus 367
- Mofu, Eddie 367

- Mohri, August 529, 544
 Mojau, Julianus 793
 Mojowarno 149, 641–642, 672–673, 680,
 682, 714–716, 734, 736, 752, 758
 Mollema, G.W. 307
 Moluccas/Maluku ix, 13, 17–75, 86, 88, 92,
 95, 99–135, 138–142, 146, 151, 152, 154,
 157, 161, 165, 167, 168, 170, 175, 178,
 182–186, 194, 224, 225, 229, 236, 244,
 307, 347–349, 354, 355, 357, 360, 377,
 379, 383–417, 419, 445–448, 463, 477,
 480, 482, 487, 518, 647, 649, 665, 716,
 749, 755, 761, 771, 779, 782, 791, 796,
 828, 834, 880, 903, 925, 952
 Mononutu, Arnold 194, 851
 Monteiro SVD, Louis E. 251, 286
 Monteiro, Gregorius 269
 Mook, H.J. van 251
 Moravian Brothers 386, 387
 Mori, I. 368
 Mormons 900
 Morrison, Robert 640, 907
 Mouw, A. 519, 521
 MPPK, *Majelis Pusat Pendidikan
 Kristen* 841
 MPR/MPRS xiv, 194–204, 206
 MSC xiv, 166, 170, 244, 355–358, 362,
 406–407, 482, 959
 MSF xvi, 270
 Muda SVD, Piet 249
 Muhammadiyah 164, 200, 206, 210–211,
 222, 548, 760, 788, 801, 914
 MUI xiv, 211–212, 223, 225
 Mukhdi Akbar movement 478, 481
 Mukti Ali, H.A. 800, 853
 Mulder, D.C. 690
 Müller-Krüger, Theodor viii, 424, 758
 Munninghoff OFM, Herman 370, 377
 Munson, Albert 432
 Munson, Samuel 529, 530, 532, 545, 600
 Munthe, Rahman Tua 957, 958
 Murwito OFM, Aloysius 371
Musyawarah Antar Umat Beragama 207,
 213, 480, 852, 948
 Mutsaers SJ, Bernardus 429

 Nababan, Asmara 219
 Nababan, Soritua A.E. 226, 555, 560–568,
 631, 711, 793, 794, 845, 846, 861
 Nabire 348, 361, 375–376
 Nagata, S. 319
 Nangapanda 288
 Nanga Sejirak 519
 Nangung, Albert 315
 Narumi, S. 461
Nasakom xiv, 200
 Nasution, Bondanalolot 534

 Natataroena, Suryahasmara 647
 Natsir, M. 195, 206, 207
 NBG xv, 169, 668, 669, 826
 NCC, National Council of Churches
 (China) 826
 Ndoi SVD, Frans 966
Negara Indonesia Timur, NIT 194, 250, 251
Negara Islam Indonesia xv, 195
 Neijens, Matthias 355
 Neill, J.M. 643
 Nestorian 3–6
 Nevius, John 552
 Ngadji, Petrus 243
 Ngefak-Bara Pah, Pao Ina 279
 Ngelow, Zakaria 193, 788
 Ngganggung SVD, Paul 278
 Nggawa SVD, Darius 269, 276, 296
 NGZV, *Nederlandsche Gereformeerde Zending
 gsvereeniging* 320, 674–675, 677
 NHK, *Nederland Hervormde Kerk* xv, 359,
 371, 463, 478, 677, 690
 Nias 4, 154, 527, 551, 598–618, 621, 625,
 629, 630, 632, 768, 856
 NICA 251, 359
 Niemeijer, H. 116, 122, 133, 907
 NII, *Negara Islam Indonesia* 195–196
 Niks, J.F. 304, 305
 Nimpoeno, Soedono 680, 768
 Nippon Kirisuto Kyodan 180, 828
 Nisononi, N. 307
 NIT, *Negara Indonesia Timur* xv, 194,
 250–251
 Nitu 110
 NIZB, *Nederlandsch-Indische
 Zendingbond* 760, 774, 824, 825, 827,
 961
 NKRI xv, 193, 194
 Nollen MSC, H. 355
 Nomachi, Colonel 658
 Nommensen, Ludwig I. 148, 149, 172, 203,
 529, 532–548, 554, 557–562, 589, 592
 Nommensen, Jonathan T. 529
 Nonce Daeng Massikki 478
 Nong, Domi 257
 Nono, Yosef Lalu 273, 275
 Noordhoff, G. 303
 Notohamidjojo, O. 200, 691, 969
 Novak, Michael 917
 Noyen SVD, Piet 243, 245, 313, 314, 732
 NU, *Nahdlatul Ulama* xv, 197, 717, 718,
 784, 788, 801
 Nugroho, Harry 971
 Numfor 346, 348, 350, 355, 361, 377
 Nunez, Nicolau 39, 41, 55, 62
 Nunusaku Religion 224, 409
 Nurak, Hilarius Moa 624
 Nurcholis Madjid 788

- Nyarumkop 504, 505, 702
 Nygh, H. 953
 Nyo, Petrus 262
 NZG xv, 139, 141, 142, 301–304, 383,
 385–386, 389–391, 419, 423–427, 433,
 452, 456, 458, 464, 466–467, 477, 573,
 651, 669, 671, 672, 714, 716, 755, 912
 NZV xv, 142, 167, 487–489, 651–658, 672,
 909–912

 Octavianus, Petrus 309, 875–877, 891
 Oei Bian Tiong 915
 Oei Soei Tiong 911
 Oei Tiong Ham 667
 Oetama, Jakob 972–973
 Oevaang Oeray 514
 Ogihara SJ, Aloysius 184, 247
 Ogilvie & Co. 954
 Ojong, P.K. 972–973
 Okaba 356
 Olden, F. van 623
 Oldham, W.F. 585–587
 OMF, *Overseas Missionary Fellowship* 774,
 874
 Ondi F. 369
 Ong Ki Ong 920
 Ong Kie Hong 957
 Ong Tae-hae 903
 ONKP 202, 599, 610–612
 Onvlee, L. 324
 Oomen MSC, Melchior 355
 Oostrom-Philips, Johanna Christina
 van 670, 674
 Oostrom Soede, T.J. van 394
 Oppusunggu, H.M.T. 557
 Ormu 353
 Orphan/orphanage 114, 123, 218, 234, 274,
 288, 310, 450, 535, 626, 679, 695, 871, 890
 Orthodox Christianity (Greek,
 Russian) 689, 899–900
 Osok 366
 Ostrom, Egon 588
Otiv bombari 356
 Otterspoor, W. 351
 Ottow, Carl 350
 Our Lady's Sodality (*Kongregasi*
Maria) 249, 967

 Pacheco, Simão 78
 Padang 432, 530, 531, 535, 537, 539,
 599–600, 617–621, 625–626, 629, 633,
 709, 899, 919, 958, 960
 Padri movement/war 99, 531, 532, 534,
 537, 545, 580
 Padroado/patronato 52, 82, 88
 Padtbrugge, Robert 67
 Paiva, Antonio de 59–60

 Paji 77, 78, 81, 88
 Paji, Lambert 284
 Pakage, Jordan 364
 Pakage, Zakheus 363–365
 Pakianathan, Solomon 586, 587
 PAKSOE 437
 Paku Alam V 674
 Pakubuwono IV 667
 Pakubuwono V 667
 Pakubuwono IX 674
 Palasari 735, 741–742, 809, 934
 Palaunsoeka, Francis Xavier 514
 Palembang 3, 4, 6, 527, 585, 587, 593–597,
 621, 626, 632, 709, 876, 903
 Palha, Francisco 28
 Palomino OFM, Blas 63
 Pamai 353
 Pamangkat 504, 506
 Pancasila 188, 197–201, 207, 212–214, 252,
 259, 260, 264, 368, 370, 412, 480, 497,
 615, 694, 706, 707, 742, 761, 778, 779,
 781–782, 785–787, 792–793, 801, 804,
 843–849, 851, 922, 973, 974
 Pandegiro, J. 452
 Pandiangan, Elias 629
 Pandoyoputro O.Carm, H.J.S. 724
 Panggabean, Apul 557
 Panggabean, F.P. Sutan Maloe 549
 Panggabean, General Maraden 567
 Panggabean, Hamonangan 590
 Panggabean, Wismar 589
 Pangkal Setia 433, 434, 962
 Pangkalpinang 270, 621, 623–624, 709
 Paniai see *Me of Paniai*
 Pansur Napitu 157, 544, 545, 756, 957
 Panuluh, Dudut 937–938
 Papa i Wunte 457, 458
 Papare, Silas 366
 Pape, Franz 305
 Papo, Yakobus 273
 Papua 23, 24, 32, 73, 148–150, 163–168,
 170–173, 176, 180, 181, 185, 186, 198,
 207, 225, 229, 244, 266, 267–270, 309,
 330, 338, 345–381, 393, 396, 398, 402,
 406, 419, 457, 458, 460, 468, 472, 518,
 520, 527, 630, 639, 649, 650, 660, 665,
 724, 756, 764, 771, 779, 782, 791, 796,
 805, 855, 863, 867, 870, 872, 873, 880,
 892, 925, 934, 936, 963
 Paraguay 233
 Pardede, Jansen 801
 Pareira SVD, Clemens 254, 284
 Pareira SVD, Girulfus Cherubim 269, 327
 Parera, Frans Meak 268
 Parera, Jos Daniel 268
 Parera, Viator 260
 Parhusip, A.H. 560

- Parimo, Herman 222
 Parkindo xv, 190–200, 204–207, 252, 255, 292, 331, 366, 463, 469, 553, 649, 694, 784, 851, 964, 973
 Parmusi xv, 204
 Partai Kat[h]olik 191–199, 204–207, 252, 253, 255, 256, 262, 704, 784
 Partonadi, Sutarman S. 674, 795
 Passionist (CP) 270, 274, 275
 Pas O.Carm, Clemens van der 720
 Pastoralia 266, 272, 760, 765, 964
 Patanga, Arief 222
 Patiro, Yahya 222
 Patti, W. 303
 Pattinasarani, Lukas 301
 Pattiasina, Thomas 396
 Pattikayhatu, P. 475
 Pattimura alias Thomas Matulesia 383, 385, 391, 393, 411
 Pattingalloang, Karaeng 61
 Patty, A.J. 178, 394
 Patty, Isaak 407
 Paulus Due 295
 Paulus Kupang 120
 Paulus Mite 296
 PBI, Baptist Fellowship 214, 859, 871
 PDI/PDIP xv, 205, 215, 220, 224, 226, 256, 694, 779
 Pede da Lopez, Yosef Frederikus 254
 Pedersen, Paul 358, 589
Pela 224, 394, 409–411
 Pelamonia 361
 Pelletimu, Chr. 355
 Pello, Mesak Hendrik 304
Pemali 25, 109, 234, 235
 Pentecostal vii, xiv, 140, 142, 143, 168, 177, 183, 203, 209, 210, 216, 221, 283, 284–293, 296–299, 310, 379, 399, 400, 428, 433, 436–437, 452, 474, 479, 559, 560, 577, 578, 584, 647, 659, 664–666, 687–688, 691, 717, 736, 739, 771, 772, 804–808, 838, 850, 857, 859, 863, 867–903, 914, 917
 Perboyre CM, John Gabriel 720
 Pereira SJ, Antonio 46, 64, 65
 Pereira, Captain G. 27
 Pereira, Ruy 58
 PERMESTA/PRRI rebellion xvi, 196, 438, 555, 616
 PERSETIA xv, 773, 776, 792, 841, 854, 856, 877
 PERTI 206
 Pesik, Hendrik 750
 Pesser SVD, Jacob 315
 Pestana OP, Antonio 76
 Peters, Jos 259, 261
 Peterson, Lorman M. 259
 Petroses Wongga 489
 PGI see *DGI*
 PGK 252
 PGPI 859, 867, 882
 PGSLP 265
 Phang, Joseph 432
 Philips-Stevens, Christina Petronella 670, 674–676
 Piagam Jakarta (*Jakarta Charter*) 188, 190, 197, 199–200, 204, 207
 Picauly, P. 389, 750
 Picpus Fathers (SSCC) 623–624
 Pigafetta, A. 15
 PII xv, 214, 219, 226, 859, 867–868, 871–873, 877–878, 890, 893, 896
 Pijl, Kornelis 952
 PIKI 217
 Pinto, Mendes 15, 16
 Pires, Tomé 57, 74
Piring natzar 397
 Piry, S.J. 329
 Pius, Raja Rassi Wangge 242–243
 PKB, *Punguan Kristen Batak* 549
 PKI see *Communism*
 PKN see *Parkindo*
 PKPM see *GKPM*
 Pluskow, A. von 93
 PMKRI, *Perhimpunan Mahasiswa Katolik Republik Indonesia* 205, 252
 PNI xv, 192, 194, 199, 252–254, 761
 PNI Katolik 253
 Poedjosoewito, R.S. 594, 595
 Poerwadarminta, Willibrord J.S. 700
 Poerwodiwirjo, Raden Mas Joesoef 701, 926–928
 Poerwowidagdo, Judo 809, 935, 942
 Pohsarang 722, 929–930, 932, 948
 Pokaraga, Niachil 50
 Pong Lengko 468
 Pontianak 494–495, 502, 504–510, 514–519, 522, 585–587, 709, 772, 919, 922
 Pope, Benedict XV 919, 926
 Pope, John Paul II 297, 336, 337, 886
 Pope, Paul VI 886
 Popma, W. 331
 Portuguese vii, 9–135, 137, 141, 229–237, 245, 250, 256, 311–314, 319, 327, 335–339, 346, 348, 355, 400, 408, 543, 563, 650, 718, 749, 925, 952
 Pos, Willem 321, 323
 Poso 180, 181, 198, 222–225, 379, 445, 455–472, 694, 800, 855
 Post, Walter 363, 376
 Pouw Boen Giok 658, 770, 804, 915
 Pouw Peng Hong 826, 912
 PPKI see *BPUPKI*

- PPP xvi, 205, 215, 219, 523
 Prabowo Subianto, General 413
 Pramana, Yatma 936
 Pramono, R. 564, 565, 567
 Prawar, D. 369
preman (gangs) 268, 412
 Prenthaler SJ, Johannes 702
 Prinsen, Lambertus 503, 643
 Priyanahadi, Y.B. 775, 971, 972
 Probowinoto, Basuki 190, 191, 964, 968
Protestantsche Kerk see *Indische Kerk*
 PRRI see *Permesta*
 PSII 197
 Purba, Johannes 578
 Purwokerto 371, 647, 665, 709
 Putussibau 504, 510
 Pykett, G.F. 586
- Qadiriyyah brotherhood 494
- Raats SVD, Jan 251
 Rachmatullah, Muhadji 620
 Ragha SVD, Bene 275
 Raja Ampat Islands 348
 Ramadan 394, 412, 703
 Rangel, Miguel 81, 83, 84
 Rantung, Samuel 432
 Rasjidi, H.M. 190, 211, 212, 853
 Ratahan 422, 427, 428, 432
Ratu Adil 754
 Ratu, Anton Pain 269, 315
 Ratubandju, Mb. 329
 Ratulangie, Sam (G.S.S.J.) 152, 178, 194, 360, 425, 766
 Ratuwalu, Johannes 308
 Raxa Laudin, Kaicil 57
 RBMU 371, 372
 Rebello SJ, João 46
 REC, *Reformed Ecumenical Council* 332
 Redemptorists (CssR) 269, 270, 327, 334
 Reenders, Hommo 450, 670
 Rees, Otto van 429
Reformasi 252, 374, 379, 444, 445, 557, 668, 779, 784, 787, 788, 793, 861
 Regig, Nyoman 685
 Reichenbach, Rolf 625
 Reid, A. 9, 10, 13, 17–20
 Reitz, Gerhard O. 616
 Reksosusilo, Stanislaus 795, 807
 Renville Agreement 191–192, 195
Repelita 210, 276
Republika 18, 412
Réveil (see also *awakening*) 349
 Rhijn, L.J. van 302, 714
 Rhodes SJ, Alexander de 80
 Ribeiro, José Joaquin 335
- Ribeiro SJ, Nuno 39, 40
 Riebeeck, Abraham van 127
 Riebeeck, Antonia van 127
 Riebeeck, Jan van 127
 Riedel, Johann F. 119, 150, 389, 419, 421, 423
 Rietschoten, C. van 325
 Rijckevorsel, Caroline van 703
 Rijckevorsel, Leopold van 703
 Rikin, Mintardja 654, 659
 RIS, *Republik Indonesia Sarikat*, see also *NKRI* 193
 Ritapiret 249, 254, 267, 293, 297, 299
 Riwo Lobo, Yakob 303
 Riwo, L. 306
 Riwo SVD, Philip Loi 275
 Riwo, Tjilik 497
 RMG, *Rheinische Missionsgesellschaft* 139, 143, 155, 158, 168, 181, 374, 499–502, 529, 533–559, 587, 600–619, 958
 RMS, *Republik Maluku Selatan* xvi, 194, 397, 785, 834
 Rodrigos, Thomas 109
 Roessel, Dion. van 355
 Rohden, Georg Ludwig von 542
 Ronggowarsito, Raden Ngabehi 667
 Ronsumbre, Micha 374
 Roon 353
 Roorda van Eysinga, Sytse 388
 Roos, Samuel 316, 319
 Roosmalen, Jan van 273, 771
 Roskott, Bernard N.J. 157, 389–391, 421, 750
 Rossum, Sybrandus van 628
 Rote 303–310
 Rozaman, Ama 615
 Rudersdorf, Otto 605
 Ruil, Albert Cornelisz 127
 Rullmann, J.A.C. 684
 Rumadian/Rumadaan
 Romainou, F.J.S 360, 368–369, 396
 Rumambi, W.J. 185, 197–199, 430, 438, 770, 843, 860, 968
 Rumere, Z. 369
 Rumi, O. 374
 Rumsarwir, Wim 369
- s' Jacob, F. 429
 Sá, Captain Duarte de 28
 Sá, Captain Henrique de 41
 Sá, Antonio de 81, 96
 Sabia, Kolano 28, 50
Sabilillah 192
 Sacred Heart Priests (SCJ) 631, 632
 Sadrach Surapranata 156, 641–643, 670–671, 674–676, 678, 683–684, 696, 714, 753, 754, 795

- Sahertian, Dominggus 302
 Sahetapy, J.E. 209, 219
 Said Abdoelqadir bin Djadid al-Habsji 238
 Said Oemar bin Abdoelkadir al-Djoefri 238
 Sairin, Weinata 228, 801, 819, 885
 Sakertemin 357
 Saklil, John Philip 367, 371
 Salatiga 200, 203, 309, 360, 567, 593, 670, 672, 675, 677, 678, 681, 682, 684, 686, 689–691, 694, 719, 795, 807, 847, 855, 857, 887, 911
 Salawati, Yahya 451
 Saleleubaja, A.P. 620
 Saleleubaja, Edison 617
 Saleleubaja, Hermanus 620
 Saleleubaja, Ph. 618
 Salesians of Don Bosco 339
 Saliha, Nicolaas 407
 Salman Reis 15
 Salvation Army 168, 184, 214, 399, 400, 437, 464, 465, 479, 678, 838, 871, 911
 Samarinda 493, 504, 508, 510, 514, 515, 519
 Sambas 274, 494, 495, 504–506, 508, 523, 524
 Samosir 528, 547, 630
 Sanders, Jan 231–234
 Sanggau 504, 508, 510, 514, 515
 Sangir islands 68, 117–118, 130, 180, 183, 198, 347, 400, 402, 432, 447–453, 461, 825
 Sangsun SVD, Eduardus 269
 Sani SVD, Paul 249, 269, 271
 Santen SJ, Petrus Jacobus van 958
 Santvoort, H. Van 356
 Saparua 33, 35, 38, 42, 43, 106, 117, 355, 383–387, 396, 916
 Sapulete (Pastor) 285, 291
 Saragih, Jaudin 555
 Saragih, Jaulung Wismar 556, 962
 Sarasin, Paul and Fritz 420
Sarekat Ambon 178, 394
 Sarneel CM, E. 720
 Sarungallo, Renda 198
 Saröfanötöna, Harita 612
 Sasraringrat, Maria Soeyadi Darmaseputra 704
 Sau, Bernard 306
 Saud, Hermann 369, 378, 379
 Saumlaki 398
 Sawor, Zacharias 366, 381
 Scheunemann, Detmar 309, 875
 Scheunemann, Rainer 872
 Scheurer, J.G. 679
 Schmitt, Hermann 682
 Schmutzer, Joseph 702, 722, 927, 929, 934
 Schmutzer, Julius 702, 703, 722, 925, 929
 Schneider, A. 610
 Scholten, J.J. 503, 642–644
 Schouten, P.J.B. 262
 Schouten, Mieke 422, 441
 Schreiber, August 544
 Schreiner, Lothar 529, 530, 541, 542
 Schrieke, B.J.O. 9–21
 Schröder, C.Ch.J. 153, 768
 Schumann, Olaf 802
 Schuurman, Barend M. 716, 757
 Schuurman, J.A. 429, 824
 Schuurmans, N.D. 681
 Schuyt, P. 459
 Schwartz, Carl 674
 Schwarz, Johann G. 119, 150, 389, 419, 421, 422
 Schweitz SJ, Bernard 321
 SEAGST xvi, 773, 793, 795, 796, 799, 807
 Seda, Frans 252, 256, 972
 Sedoyo, Petrus 670
 Sejiram 498, 504, 508, 509, 512
 Selim II, Sultan 16
 Sellers, Robert Preston 795
 Sem Sampir 672
 Semarang 103, 122, 126, 180, 234, 236, 269, 303, 428, 640, 642–647, 650, 665, 667, 669–673, 676, 678, 679, 688–689, 691, 692, 695, 696, 699, 701, 704–710, 713, 753, 755, 771, 870, 881, 882, 884, 887, 911, 919, 942, 955, 959, 963, 965, 870
 Senen, Cornelis 123
 Sene, Alfons 273
 Senghaje, Yohannes 300
 Sentani 346, 353, 359, 364, 366, 370
 Septura MSC, Nicolaus Adi 371
 Seram 23, 24, 32–38, 43, 44, 45, 106–110, 113, 346, 348, 355, 386–388, 404, 414, 416
Serat Centhini 130
 Serdang 527
 Serrão, Francisco 17, 25, 26
 Serui 354, 360
 Setiabudi, Natan 861, 916
 Setio, Robert 792, 809
 Seya, Shigeharu 185
 Shakib Arslan 494
Sheikerei 552
 Shihab, Alwi 206, 210
 Shirato, Hachiro 828
 Si Singamangradja XII 530, 532, 538, 539, 542, 628
 Siahaan, S.M. 563–566
 Siahaan, G.H.M. 835
 Sidjabat, W.B. 786, 800, 842, 969
 Sie Ing Hoen 920
 Sihite, W. 564
 Sihombing, Herman 617–619

- Sihombing, Justin 396, 552
 Sihombing, P.M. 560–562
 Sihombing, T.S. 554
 SIL, Summer Institute of Linguistics 371
 Silalahi, T.B. 567
 Silva, Yakobus da 291
 Simanjuntak, Alfred 968, 970, 972
 Simanjuntak, P. 620
 Simanjuntak, P.W.T. 565–567
 Simarmata, W.T.P. 569
 Simatupang, Tahi Bonar 192, 201, 202,
 208, 212, 368, 699, 752, 769, 780, 781,
 785, 786, 800, 843, 844, 848, 861, 864, 969
 Simbolon, Maludin 196
 Simons, G.K. 239
 Simorangkir, J.C.T. 199, 206, 843
 Simorangkir, O.P.T. 562–564, 567
 Simson movement 358
 Sinaga, Anicetus B. 531, 631, 796
 Sinaga, D. 881
 Sinaga, J. 558
 Sinaga, Martin L. 558, 787
 Sinaga, Richard 560
 Sinaulan, H. 434
 Sindhunata SJ, Gabriel Possenti 775, 797,
 963
 Sindoepewata, Cl. 721
 Singamböwö, Zebua 611
 Singgih, E. Gerrit 690, 778, 793–794, 898
 Singkawang 502–508, 919, 922
 Sintang 254, 270, 504, 508, 510, 514, 515,
 519, 521
 Sipholon 157, 201, 544, 563, 565, 568,
 756, 847
 Sir, G. Edu 288, 293
 Sirait, Kassianus 551–552
 Sirait, Sabam 828
 Siregar, Melanchton 207
 Siregar, Nelson 566
 Siregar, Simon 534
 Siregar, W.H. 330
 Siswawarsana, Idris Nakam 680
 Siswodwidjo, J. 594
 Sitefanö 603
 Sitompul, Aristarchus 549
 Sitompul, Adelbert A. 564, 616, 795
 Sitompul, Einar M. 567, 568, 801, 957
 Sitompul, Haji Ibrahim 549
 Sitompul, K. 554
 Sitompul, Ruhut 220
 Sitorus, Hermanus 590
 Siwa Famali 615
 Sjadzali, Munawir 567
 Sjahrir, Sutan 190–191
 Sjarifoeddin, Amir 178, 190–192, 763, 825
 Sjoen, Jeheskiel 305
 Skubinna, Wilhelm 606
 Slater, John 952
 Smit, J. 370
 Soares, João 75
 Soares, Manuel 121–122
 Sobarofek, Lukas 369
 Society of the Divine Word (SVD) 166,
 170, 181, 241–339 passim, 370, 624, 735,
 741, 742, 889, 932, 959, 965, 966
 Soedarmadi 680
 Soedarmo, R. Simon 721, 835, 969
 Soedirohoesodo, Wahidin 668
 Soegijapranata SJ, Albertus 180, 193, 199,
 269, 281, 704–706, 709, 711, 755, 763, 784
 Soeharto 193, 195, 203–221 passim, 252,
 255, 256, 260, 261, 265, 266, 279, 335,
 338, 339, 347, 369, 375, 377, 379, 399,
 402, 410, 412, 413, 441, 444, 446, 463,
 464, 472, 493, 513, 514, 523, 560,
 563–568, 634, 663, 668, 686, 691, 695,
 705, 706, 717, 718, 776, 779, 782–789,
 793, 797, 801, 844, 850–852, 887, 921, 972
 Soekiazian, Margar 672
 Soekiman, Anton 697–700
 Soepono, R. Ng. Djojo 672
 Soeseno 766
 Soesena, Zacheus H. 680
 Soesilo, Alex 802
 Soetapa, Djaka 800, 819, 850, 854
 Sol, Andreas 708
 Solo, Markus 802
 Somalaing, Datu 628
 Sonck, Martin 113
 Sondaal SJ, L. 720, 926
 Song Choan-Seng 796, 969
 Songan, Johannes J. 796, 820
 Sopater, Ponidi 680
 Sopater, Soelarlo 667, 692, 795, 850, 861
 Sowada, Alphonsus 362, 936
 Spelz MSC, J. 485
 Spitters MSE, J. 518
 Statistics 103–104, 117, 118, 120, 121, 123,
 126, 141, 165, 167, 216, 236, 238, 248,
 298, 306, 314, 321, 330, 331, 338, 339,
 354, 361, 371, 372, 378, 389, 403, 404,
 407, 419, 430, 475, 479, 495, 496, 504,
 507, 515, 522, 569, 589, 607, 620–623,
 639, 649, 675, 691, 710–711, 724, 882,
 890, 904, 906, 926
 Staverman, R. 361
 Steller, E.T. 450
 Steller, K.G.F. 450
 Steur, Johannes van der 678–679, 695
 Stiphout, M. van 270
 Stock CICM, Ray 483
 STOVIL 157, 180, 305–307, 392, 394, 398,
 407, 755, 770
 Straalen, Ildefonsus van 613

- Sträter SJ, F. 699, 700, 702
 STT, *Sekolah Tinggi Teologi* xvi, 173, 558,
 565, 592, 757, 776, 780, 785, 799, 802,
 825, 831, 833, 874, 877, 893
suangi 110
 Suarabun, Otto 358
 Subiyat, L. 963
 Suchtelen, B. van 243
 Sudiharto, Anton 939–940
 Sugirtharajah, R.S. 969
 Sukabumi 780, 841, 909, 915
 Sula 400, 403, 410
 Sularto, St. 972, 973
 Sulawesi /Celebes 19, 23, 30, 59–67, 78, 88,
 99, 117, 166, 168, 184, 196, 222–223, 229,
 251, 419–490, 495, 496, 694, 755–756, 759,
 761, 764, 770, 779, 791, 798, 799, 807, 828,
 831, 848, 855, 870, 871, 873, 960, 974
 Sulayman the Magnificent, Sultan 16
 Sumampow, Johnny 440
 Sumartana, Th. 671, 693, 767, 787–788,
 802, 809, 812
 Sumba 149, 150, 166–170, 173, 176, 181,
 198, 229, 237–238, 240, 244, 251, 257,
 259, 262, 269, 284–339, 373, 624, 756, 934
 Sumual, Ventje 196
 Sun Yat Sen 826, 920
 Sunardi 802
 Sundermann, Heinrich 154, 602, 603, 614
 Sung, John (Song Shangjie) 684, 873, 914
 Supardjo, Thomas 592
Supersemar 203
 Supomo, S. 188
 Supper, Johann Christoph 669
 Surabaya 184, 191, 212, 215, 218–219, 269,
 400, 414, 428, 563, 587, 640, 641–647,
 663, 701, 709, 712–726, 737, 759, 771,
 847, 849, 868, 880–884, 911, 938, 953,
 955, 959
 Surakarta 431, 643, 666–669, 672, 677,
 679, 680, 685, 688, 689, 694, 700, 712,
 715, 753, 794
Surat Keputusan Bersama (SKB)
 no. 1/1969 208, 209
Surat Keputusan Menteri Agama no. 70 &
 77/1978 259
 Suroono, E. 965
 Suropati 131
 Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono 209, 223, 226,
 779
 Sutopanitro, Stanislaus 709
 Sutrisnaatmaka, A.M. 795
 SVD see *Society of the Divine Word*
 Suwatan MSC, Yosef 223, 431
 Swantoro, P. 704
 Swaving, A.H. 427
 Swellengrebel, J.L. 127, 734, 740, 742
 Swemmelaar, J.W. 126
 Syafei, Theo 222
 Syamsuddin Daeng Soreang (Denso) 479
 Sylvanus 211
 Tabarija 27, 28, 36, 50
 Tabernacle Church see *GKII and KINGMI*
 Tack, Hendrik 104
 Takenaka, Masao 693, 935, 942
 Tahalele 42
 Talahatu, Pieter 302
 Talahatu, Willem 302
 Talaud 62–67, 117–118, 130, 180, 198, 400,
 432, 447–453, 825
 Talawaän 422
 Tambaram 173, 177, 195, 461, 762, 767,
 827, 828
 Tambunan, A.M. 784, 968
 Tambunan, Ompu ni Hobul 628
 Tambunan, Rusman 590
 Tampenawas, Richard 750
 Tampubolon, Felix 219
 Tampubolon, Jakobus 534
 Tan Giok Sie 921
 Tan Goan Tjong 657
 Tan Hok Tjoan 687, 881
 Tanangwangko 422
 Tanimbar 23, 115, 244, 346, 355, 387, 398,
 404–408, 764, 890
 Tanja, Victor 801, 802
 Tapilatu, Mesakh ix, 882
 Tartib Eprajim 734, 767
Tauhid 189
 Taveira OP, A. 75
 Tavora, Manuel de 40
 TEAM 371
 Tee Sien Tat 911
 Teffer, M. 696
 Telaumbanua, Dana 616
 Telles de Meneses, A.J. 93
 TEN 561
 Tenggaraong 493
 Tentua, J.H. 305
 Tering 510, 518
 Ternate 9–73 passim, 100, 101, 103, 107,
 115–117, 126, 171, 237, 348–350, 357,
 359, 362, 384, 387, 390–393, 398,
 400–404, 415, 416, 429, 445, 447, 455
 Tethool, Joseph 415
 Thenau, Eduard 320
 Thenu, Amos 120
 Therik S.A.K. 284
 THHK 623, 905, 910–914
 Thiel, Martin van 509
 Thijssen SVD, Mgr. Anton 256, 262,
 269–271, 275, 741
 THKTKH xvi, 909–916

- Thomsen, Martin 610
 Thoolen SVD, Theodorus 259
 Thung Goan Hok 909
 Tidore 9–73 passim, 101, 115–118, 348, 415, 445
 Tillaart SVD, Theodorus van den 315
 Tillemans MSC, H. 357, 362
 Timika 347, 367, 370, 371, 375–379, 782
 Timmerman, Sara Maria 387
 Timmermans, Chrysologus 613
 Timo, Eben Nuban 796, 820
 Timothy I, Patriarch 4
 Tinangon, Yafet 315
 Tinulele, Susianti 224
 Tioliza, ruler of Morotai 56
 Titaley, John 786
 Titaley, Sammy 415
Tiwah-ceremony 498
Tjahaja Sijang 751, 759, 766, 953, 955–956, 961
 Tjakraatmadja, M.K. 366, 368
 Tjoa Tek Swat 915
 TMF 371
 Todabelu (Mataloko) 246–249, 258, 266, 268, 756
 Toding, Daniel 564
 Tödölala 601
 Tokoh, E. 307
 Tomohon 157, 180, 392, 422, 431, 433–436, 439, 440, 442, 755, 756, 770, 845, 847, 848, 857, 953
 Toraja 165–167, 173, 174, 176, 180–181, 185, 186, 198, 290, 347, 455–492, 498, 519, 663, 744, 764, 796, 799, 925, 931
 Tordesillas, Line of; Treaty of 38
 Tosari, Paulus 641, 643, 714, 752, 753, 767
 TPM 374
 Travasso OP, João 78
 Trisakti University 221
 Triton bay 349
 Trowt, W. Thomas 669
 Tsang Kam Fuk 716, 732
 Tsen On Njie (= Zeng Aner) 622–623, 918
 Tual 237, 349, 357, 398, 405–407, 415
 Tule, Philip 803, 821
 Tundang, E.D. 502
 Tunjung region 512, 515
 Tunli'u, Hennie 309
 Turcotti SJ, Carlo 63, 66
 Tutuarima, W.H. 180, 394, 755, 768
 Tuuk, Herman N. van der 533, 534, 537, 731, 732, 740, 742
 U Chim Seng 506, 586
 Ufer, Conra 603
 UFM 371, 372
 Ugang, Hermogenes S. 796, 821
 Ukur, Fridolin viii, ix, 501, 524–525, 692, 794, 806, 828, 861
 Ulfers, S. 427
Undang-Undang Dasar xvi, 193, 200
Undang-undang Perkawinan 840
 Universitas HKBP Nommensen 203, 592
 Universitas Kristen Duta Wacana xi, 592, 646, 679, 690, 717, 743, 770, 776, 792, 800, 807, 809, 964
 Universitas Kristen Indonesia 203, 621, 649, 841
 Universitas Kristen Maluku ix, 398
 Universitas Kristen Palangkaraya 503
 Universitas Kristen Satya Wacana 200, 203, 567, 691, 694, 795, 807
 Universitas Sanata Dharma 757
 Universitas Santo Thomas Sumatra Utara 626
 USDEK 200
 Utami, Ayu 633
 UZV, *Utrechtse Zendingsvereniging* xvi, 142, 351, 353–354, 357, 359, 400, 731
 Vajrabodhi 4
 Valenberg OFMCap, Tarcisius van 919
 Valentijn, François 36, 37, 49, 121, 128
 Vallon, Jean-Pierre 599, 600
 Varthema, L. 24
 Vasconcellos, Sanches de 34, 43
 Vatican 171, 246, 247, 263, 269, 271, 272, 283, 286, 337, 338, 361, 503, 517, 614, 621, 626, 630, 633, 644, 661, 706, 707, 708, 723, 724, 758, 760, 769, 801, 804, 805, 839, 886, 919, 921, 925, 926, 933
 Vaz, Simon 50, 53, 57
 Vedapura 262
 Veen, H. van der 467–470
 Velde van Capellen, S.D. van de 423, 449
 Velde, A. van der 78, 81
 Velden SJ, Arnold van der 245, 321
 Veloso, Balthasar 27, 50
 Veloso, Gonçalo 50, 52
 Velsen SJ, A. van 315
 Vermaassen, J.D. 302, 959
 Venn, Henry 552
 Ventimiglia, Antonio de 499, 503
 Verbeet, Gerrit 115
 Verheijen SVD, Jilis 268, 765
 Verheijen, R. 722
 Verhoeven, Pieter 111
 Verkuyl, Johannes 215, 359, 774, 793, 839, 968
 Vermeer, A. 674
 Verstraelen SVD, Arnold 246, 250, 313, 732
 Vertenten MSC, Petrus 170, 355, 356

- Vervolgschool* 251, 359, 362
 Verwiebe, E. 550
 Vesiva, Helena 60
 Viaigue (Waigeo) 348
 Viegas SJ, V. 59, 60
 Viera SJ, N. 41, 42
 Villalobos, Ruy Lopez de 38, 54
 Visch, Henk 360, 741
 Visser 't Hoof, Willem 763, 833
 Vitriarius, Wouter Melchiorz 112
 Vlaming van Oudtshoorn, A. de 86, 107
 VOC xvi, 20, 31, 33, 35, 49, 51, 57, 59,
 61–67, 73–139 passim, 147, 300, 318, 319,
 348, 355, 384, 389, 392, 447, 452, 538,
 599, 650, 666, 667, 908, 951, 852
 Voets, Thomas 273
Volkskirche 259, 536, 610
Volksraad 434, 703, 704, 732, 733, 762, 927
Volkstum 149
 Voogel SJ, Franciscus 484
 Vorm, Petrus van der 106, 128
 Vorstman, F.C. 549
 Vrancken, P. 230, 429, 644
 Vreede, E. de 433, 435
 Vreede, Johannes 696
 Vriend, Wim 374
 Vriens SJ, G. 963
 Vries, I.E. de 305
 Vries SJ, Johannes de 428, 429, 503, 623
 Vries, S.A. de 304
 Vroklage, B. 170, 311, 312

 Wachid Hasyim 189
 Wailete 412
Wali sanga 32, 666, 674
 Wallace, Alfred Russell 350
 Wambi 356
 Wanandi, Jusuf (Liem Bian Kie) 921
 Wanandi, Sofjan (Liem Bian Kun) 921
 Wanget, Arnold 315
 Wanggay Thomas 375
Wanita Katolik 252, 704
 WARC, *World Alliance of Reformed Churches* xvi, 332, 659,
 Ward, Nathaniel 529–530
 Warneck, Gustav 544, 549
 Warneck, Johannes 549, 550, 604
 Waropen 357, 361
 Warwyk, W. van 34
 Wayan Mastra, I 736, 737, 767, 796
Wayang 172, 493, 595, 641, 666, 680, 684,
 692, 693, 713, 764, 795, 797, 927, 943–946
 WCC, *World Council of Churches* xvi, 212,
 332, 463, 554, 558, 561, 659, 757, 780,
 799, 805, 834, 837, 843–846, 853, 855,
 859, 863, 872, 882, 885, 900
 Weakebo 364, 365

 Weber, Max 793, 917
 Wege Bage movement 364, 365
 Weidner, Ch. 306
 Weijden, Burchardus van der 613
 Wenas, A.Z.R. 180, 185, 186, 396, 426,
 436–439, 755, 768, 831
 Wendu 356
 Wenneker, Carolus 629
 Werndly, Georg Henric 126, 153
 West, Benjamin 585
 Westen SŠCC, Gabriel van der 624
 Wetering, F.A. van de 304
 Wetzler SVD, Adriaan 254
 Weweng, Osef 315
 Wibisono, Christianto 502
 WIC, *the West Indies Company* 100
 Widjaja, Albert 811, 821
 Widjaja, Sutrisna 807–808, 821
 Widodo, Admiral Adi Sucipto 413
 Widyatmadja, Yosef 694, 763, 794
 Wielenga, Douwe Klaas 322, 323
 Wiersma, J. 427–429
 Wijaya, Yahya 917
 Wijngaard, G.C. van den 408
 Wilhelm, Jacob 674, 675, 754
 Wilhelmina, Queen 243, 251
 Wilken, N.P. 423
 Willekens SJ, P. 181, 920, 921, 926
 Willis, Avery 206, 688, 691, 692
 Wiltens, Caspar 49, 104, 112
 Wind, A. 667
 Winkler, Dr. J. 551
 Wiranto, general 412, 413, 415
 Wirie, Timoteus 351
 Wirjoatmodjo, T.S. 723
 Wiryotenoyo, Broto Semedi 795
 Wirz, Paul 356
 Woen, Mesakh Ratu 293
 Woga, Edmund 327
 Wogma, Johannes 104
 Woi, Amatus 279
 Woloan 243, 315, 702
 Wolterbeek, J.D. 724
 Wolters CM, J.H. 720, 722
 Woodward, Leonard 464
 World Bank 347, 694
 World War I 174, 245, 356, 502, 545, 548,
 550, 608, 609, 629, 632
 World War II 168–169, 177, 319, 327, 358,
 409, 460, 467, 477–479, 486–489, 554,
 570, 588, 593, 595, 610, 613, 616, 618,
 678, 683, 740, 758, 760, 761, 828–829,
 915, 916, 969
 Worthington, C.M. 506, 586
 Wulp, H. van der 302
 Wuwur, Henri Dori 805, 821
 Wybenga, R. 331

- Xavier, Francis x, 19, 24, 28, 34–41, 50–51, 54–55, 59, 60, 62, 67, 68, 388, 514
- Yahya, Yunus 906
- Yamaguchi, Paulus 184, 247
- Yamin, Mohammad 187, 188
- Yanto, Yussar 598
- Yap Boen Pho 911
- Yap Thiam Hien 219
- Yap Un Han 588
- YAPPER 374
- YAPKI 874
- Yaspem 261
- Yaspensel 261
- Yewangoe, Andreas A. 794, 862
- YKS 261
- Yogyakarta 126, 200, 223, 268, 327, 371, 411, 414, 592, 639, 643, 646, 665, 666–669, 674, 677, 679–712 *passim*, 717, 723, 743, 753, 757, 760, 770, 771, 772, 775–777, 790, 792, 797, 800–803, 806–809, 813, 830, 831, 853, 880, 893, 927, 930, 932, 935–937, 940, 941, 948, 959–960, 963, 965, 968, 971
- Yoka, Hank 366
- Yoku, Alfeus 366
- Yoku, Permenas 366
- Yubilate*, hymnbook 279
- Yumarma, Andreas 795
- Yuwono, Harun 802
- ZCGK 320, 321
- Zendingsconsulaat* 128, 171, 176, 551, 825, 829, 863
- ZGG 373
- ZGKN xvi, 167, 322, 331, 371, 373, 591
- Ziekentrooster/krankenbezoeker* 49, 103
- ZNHK xvi, 359, 371
- Zoetmulder SJ, Piet 667
- Zocca, Franco 276
- Zöllner, Siegfried 374
- Zwaans SJ, L. 919
- Zwitser, D. 331