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 Zendingsvereeniging* (NZV) began mission work in Muslim West Java (1863); the *Utrechtsche Zendingsvereeniging* (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 Zendingsvereeniging* (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, Tunggul 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 Indonesians 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 Staatskundige 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 Kuiper 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 administrated 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 WSCF, 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 signalised 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 Sangihe, 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.

Musyawarah 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 Pati, 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 descend, 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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