In chapters four and five we have discussed the beginning of Christian communities in the southeastern islands that nowadays are called Nusa Tenggara Timur, NTT. These are the three larger islands of Flores, Sumba and Timor, with a number of smaller ones, especially the group of Solor, Adonara, Lomblen (or Lembata), and Alor, east of Flores, and the islands of Rote and Sawu to the Southwest of Timor. With a population of 3,823,154 in 2000, it was the province with the highest percentage of Christians, 87.7%. Out of the three other provinces with a majority of Christians it was in absolute numbers and in percentage by far the most ‘Christian’ (Papua with 75.5%, North Sulawesi with 69.3% and the Moluccas, not including North Moluccas, with 50.2%).

In this chapter we will see the local variations on a renewed race with Islam in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, the very slow transition from sixteenth and seventeenth century Portuguese and Dutch Christianity towards a modernising Christianity that accepted schools, hospitals and other aspects of modernity as part of a new culture and religion in the twentieth century. More than in Java or in Sumatra, even than in Sulawesi, in this part of Indonesia traditional religion could survive. In Flores and Timor it survived partly as a hidden tradition under the cover of formal or nominal Christianity. In Sumba traditional religion could quite strongly survive as the major religious tradition of an important, however dwindling minority. Catholicism in Flores has been given here much more attention than the developments in the two other islands that have stronger Protestant communities, because of its exceptional situation as a Catholic majority. Besides, many issues for the whole of NTT are discussed in the longer first section on Flores.

Flores as a Catholic stronghold

The difficult transition from old Portuguese to new Dutch Catholicism in Flores and Timor, 1859–1904

The political status of East Flores and of the islands from Adonara until Alor was until the mid-nineteenth century still uncertain. The Portuguese from Dili, East Timor, claimed sovereignty over this region and from time to time a Catholic priest was sent to look after the flock in Larantuka, Sikka and...
Maumere. Due to financial problems, the governor of Dili had to borrow money from the Dutch in Batavia and when it proved impossible to pay back this amount of 80,000 guilders, negotiations started to give some territory to the Dutch for an additional sum of money instead of paying back the loan. In the 1850s these negotiations discussed also the religious status of the ‘new Dutch territories.’ The Portuguese wanted to include a remark that Catholicism would continue to be protected by the new overlord, but Dutch parliament wanted also to include the religious freedom of Protestants. In the final agreement it was stated that “the freedom of religion is mutually guaranteed to the citizens of the areas which are ceded by the present treaty.” Notwithstanding this position, the Batavia administration deemed it necessary to send a Catholic priest to Larantuka. By decision of the governor general on 12 September 1859 a request was sent to the Apostolic Vicar P. Vrancken in Batavia:

While still waiting for approval by Parliament, this government wants to prepare now already the possibility of the execution of this special requirement, by providing the residents of the most important location of our new possession, Larantuka, with the convenience to practice the Roman Catholic worship, which seems to be practised in that area and for which the presence of a Roman Catholic clergyman is required.

In 1851 the Dutch army had already taken possession of the fortifications of Larantuka and Wureh, on the island of Adonara, just some 6 km from Larantuka on the other side of Strait Solor. This was done as guarantee for the first loan of 80,000 given to the Portuguese governor of Dili. The Portuguese priest Gregorio Maria Barreta is said to have told his former parish, “You may change your flag, but you should never change your religion.” He had told his flock that there were sorani tua and sorani muda, old and new Christians. As Protestants the Dutch were considered as representatives of new Christians. In order to correct this image the governor general had deemed it necessary to make an exception to a ruling that was defined only a few months earlier. Answering the requests of a small group of Chinese Catholics in the island of Bangka to send a priest, it was stipulated that Catholic priests would be paid by the colonial government only for the pastoral care of European Catholics, but not for native people. For strategic and political reasons, however, an exception should be made for these new citizens of the colony in East Flores.

There had been only occasional contacts between the Catholics of East Flores and Adonara with the Portuguese centre in Dili. There were in the first half of the nineteenth century only one or two priests in the neglected Portuguese colony, which had become part of the diocese of Macao in China. The first

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1 Government Secretary to Vicar Apostolic P. Vrancken, Batavia, 12–9–1859, see Steenbrink 2003–I:73.
Dutch priest, Jan Sanders, arrived in mid-1860. He had many problems in organising the building of a parish house. He was very much surprised at the contradiction between the pride of being a Catholic and the resistance against clergy. During a visit in mid-1861 to Sikka, more westward on the south coast of Flores, people were not willing to receive him in their houses.

The Portuguese Padris had the practice of asking for some remuneration for all their services, demanding rice, oil or wax; it was even said that Victorinus a Doloribus, the last Padri who administered this area, returned with a full shipment. If this would have been the case with the services of the Padri only, it still could be accepted, but everybody of his company followed the same practice for his own pocket and perhaps even worse. In such a way a pastoral visit could become a robbery (rampaspartij), where everybody tried to acquire as much as possible.2

The Dutch priests were salaried as high-ranking colonial officials and did not have the material problems of the Portuguese clergy. But they also had many problems in finding their place in the Catholic tradition of East Flores.

Already since the early eighteenth century there had been very few Catholic clergy in Flores. Catholicism had been continued as the practice of the Brotherhood of the Rosary, the Confraria da Rosario. The local social and political elite provided the leadership of this Confreria. The raja was its president. There were every three years elections for functions like Procurador, Maestri, Scrivan, Thesorero, Tjumador (from the Greek-Latin thymiama or incense for the person who held the thurible) and Capellao. The Procurador had to look after the buildings and the other objects, which were required for the public exercise of religion. The Maestri was the leader of religious music and public prayers. He gave religious instruction to children and baptised them during the absence of priests. The Scrivan or Escrivão was secretary and bookkeeper. He kept a register of deaths. The Thesorero was the guardian of the sacred objects, kept in the Capella Maria of Larantuka. He therefore had to live in a house neighbouring the chapel. After keeping this position for three years, he had to show all the sacred objects to the Confreria and the crowd. It was one of the major ceremonies during the change of leadership of the Brotherhood.

In the small town of Larantuka alone there were three churches and several chapels that were used for the major ceremonies that were organised by the Confreria. The greatest ceremonies were at Christmas, the procession of Good Friday, and the Feast of the Rosary (7 October). At these occasions the rosary was prayed in broken Portuguese formulas, and there was a great preparation with people bearing thousands of candles. At Christmas the statue of the baby Jesus was brought in procession to one of the churches. At this procession all the dignitaries of the brotherhood used their opa or long white robes like the

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Dominican Friars who had brought Christianity here from the mid seventeenth century. At the Good Friday procession the crowd halted at temporary altars, *armida*, like the way of the cross. The first priest, Jan Sanders, only behaved as a spectator at this celebration where the people of Larantuka did not use the service of the priest:

The boy is put on a bench. And there he sings with a clear voice: *O vos omnes qui transitis per viam* [All you who pass by] and he opens the scroll, showing a life-sized *Ecce Homo* and continues: *et videte si est dolor sicut dolor meus.* There is deadly silence, people are watching and listening, as if they are responding to this invitation. As soon as he finishes, all fall upon the earth, singing *Misericordia Senhor, Misericordia*. This part of the ceremony is so simple and beautiful, so impressive, that I am not able to give a good description. One must see and hear this, this beautiful act of faith of these simple Christians in the silent night, illuminated by the clear moon of the tropical lands, in a wilderness, surrounded by thousands of unbelievers and heathen.4

As the first priest, Sanders did not much interfere with the local Christian traditions. He left Flores in late 1861 due to health problems. His successor Caspar Franssen who worked in Larantuka from December 1861 until late 1863, proposed a quick reform of this priestless Portuguese remnant of Christianity, but could find no support with the local elite. Franssen preached against polygamous practices of the elite and wanted a prominent role for himself in the liturgy. He also wanted to re-introduce proper Latin for the official liturgy and Malay for hymns and the praying of the rosary. He failed like many of his successors and until this day Catholicism in East Flores still cherishes the special practices of great processions, a rosary prayed in broken Portuguese, and the quite spectacular outfit of prominent people during the great processions. The most extravagant are four men called Nicodemus, who in the procession of Good Friday carry the dead Christ. In the description of Caspar Franssen, “rabbis, disguised in a ridiculous way with a white nightcap, supposed to be Jewish, a mask before their face as if it was Carnival, a long beard of goat hair. […] These people in disguise are a derision of the religion and really made my blood boil.”5

It was quite a long process: the conversion from lay-dominated ex-Portuguese Catholic tradition to nineteenth century clergy-dominated and Dutch-style Catholicism. In fact, some practices never were fully deleted. For the rest, it took the Dutch missionaries more than fifty years before they could more or less impose their style of Catholicism on the Larantuka Catholics. The major

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3 “Is any suffering like my suffering?” from Lamentations 1:12, read as the third lesson of the matins on Maundy Thursday.
4 Steenbrink 2003–I:78.
reason for this was the position of the Catholic raja who was president of the Brotherhood. Under formal Portuguese rule from Dili the raja of Larantuka could behave more or less as an independent ruler. The boundaries of his realm were not clearly fixed, but he claimed sovereignty over a territory that extended to Sikka and Maumere to the west and also over a number of villages in the island of Adonara, divided between this Catholic ruler of Larantuka and the Muslim raja of Adonara, as has been stated above. Under Dutch colonial rule, exercised in fact by the Resident of Kupang, the raja saw the Dutch Catholic missionaries as both supporters and opponents. The resident of Kupang was for most of this period a Protestant. In 1862–1864 it was Isaac Esser who wanted to promote Protestantism whenever possible. The Catholic missionaries considered the raja of Larantuka as a semi-independent ruler. This was most clear in the case of Don Lorenzo Diaz Viera Gondinho who took the dignity in 1887. Lorenzo was educated at the mission school and therefore it was hoped that he would transform East Flores into a truly Catholic region. The clergy adapted the traditional anthem for the king at Sunday Mass and sang, *Domine salvum fac regem nostrum Laurentium*, Lord bless our King Lorenzo, until they were rebuked by the colonial officials that they were obliged to sing for the Dutch king, not for one of the lower Indonesian rulers.

Already in the mid-1860s the first Jesuit missionary Metz had had his dreams about a close cooperation between the clergy and the Catholic raja, if only the latter would leave polygamy and show more true Catholicism:

> These abuses [polygamy and heavy drinking] are most deeply rooted within the royal family, and I consider them as the greatest power of the devil in this area to defeat the work of God. If we succeed in truly winning the Raja for God's affairs, then it will not be difficult, with God's Grace, to establish here a new Paraguay.6

Metz was referring here to the theocratic settlements established in Latin America by the Jesuits in the eighteenth century to defend the native population against the evil influence of Portuguese and Spanish colonial rule. It was a missionary dream that could not be realised.

Colonial rule became stronger after the turn of the century and Raja Lorenzo was deposed in 1904 because he had levied heavy taxes and applied death penalties as if he were an independent ruler. In fact he was the last of the rajas who could enjoy still the privileges of indirect rule. His successor was put under severe direct control. The deposition of Lorenzo in 1904 caused much trouble, because several missionaries defended his case, protested against the measures taken against him, and therefore were blamed also for the liberties he had taken. The matter could be settled rather quickly, because in the first

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decades of the twentieth century the missionaries of East Flores no longer depended on a Catholic local ruler, but could base their influence on the system of education that became the backbone for the spread of Catholicism.

The Larantuqueiros, the coastal people of the realm of Larantuka, were found, besides in Larantuka itself, in some other coastal places like Konga and Sikka on the south coast of Flores, in Maumere on the north coast, in Nita, located in the mountainous region between Sikka and Maumere, in Wureh on the island of Adonara. They had never tried to convert the mountain people. There was a kind of symbiosis between the coastal and the mountain traditions. This was already experienced during his first period by Jan Sanders who had troubles in buying wood for his parish house and therefore had to stay in the house of the military commander H. Demmeni who *nota bene* lived with his ‘housemaid’, a former orphan of the truly Catholic orphanage in Semarang. After waiting for several months, on one day Sanders heard a crowd of several mountain people arriving with a large quantity of wood,

But what a disappointment! They went straight past my house, to the hamlet of Lawonama. My disappointment turned into a real insult for me with the sober message from Don Mingo [a brother of Raja André] that the logs were needed to reconstruct the *rumah pemali* of the *orang gunung* [mountain people] in the village.7

The Catholic rulers of Larantuka not only respected the tribal religion of the people in the mountainous inland regions of the island, they also provided a sacred place (*pemali*) for them to be used on the occasion of their visits to the coast. At the inauguration of the new ruler, not only the secular ceremonies were to be used in front of the Resident of Kupang: some Catholic rituals were allowed as well, but pagan rituals were also quite common. In 1887 this was a cause of conflict between the clergy and the colonial officials. The pious Raja Lorenzo had made a grand ceremony of his inauguration. The *pemali* house of Larantuka was no longer used for the occasion but the church was used. The raja took the royal oath before the altar of the Holy Virgin Mary and then laid the sceptre, which had been taken from the coffin of his predecessor the day before, on the altar of the Virgin. The ritual slaughtering of a chicken or goat and the drinking of its blood was abolished. As a compromise to the old traditions in the vicinity of the old temple only the ritual drinking of a glass filled with gunpowder and arak, stirred by a sword, still had to be performed by the chiefs, who took the oath. The old formula of swearing to the Lord of Heaven and the Lord of the Earth caused some problems. Under ‘Lord of the Earth’ the devil was understood, but the formula could not be changed,

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7 Sanders to Bishop Vrancken, 8 May 1861, see Steenbrink 2003–I:100.
because this could have influenced its validity. On this occasion Raja Lorenzo persuaded the chiefs of the mountain villages to embrace Christianity.

From many similar facts it can be seen that Catholicism and traditional religion lived side by side in East Flores, not only as the religion of the coastal people versus mountain people, but even within the personal life of many people. It would take a long time, perhaps even it would never really happen in full, that old traditions would be abolished. But sometimes wonderful conversions took place. Besides the chief and rulers, there was a high official for traditional religion, with the name of Tuan Tanah or ‘Lord of the Land’, called ‘high priest’ by the missionaries. In 1873, after ten years of patient toil by Father Metz the first priest who stayed for a longer period, this most important official of the traditional religion in Larantuka with the Portuguese name of Don André, miraculously repudiated his old practices. The immediate reason for this repudiation was the extraordinary experience of a common woman, who three times received a divine command to return to God. She obeyed, dressed herself in a shroud and lay down with a blessed candle and a rosary in her hands. It seemed as if she was dying and would thus literally ‘return to God,’ because she remained silent and everybody who saw her was convinced that she had passed away. After more than 24 hours she regained consciousness, was very weak and said that she had experienced heaven. She said that she received orders that the rumah pemali should be demolished. She called the Tuan Tanah Don André and told him everything. This man, more than 80 years old, believed her and consulted the priest in order to do things properly. But he was concerned to prevent the mountain people from causing trouble. It was decided that the rumah pemali would remain intact, but in front of it a new chapel in honour of the Saints Philip and Jacob, patrons of Larantuka, would be built as a sign of the power of Christianity. All chiefs openly repudiated the ‘service to the devil’. The Tuan Tanah continued in his repudiation, consented that the ceremonial drum be sent to Holland in 1875, and died as a respected Christian on 24 January 1880, at the reputed age of 98 years.8

A quite peculiar theme in this period of transition from older Portuguese Catholicism, mixed with many tribal traditions, towards nineteenth and twentieth century Dutch Catholicism, is the practice of marriage. There were incidental cases of polygamy most of them with the local elite. Virtually all rajas of Larantuka in this period had several spouses, mostly at different places, as sign of their power over a vast area and in order to strengthen the ties within the elite. Catholic tradition in Larantuka did not give a prominent role to the clergy: not at the great Catholic holidays like Christmas or Easter,

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even less at Sunday mass that was quite uncommon for them to attend. They also seldom celebrated their marriages in church. Because the elite did not give the clergy a role in marriage, the common people were even less accustomed to go to a priest for marriage celebration. The Jesuits who served this region after two diocesan priests had worked here between 1860 and 1863, found a quite ingenious method to accommodate to the reluctance of their flock to have a church marriage. They knew that a priest was not necessary for the validity of a marriage until the Council of Trent (1545–63). They estimated that at that time the Portuguese did not yet rule over this region. Therefore the decisions of Trent never were officially promulgated in these territories, and this made these regulations not applicable for this region. Therefore they considered *kawin kampung* (lit. marriage in the village) according to traditional rules as valid, also for Catholic Canon Law. During the few contacts the priests of Larantuka had with the few priests of Dili, this was a point of debate. The Portuguese and their colonies considered it a matter of fact that the Portuguese had ruled the Moluccas and also southern territories of Indonesia during the later sixteenth century and therefore marriages should be blessed by the parish priest.

The case of marriage shows a crucial theme in the spread of Christianity. Not the number of baptisms, even less the statistics of people going to a Christian school or the weekly church service alone, but the field of marriage is a quite important factor that may show the influence of a new religious tradition on society. Marriage, a central and decisive factor in social and public life, could not easily be brought under the rules of Catholicism. It remained more or less outside the domain of the new religion, not only in the nineteenth but also in the twentieth century. Traditional discussions, the division of wealth between families, the different view on sexuality and on the upbringing of children: it proved that a new religion could be accepted but certainly not in full.⁹

Around 1900 the Catholics in Indonesia counted 50,000 baptised (of a total population of some 40 million). Of these slightly less than half were of European descent. Out of the 26,000 indigenous Catholics two thirds or 18,000 lived in East Flores and West Timor, while there were about 7,000 in Kai and most of all Minahasa, with not yet 1000 in Sumatera (Tanjung Sakti). There were at that time sixteen Dutch sisters (Franciscan Order of Heijthuizen, now called of Semarang) working in boarding schools in Larantuka and Maumere. Ten Jesuit priests worked in NTT, six of them in Larantuka, from where trips to stations like Wureh, Konga and other places were made. Two stayed in Maumere, one in Koting, and one or two in Timor (alternatively in Atapupu and Lahurus).
At the turn of the century about one quarter of the coast line of Flores had come under Dutch colonial rule and was also served by the Catholic mission. The inland villages were not yet missionised, except from some expeditions led by the crown prince Lorenzo in the early 1880s. These missions had led to the sending of some children of inland chiefs to the mission school in Larantuka. The only true inland station was in Koting. This village was close to the village of Nita, one of the remnants of the Portuguese, Malay-speaking cultural communities that also fostered a memory of the Catholic past. The raja of Nita, however, had not much authority in his own region and was not only seen as a weak but also not always a consistent ally of the clergy. Therefore missionary Jesuit A. IJsseldijk took nearby Koting as the location for the only mountain station of the region. Missionary activities were in Malay while only in the early twentieth century some interest started for Lamaholot, the language of the more populous inland regions of East Flores.

Another race between Islam and Christianity: Flores and other parts of NTT 1900–1930s

Until 1650 there was an expansion of the Muslim trading network from Ternate and Makassar towards the southeastern islands, NTT. The Dutch conquest of Malaka in 1641 and of Makassar in 1660 brought a last wave of Portuguese and Muslim traders to this region that was, until that time, not yet dominated by one of the three contending networks: Dutch, Portuguese and Muslim. Between 1650 and 1900 the Dutch managed to control society in this region in a more effective way. There was not much profit to be gained for the Dutch and therefore it took some time before the containment of the Portuguese was completed. For East Flores it was in 1859 that the Dutch flag could be raised. The boundaries in Timor were only fixed in the 1910s. Independent Muslim networks, either of Arab traders or of Buginese and Ternatean captains, survived also until the last decades of the colonial period. On sections of the island of Adonara, much of Solor and Alor, the island of Ende, off the coast of Flores, various coastal settlements in West and North Flores, Waingapu in Sumba, Tual in Kai there was a Muslim trading network that survived the rather incomplete and often very weak Dutch expansion until the beginning of the twentieth century.

With the development of steamers the trade could be intensified. In many places in East Indonesia it was the Arabs who could first buy steamships. They did not spread Islam through great missionary activities, but quite a few local people who did business with them, sooner or later embraced Islam. This caused the expansion of small trading points and the start of some others.

NTT was like most of insular East Indonesia a region of many petty rulers. The Muslim Sultan of Bima claimed sovereignty over West Flores (Manggarai),
but could only maintain some trading posts on the coast. Until the first decades of the twentieth century inland people feared that they would be taken away as slaves. In East Flores the Catholic raja of Larantuka was certainly the most powerful ruler, but he also needed many coalitions, with the inland tribes that only embraced Catholicism in the early decades of the twentieth century and with the Muslim raja of Adonara.

The major harbour of Sumba was Waingapu where the colonial official, the controleur, had his office. There lived very few true Sumbanese in this place. According to the statistics of 1880 there were only 35 Sumbanese, besides 70 Buginese, 70 Endenese and 17 Arabs (to be considered as Muslims) and 300 Sawunese (under Protestant influence since the mid-eighteenth century, more intensively since 1870). The majority of the population in all these islands were still adherents of tribal religion in 1900. This condition could have resulted in another race between Islam and Christianity as had occurred between 1450 and 1650. Especially in this region we can see a strong support of the colonial government for the spread of Christianity. Notwithstanding the military campaigns that imposed effective rule in the first decades of the twentieth century, the corvée labour and the heavy taxes that were imposed by the colonial government, Christianity became the religion of modern life, of progress and prosperity.

Although the number of Muslims in this region was very minimal, they very often were established in the harbour regions, at the best locations for the inter-island trade. Although a small community (in 1905 there were 303 people of Arab descent in the Kupang residency; they grew to 2,688 in 1930), they held a quite prominent social position. In 1927 under colonial rule a hoofd der Arabieren or representative of the Arabs was nominated in Ende (Said Abdoelqadir bin Djadid al-Habsji) and in Sumba (Said Oemar bin Abdoelqadir al-Djoefri). Around 1900 there was a saying in Sumba that “the Endenese have more authority than the Dutch.”

With the growing frequency of boats and with the increasing safety in inland territories after the so-called ‘war of pacification’ (perang pasifikasi even became the common word in Flores for the bloody show of force by Captain H. Christoffel, 1907), Muslim traders also could expand their activity to the population of the more mountainous regions off the coast. Because trade was often related to money-lending, they could influence social life to some extend and make converts in this way. Muslim expansion, however, had two great enemies in this period: the nearly unanimous opinion among colonial officials that Christianity should be promoted and the well-organised, relatively rich Christian missionary organisations with dedicated and qualified personnel.

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As to the first factor, the colonial government: until the rule of Governor General Idenburg (1909–1916) there was very seldom an outspoken Christian as the highest ruler in Indonesia. Official policy of the colonial government always had remained religiously neutral. Some missionaries even complained that the colonial expansion had resulted in a quick spread of Islam, because European missionaries needed special permits to spread their faith, while Muslims could go anywhere. It was the German missionary for Sumatra G.K. Simons who most forcefully propagated this idea. There were indeed colonial officials who feared that Christian subjects would no longer feel inferior to the Western colonisers and claim an equal place. But a majority of colonial officials, even when they did not have much sympathy for Christianity in person, saw a political gain in support given to the Christian mission. The first official after the ‘Pacification’ of Central Flores, A. Couvreur, wrote on 12 February 1908 to Bishop Luypen in Batavia concerning this region, comparing Central and West Flores to the older Catholic regions of East Flores:

[... ] If we do not act fast, Islam will occupy the interior and we will have lost this case forever. This is the more regrettable because until now the mission settled in the economically and also spiritually most backward part of Flores. That is a region with some promise, but it will never be able to keep pace with Manggarai and the region north of Ende. Also the density of the population in these regions is much higher than in Maumere and Larantuka. If we act fast, Flores, with the exception of a few coastal places, can be secured for the Catholic Church, including the fertile Manggarai, until now under the influence of the Muslim Bima, including the whole interior of Ende.\textsuperscript{11}

The colonial government took concrete steps to promote Christianity in NTT in three ways. Firstly, it surrendered the total task of education to the Protestant and Catholic missionary organisations. Secondly, it arranged a total restructuring of society by the constructions of roads and destroying the traditional villages (often not much more than just one long house), while urging people to live in new villages in small family houses. Thirdly, it created larger native political structures, to be surrendered to Catholic or Protestant chiefs. There was in this region not much more than a loose federation of rather independent villages and no common structure for larger communities. The colonial government sent few European officials, and created new structures for larger regions. Below we will give some examples of how this policy also was executed in a way to strengthen the newly converted Christian leaders.

On 23 August 1906 Hendrik Colijn, special advisor for the Outer Islands, arrived in Larantuka as part of his great trip through East Indonesia. Much to the surprise of the missionaries, he communicated the plans of the Dutch

\textsuperscript{11} For references Steenbrink 2007-II:Document 5.
minister of Colonial Affairs, A.W.F. Idenburg, regarding the development of education in the Indies: a broad network of village schools, supported and largely financed by local social networks. In East Indonesia, this system was to be organised by Catholic and Protestant missions. Colijn was enthusiastic about the school and more specifically about the vocational training in Larantuka and praised its carpenters. Father Hoeberechts defended the first goal of the mission schools, the religious education. On this point, Colijn was positive, saying, “Of course, that is your honest aspiration, to make them confident and obedient Christians. You may continue to build Catholic schools, but it should not be an ecclesiastical school.”

This was just the beginning of a grand plan. Colijn elaborated this idea and made another trip to NTT in 1909 to discuss details of the programme with local workers. The Protestant missionaries in Sumba were somewhat hesitant to accept the generous offer of the colonial administration, because the financial obligations would exceed the possibilities of the missionary budget. They were happy to guarantee the availability of the teachers and to control the content of the education, but preferred a direct payment by the local government. On the Catholic side the missionaries were quite keen to show that they were the organisers and supervisors of education. They therefore liked to pay the teachers themselves and receive the money later from the government cashier. Only on 31 March 1913 was a decision published about the subsidies for education to be given under responsibility of the Protestant and Catholic mission in the region of Timor en Onderhoorigheden, or the island of Timor and related districts. The ruling was adapted several times but basically was continued until the end of the colonial period and even somewhat later as well.

Education became the major effort of Protestant and Catholic missions alike. In mid-1941 the Catholics counted 87 priests in NTT, but there were 572 teachers working in 247 Catholic schools with 33,522 pupils. In Sumba there were 69 Protestant schools with some 6,000 pupils. In Timor, Rote, Sawu and Alor there were similar developments. The system worked: there was no rivalry between government schools and mission schools because the latter were the sole players in the whole of NTT. The measure to hand over all responsibility for education to the Christian mission was an important stimulus for the advance of Christianity in this region.

Another major effort to create a society where Christianity would be the dominant religion, was the relocation of people who lived in large family houses (Flores) or in small fortified villages (Sumba), in most cases on the tops of hills or in areas that were difficult to approach, for reasons of safety.

In the island of Flores, a trans-Flores highway was built between 1908 and 1927 from Larantuka to Reo. New villages should be built along this road and people should move from the high mountains to locations close to this village. The traditional houses were considered very unhealthy, with many people in one location, and the animals staying amidst the excrements under the houses where they could not be touched by the sun. Colonial officials urged people to move to new villages. But this also had religious implications. Leaving the large houses would mean that there would be no proper place to keep the drum. In that case the drum would become powerless and the spirits could no longer be invoked. Despite these arguments, people were ordered to start the construction of small houses. Willem Coolhaas, who was the controleur in Ruteng between June 1926 and May 1927, observed the move in his region. Under strict military surveillance people had to plant their new gardens. Although no offerings were made to the spirits, the harvest was better than usual. Coolhaas concluded:

This was, according to Manggarai people, something extraordinary. Apparently the spirits had no power. At least they had to bow for the authority of the Europeans. This was the right moment for the missionaries to continue their work with more success than before. They were able to fill in the empty place caused by the weakness of the spirits. This happened just one year before my arrival. Since then the victory of Christianity has become absolute.  

Manggarai, the utmost western part of Flores, was traditionally ruled by the Sultan of Bima. In 1931 the colonial government created a realm for the new raja of Manggarai and instituted Alexander Baroek, educated at the Catholic mission, as the new ruler of this territory, at the same time cutting the last bonds between Bima and Flores. The missionaries joined the effort to re-write Flores history. The SVD priest Willem van Bekkum (later the Bishop of Ruteng 1951–1972) wrote a series of articles on the history of Manggarai that concentrated not on the foreign influences of Bima and Gowa, but on the inland policies. Although acknowledging the permanent relations with other areas of Indonesia in his historical studies, Van Bekkum emphasised the district of Todo (where Alexander Baroek originated) as the major area of the 38 districts of Manggarai.  

Also in Central Flores the colonial government created larger territories. Here it was the authority of Muslim Ende that was reduced in favour of the new Christians of the interior. The centre of Catholic mission started in Ndona, only some ten kilometres inland. In 1911 the Jesuit priest Henricus Looijmans motivated this move as follows,

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15 Coolhaas 1985:98.
16 W. van Bekkum 1944. Also Maribeth Erb 1987.
My objection is that Ende is only inhabited by Muslims, Arabs and Chinese, and is not fitted to educate sons of pagan chiefs, who could eventually become Catholic teachers. But the government really has decided that a school must be built in Ende. This can only be realised by placing a priest in Ende, who founds his house and a dormitory for sons of chiefs somewhat outside Ende, or at least separated from the school.17

In a later stage the town of Ende, the location of the best harbour for Central Flores, still gained prominence but through a continuing process of fusion of districts with native rulers the Lio region was constructed under Pius Rassi Wangge as the most prominent official. Pius Rassi Wange was born 1892 and baptised in Lela in 1909. He was the son of the pagan chief of Wololele but was sent to the Catholic school in East Flores at the advice of the colonial officials. He stayed in Lela for six years, became a Catholic, and in 1914 he married Johanna Boko a new convert as well. He was installed as raja of the self-governing territory Tanah Kunu V in that same year and his territory was again and again increased to the detriment of the Muslim rulers of the south coast.

Raja Pius showed himself a staunch defender of Catholic interests on several occasions. In March 1922 there was a rapid movement towards Islam in Nggela, inland Central Flores. In one week 24 girls of the school of Nggela converted to Islam, and at the same time stayed out of school. Raja Pius visited the area to inquire about the event and found that one Wawi, a committed Muslim, had suggested to these girls, that they would be freed from the obligation to go to school if they only embraced Islam. The 24 girls followed the advice of Wawi and even went to Ende where they remained in the house of one Haji Ali for some time. Raja Pius returned the girls to their parents and to the Catholic school.

For a long time Raja Pius remained the great supporter of Catholic mission in Central Flores. However, not always could his behaviour be condoned. As a ruler, educated in a feudal family, he was nominated as chief for a much larger territory by the colonial power. He definitely was not a politician of a democratic country. Missionaries also complained that he could easily ‘borrow’ or take away mission property, like building materials from the ever-building Catholic church, without taking the trouble of paying for the things he took.

In mission history Raja Pius Rassi Wange of Ende-Lio sometimes is compared to that other great figure of hope and disappointment, Lorenzo II of Larantuka. Similarly the rule of Raja Pius ended in a dramatic way. After a long series of minor incidents in the 1920s and 1930s, more serious complaints

17 Steenbrink 2007–II:100.
against Raja Pius, including accusation of several murders, started in the late 1930s. In 1940 he was called to Kupang, where he was put on trial. He was deposed as raja of Lio in early 1941 and condemned to exile in Kupang for a period of ten years. A large number of Kapitan from the Lio region were punished in a similar way. At the start of the Japanese occupation Raja Pius managed to come back to Flores and gained a position close to the Japanese administration. This made it possible for him (in the words of a European priest) “to resume his old method to extort the population.” On 14 April 1947 he was condemned to death and executed in Kupang.\footnote{Steenbrink 2007–II:107–109.}

Another colourful figure in this development was Mbaki Mbani, raja of Ndona, the place, still pagan in the 1910s, where the Catholic mission would build its great compound. After some hesitations, Mbaki Mbani embraced Islam in 1918. The missionaries blamed the Dutch official military commander or Gezaghebber B. van Suchtelen for this move. They related this development also to a rivalry between Van Suchtelen and his superior, the outspoken Catholic A. Hens, controleur, 1910–1913, and assistant-resident of Ende 1913–1916. Van Suchtelen had for several years directed the son of Mbaki Mbani in a somewhat disperse, but definitely not Catholic direction. Gezaghebber Van Suchtelen sent Mbaki Bani’s son, later known as Petrus Ngadji (also Ngatji), to the neutral government school of Kupang. Later, controleur Hens sent him to the Catholic school of Lela, where he was baptised on 27 August 1914. Mbaki Bani, still hesitating between the Christian and Muslim influences, did not agree to send him to Woloan for further education because he did not like to push him closer to Catholicism. Thereupon Petrus Ngadji returned to Ndona before completing his course in Lela, in 1915. In December 1916 his fiancée Tipoe was sent to the sisters in Larantuka (where she only met one girl who could speak Lionese, Malay and Lamaholot being the common languages in Larantuka). The sisters praised her for her piety, but there was never to be blessed a Catholic marriage between the two. Van Suchtelen took Petrus Ngadji with him on a trip to Java in 1916.\footnote{Van Suchtelen 1921:85. For this section Steenbrink 2007–II:102–103.} In January 1918 Mbaki Bani, after toying for some time with the idea of becoming a Protestant (because the Dutch Queen Wilhelmina was a Protestant),\footnote{Piet Noyen, letter to Luypen, 22 July 1915, in Steenbrink 2007–II:103. Noyen characterises here Mbaki Bani as “shrewd, clever but stubborn.”} opted for Islam, and in 1919 his son was circumcised, although there is no clear evidence that Petrus Ngadji ever fully converted to Islam. In the later political development his position was overruled by the extension of power given to Pius Rassi Wange in Central Flores.
In the 1930s the colonial government had to cut its expenses. In the double move of saving money and implementing the ideal of self-governing regions, the native ruler of Sikka, Raja Don Thomas da Silva, installed in his function in 1921, became a fully independent ruler and colonial official in June 1932 as a rare example of *ontvoogding* or ‘manumission’. This implied that he had no longer a European superior but was nominated as the highest official in his district. In 1929 the realm of Don Thomas had already been extended to include the former district of KangaE after its childless Muslim ruler had died. This was again a move towards a containment of the spread of Muslim influence, this time from the north coast because KangaE was a northern district, east of Maumere.

For the islands of Sumba and Timor the threat of Islam was much less urgently felt. For the islands of Solor, Adonara, Lomblen and Alor, there was already a more or less fixed differentiation of religions. Islam was firmly settled in many villages. Most of the pagan villages in this region, however, accepted Christianity. As in the case of the Moluccas there are theories about an ancient duality of society. The island of Adonara, to give just one example, was divided in a patchwork style between the Muslim raja of Adonara and the Catholic raja of Larantuka. Until 1900 the Larantuka villages were all pagan and they only later embraced Catholicism. They did not opt for Islam in a period when the global religions established their hegemony in this region.

*The Catholic mission as a partner in the development of Flores as a modernizing late colonial society: 1900–1942*

The quick colonial expansion in Flores culminating in the War of Pacification of 1907 opened unexpected possibilities for the Catholic Mission, especially through the total offer of education in 1913. The Dutch Jesuits who had provided mission personnel to the whole of Indonesia since 1859, did not feel capable of offering enough people for a true expansion. Therefore they discussed the transfer of sections of the great mission territory to other missionary orders that were blossoming in Europe in the early decades of the 20th century. After the relocation of Kai, Tanimbar and Papua to the MSC in 1902, Kalimantan (1905) and Sumatra (1911 both to the Capuchin Friars), in 1913 the islands of NTT were designated to the SVD (Societas Verbi Divini or Society of the Divine Word), a missionary society of German origin with its headquarters in Steijl, the Netherlands. Initially it was only Timor that was handed over, but soon the whole of the NTT, or the Lesser Sunda Islands were included in the new apostolic vicariate. The SVD could take over responsibility in Timor in 1913 and started in Ende in 1914. Ende and not Larantuka was taken as the centre of the mission because here the government also took its major seat. Besides, there was the threat of the expansion of Islam.
In 1914, the Prefect of the Flores mission, Piet Noyen wrote bluntly to retired missionary Maria Joseph Claessens in the Netherlands, “The construction of the roads has been finished now, and the conditions in the interior are quite safe. The hajis (returned pilgrims from Mecca) will spare no costs or energy to plant the poison of their doctrine on the mountains. Therefore Ende has to become the main station of the mission.” In other correspondence, military terminology was used and it was stated that Ende would be ‘occupied’ (besetzen) in 1915.\(^\text{21}\)

Due to lack of money and personnel during the World War I in Europe (1914–1918), the SVD could not execute their ambitious plans in the 1910s. Initially only Indonesian teachers were sent to Central and West Flores. They opened for the first time in history schools where Malay was the language of simple instruction. Most of these school teachers were graduates from the school of Larantuka, who had to learn the local languages. These must have been very daring and enterprising people, who could establish a new tradition, keep a first generation of children in schools, teach them the new language of Malay and lead many of them to the new religious tradition of Catholicism. With the strong encouragement of the colonial officers, schools were established very quickly at Bajawa and Boawae in 1911 and 1912 respectively, followed by Kotta in 1914, Sawu and Mbai in 1916 and Raja in 1917.\(^\text{22}\) This number had grown to 13 in 1920 and some 50 in 1942 for the new region of Central Flores alone.\(^\text{23}\)

The transfer of the mission from the Jesuits to the SVD order had to be postponed until the period after World War I. This last phase turned into a great tragedy. In December 1918 East Flores was struck by the Spanish influenza, which cost the lives of four missionaries, three teachers, twenty pupils of the boarding school of Larantuka, besides many common people. Among the priests was the last Jesuit priest of Larantuka, Arnold van der Velden, who died on 18 December 1918, soon followed by SVD brother Vincentius Meekes and two SVD priests Simon Karsten and Wilhelm Baack. The last Jesuits, four priests and two lay brothers who served the parish of Maumere and Sikka, left in early 1920.

The first SVD leader of the NTT mission was Piet Noyen, a former missionary in China (1893–1909). He was a very ambitious and dynamic person who wrote hundreds of letters to Europe, asking for more personnel and money. Noyen broke away from the affection for the Portuguese heritage in East Flores as the basis for the expansion of Catholicism. He wanted a mission concentrating on the youth, educated in mission schools. Therefore he

\(^{21}\) Steenbrink 2007–II:87.
\(^{22}\) L. Lame Uran 1984:126.
established his main office in Ndona, close to Ende. He died on 24 February 1921 in Steijl, the Netherlands, while on sick-leave and just before his ordination as bishop.

His successor was Arnold Verstraelen, born 1882 in the Netherlands and between 1907 and 1912 a missionary in the German colonial territory of Togo, West Africa. From 1913 until 1922 he was the leader (and for several years the only priest) in the Timor mission. He was the first to see the results of the great financial subsidies for education from the side of the colonial government. He died in 1932 because of a car accident on the new Flores ‘highway.’ A horse, not yet accustomed to the sound of cars, panicked and the bishop’s driver could not control the car either. In the decade of the pastoral leadership of Verstraelen the number of schools rose from 137 to 287 and the number of baptised from 60,000 to more than 200,000. The number of chapels and churches for Flores increased from 96 to 333. Therefore we may consider this as the decisive decade for the future character of Flores society and culture.

Verstraelen was succeeded by Henricus Leven born in Lank, Germany, in 1883. He worked between 1911 and 1914 in Togo. After the death of Verstraelen, the Vatican wanted to nominate Leven, but the colonial government asked that he should accept Dutch citizenship, before being formally nominated and ordained: the administration accepted German missionaries in Protestant and Catholic missions, but in this period preferred Dutch citizens as their leaders. Henricus Leven was considered somewhat rigid and bureaucratic after his lively and dynamic predecessors and sometimes even labelled as ‘Prussian,’ a term, which implied impersonal dedication and discipline. He guided the mission through the period of economic decline in the 1930s. In the field of marriage where Flores customs were so different from the basic Catholic rules, while many newly baptised were not prepared to follow the formal rules of their new religion he formulated a strategy at the 1935 Ndona synod of recognizing customary marriages as legal. This gave room for a development of the church without the danger of frequent excommunications and estrangement.

In 1926 a first minor seminary, at high school level, was started that soon developed into a grand compound in Todabelu, in the cool highlands of Ngada. Its pupils were mostly young teachers with several years of experience in schools. The first candidates for the priesthood continued their study at the major seminary that was opened in Ledalero, south of Maumere, in 1937. The harvest was still small: out of the 176 students at the minor seminary who started their studies in 1926, only 29 or 16% were ordained to priesthood. Until the 1950s the seminary was the only educational institution after primary school. About one fourth of the ex-seminarians opted for a position as schoolteacher, about the same number found a position in the civil administration. When in 1946 the Parliament of East Indonesia was convened in Makassar,
one of the three deputies from Flores was a Catholic priest, educated at the Todabelu-Ledalero seminaries. One of the deputies of Timor had the same background. In 1950 three Flores students were enrolled in academic studies, all three graduates from the minor seminary. They were the first Florenese to finish academic studies, only some ten years after the first priests finished their study of theology.\textsuperscript{24} On 28 January 1941 the first two priests were ordained, followed by two more on 15 August 1942. During the Japanese occupation the buildings of Ledalero were confiscated by the Japanese army, but education continued in Todabelu, where on 16 September 1945 seven priests were ordained. Most of them had not yet finished their studies, but the clergy considered it necessary to use them in this period of turmoil and shortage of priests. They were all members of the SVD order and as such the equals of the European priests.

Education for nuns started on a much more modest scale. The first initiatives in the 1920s were halted because the clergy deemed it not yet suitable to open the possibility for Flores girls to become religious sisters. In 1933 a first proper training started for seven sisters in the parish house of Jopu, East Lio. It was seen as improper to mix the Indonesian and European sisters in one order. Besides, it was official Vatican policy at that time that local orders should be established. A new order was therefore created for them, the Congregation of the Sisters of the Imitation of Jesus (CIJ, Serikat Suster-suster Pengikut Yesus). In 1937 the first five sisters took the vow. In 1940 the young congregation had already 16 members. In 2001 they counted 344 sisters. Most of them worked in the archdiocese of Ende, but quite a few in East Timor, some in Jakarta and Kupang.\textsuperscript{25}

During the Japanese occupation the bishop and a small number of priests and nuns were allowed to continue their work. From 30 August 1943 the Bishop of Nagasaki, Paulus Yamaguchi, the Apostolic Administrator of Hiroshima, Aloysius Ogihara, and two Japanese diocesan priests arrived in Ende to work in NTT. They learned Malay and were very helpful in the continuation of pastoral work and of the organisation of the Catholic mission. They could not annihilate the effects of the Japanese occupation but in Flores and Timor the situation was, at least for clergy and Catholic activities, much better than in other regions. Ogihara returned to Japan in early 1945, the two diocesan priests after the capitulation on 15 August 1945, while Bishop Yamaguchi stayed until 8 September 1945. Their presence was also a proof of the important role of Catholicism in Flores society since the beginning of the twentieth century.

\textsuperscript{24} A very detailed history of the seminaries in Frans Cornelissen 1978; also Cornelissen 1951:203–212.

\textsuperscript{25} Buku Petunjuk 2001:49–72.
Flores Catholicism in the period 1950–2000

During the final fifty years of the twentieth century Flores made a rapid transition from an outlying island of little economic or political consequence to become an integral part of a national and regional market through mass migration, a globalising economy and, since the 1960s, the impact of telecommunications. Within this fast-moving drama lies the story of the transition from a mission receiving to a mission sending church; the transformation of a foreign-run SVD mission to a complex local church complete with indigenous clergy, active laity and numerous pastoral institutions of consultation and apostolic outreach. But, however grand the narrative, there is no single story; there are many streams and they do not all run in the same direction. There are tales of success and its concomitant dangers, of prophecy and compromise. Perhaps the defining narrative is that of the rarely mentioned massacre of February-May 1966.

In 1950 over 60% of all Indonesian Catholics lived in East Nusa Tenggara (NTT), a majority of them on Flores. This had slipped to 53% by 1961 and to 36.7% by 1994. The church was expanding elsewhere and there was little left to baptise on Flores but children of the baptised. By 1967 some 68.5% of the Florenese were Catholic, 705,819 out of a population of 1,027,602; another 20% were Muslim, leaving just 11.5% ‘others’, a scattering of non-Florenese Protestants and a few pockets of traditional religion.26

This was a dramatic increase from the 292,650 baptised of 1940 to 1,420,000 fifty years later. Between 1940 and 1990 the Catholics of Ende diocese increased fourfold, those of Larantuka threefold and those of Ruteng sevenfold, while the average increase nation-wide was tenfold.27 In 1985 some 31.8% of Indonesian Catholics were ethnic Florenese.

In 1950 the effects of the Japanese occupation and war in Europe were still felt for only 115 of the SVD priests and 31 of the brothers working in Nusa Tenggara in 1940 could continue after the occupation.28 As a consequence many of the extensive parishes on Flores were without a resident priest in the early 1950s. For example in the Larantuka deanery five of its 14 parishes and in Lembata two of its 8 parishes were vacat.29 However, the guru agama

26 If we compare these statistics and those below, all of which come from church sources, with those of the governmental Badan Pusat Statistik (BPS), which uses projections based on the 10–yearly national census, we find certain discrepancies; however, basic trends remain unaltered. Apart from difficulties in collecting data, political and religious sensitivity also influence the figures. These statistics should, therefore, be taken as indicative rather than as strictly factual.


29 Jebarus 2002.
(village catechists) and guru sekolah (school-teachers) who had led the church during the Japanese occupation soon reverted to their subsidiary role. Meanwhile SVD numbers grew rapidly from 195 missioners in 1950 to 252 in 1960 and 323 in 1966. Since the 1970s the numbers of missioners decreased as pastoral work was gradually taken over by the diocesan clergy who came to more than 250 by the end of the century. In the year 2000 there were still 308 SVD priests and brothers on Flores of whom 265 were Indonesian and just 43 expatriates coming from eight countries of which only 12 were under the age of 65. These figures do not include the 250 SVD Indonesians (including Timorese, Javanese and Balinese) working overseas.

In the mid-1960s there were already 94 Florenese and Timorese-born priests on Flores out of a total of 239 (39%). There were also some 240 Indonesian religious brothers and sisters out of 416 (57%). Meanwhile there were 150 seminarians at Ledalero and Ritapiret major seminaries and 668 students in the minor seminaries of Todabelu, Hokeng and Kisol. One hundred and nine parishes were found throughout the island with 1,003 churches and chapels. These were being run by 2,607 village catechists and 3,348 schoolteachers. Parishes had established 88 centres of Catholic action, 147 branches of Our Lady’s Sodality (Kongregasi Maria) and 54 presidia of the Legio Mariae. If in 1950 no Florenese had yet obtained a university degree apart from clergy, by 1967 more than 50 were studying at universities overseas, sponsored by the SVD.30

Indonesianisation

After the nationalisation of Dutch interests by Soekarno in 1957 and the prohibition of foreigners teaching, there was uncertainty regarding the presence of expatriates, in particular the Dutch. Florenese seminarians and clergy were sent to study overseas in order to take over teaching and the running of the school foundations. In 1948 Donatus Djagom (b. 1919, archbishop of Ende 1969–1996), Paul Sani (1924–1972, bishop of Denpasar 1961–1972) and Stefanus Kopong Keda (1924–2001)31 were the first seminarians to complete their theological studies in the Netherlands; Piet Muda (1914–1990) and Lambert Lame Uran (1917–2004) were the first priests sent to Europe to qualify in teaching and education.

While no more Dutch missioners were allowed into the country, most expatriates were permitted to stay. Twenty-five years later, in 1978, two decisions of the Minister of Religious Affairs (Nos. 70 & 77) laid down a strict

31 Kopong Keda, an ardent nationalist, was expelled from the SVD for being kepala batu (pig-headed) who took inculturation way beyond canonical norms.
timetable for the handing over of all work being undertaken by foreign personnel and for all overseas finance to be channelled through the Department. Emergency meetings were held between the bishops of Nusa Tenggara and the governor in Kupang and the instruction was put on hold. However, its impact was immense: an all-out effort was made to increase numbers of local clergy, religious brothers and sisters as well as catechists and other pastoral workers (awamisasi). Numbers of seminarians climbed from annual intakes of 20 SVDs, and a similar number of diocesan seminarians, to peaks of well over a hundred. Ledalero became one of the largest seminaries in the world. By 1990 some 92% of priests and religious working in Flores were Indonesians. By the year 2000 church personnel from Flores, men and women, were working in 40 countries overseas.

Not everyone might concur that the speedy baptism of Flores was ‘spectacular’. The ethnic groups of Flores held little resistance towards a centrally organised, global religion. Islam was embedded in parts of East Flores and Ende, but although the Muslim Sultanates of Bima and Gowa controlled much of West Flores until the twentieth century, Islam was not propagated in that area; in any event Islam in Manggarai was associated with slavery. The Islamic strongholds in East and Central Flores are precisely where there was Portuguese influence and the presence of Catholic communities over the centuries. Given the numbers of church personnel (one missionary per 2,190 parishioners in 1967), the times (national awakening to the outside world) and the strategy (schools, clinics, guru agama), perhaps the baptism of the island could be seen as ‘inevitable’.

In the sixteenth century Portuguese Dominicans claimed the Florenese were gens candida sed ruda—pious but backward. Early in the twentieth century Dutch Divine Word Missionary Arnold Verstraelen (1882–1932) declared they were naturaliter christiana. As the century drew to an end what type of church were they creating?

**Church, state and politics: A slow transition to independence and democracy, 1949–1955**

Half way through the twentieth century Java was still a long way from Flores. The proclamation of independence in Jakarta in August 1945 found little resonance on this largely Catholic isle. No word of the 1945–1949 nationalists’ struggle in Java gains an entry in the Catholic bi-weekly *Bentara* (1948–1959) edited by the moderate nationalist SVD Adrianus Conterius (1913–1984). Issue by issue the federalist policy of the Dutch authorities and their *Negara Indonesia Timur* (NIT) was quietly expounded. The entire edition of 1st September

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32 Boelaars 2005:283.
1948 celebrated the golden jubilee (1898–1948) of ‘our queen Wilhelmina.’ Political talk was prohibited at Ledalero major seminary until the Round Table Conference in Den Hague made independence inevitable in late 1949.

Nonetheless, de facto, the Catholic Church remained an important player in political manoeuvring. In December 1945 the Dutch reoccupied Nusa Tenggara and the following year Dr. H.J. van Mook of the Netherlands Indies Civil Administration (NICA) began organising the establishment of the Negara Indonesia Timur (NIT) with Makassar as its capital. The rajas of Eastern Indonesia (Groote Oost) were invited to the 15 July 1946 Malino (South Sulawesi) Constitutional Conference. In November of the same year the nine rajas of Flores (six Catholic, three Muslim)\(^33\) agreed to form a council (Flores Federasi) with Don J. Thomas Ximenes da Silva of Sikka (1895–1954) as chairman. When Flores became a single administrative unit, Don Thomas was chosen by the NIT prime minister as the first District Head (May 1949–December 1951).

Also in November 1946 representatives were chosen to attend the Muktamar Denpasar in December, which set up the Negara Indonesia Timur (the State of East Indonesia). Delegates had to have graduated from secondary school, which made it inevitable that only teachers and clergy from Flores could be included; delegates were chosen only by those who had graduated from three years primary school (Vervolgschool, VVS) which effectively disenfranchised a majority of Florenese, especially women. Dr. Jan Raats SVD (1912–1984) represented the council of rajas while the two elected delegates were Adrianus Conterius SVD and an alumnus from the teacher training school, Louis E.Monteiro.\(^34\) Gabriel Manek SVD (1913–1989) represented Timor. Ide Anak Agung Gde Agung of Bali and canon lawyer Jan Raats of Ledalero drew up the NIT constitution.\(^35\)

Adrianus Conterius SVD maintained a federalist standpoint until his death in 1984. Florenese politicians were not simply toeing the Dutch line; they were convinced that a federation, rather than a unitary state, would be economically more advantageous to Flores. Concern with the Muslim majority in Java and Sumatra and uncertainty about the Protestant majority in Timor and Sumba also played a part in their calculations.

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\(^{33}\) The Sinar Sembilan (nine lights) were the princes of Adonara, Larantuka, Sikka, Lio, Ende, Nagekeo, Ngada, Riung and Manggarai. The Dutch authorities, with active collusion by the church, manipulated Sikka into a prominence, which did not exist in the more original, dispersed system of Florenese governance.

\(^{34}\) Monteiro in: Liliweri 1984:122–124.

\(^{35}\) Jan Raats SVD proposed “een regionale en landencoalitie in plaats van een partijenstelsel.” (SVD Nieuws, Teteringen, No. 13, December 1946). When the unitary state was proclaimed on 17th August 1950, Raats was no longer welcome in Indonesia. For many years he taught history at San Carlos University in Cebu, Philippines before retiring to Teteringen in the Netherlands.
Most Florenese Catholics felt safe under the leadership of Soekarno who visited Flores twice (Maumere 1950; Ende 1954); the president was received like a favourite son returning home (*pulang kampung*). While many Dutch clergy had their misgivings with Soekarno’s nationalistic and leftwing rhetoric, the people were convinced that as he had been exiled in Ende by the Dutch (1935–1938), Soekarno would never challenge the position of the Catholic Church.

Flores produced a crop of young Catholic politicians who later played their part on the national stage. In 1955 V.B. da Costa (Pak Sentis) was appointed to the *Konstituante*, which was tasked (unsuccessfully) to write a definitive national constitution. He was a member of the national parliament since 1964 and was continuously re-elected until the *reformasi* election of 1999, bowing out in 2004. Frans Seda, an economist of note sponsored for higher studies in Tilburg, the Netherlands, by the SVD, was a cabinet minister under both Soekarno and Soeharto: minister of plantations (1964–1966), agriculture (1966), finance (1966–1968) and communications (1968–1973). Ben Mang Reng Say crowned a political career in *Partai Katolik* and parliament as a diplomat overseas.

Swept along by the momentum of nation-building inspired by Soekarno and the organic model of church proposed by Pius XII, the 1950s and early 1960s were the heyday of Catholic mass organisations such as *Partai Katolik* (political party), PMKRI (student association), *Wanita Katolik* (Catholic women’s association), *Ikatan Petani Pancasila* (farmers’ association), *Ikatan Buruh Pancasila* (blue-collar worker association) and *Persatuan Guru Katolik* (PGK, teachers association). These organisations were promoted in the parishes, each with its clerical moderator; they ensured that the church was organisationally present in every public and professional sector.

*The election of 1955 and its aftermath*

The first elections, both district and national, in the independent republic were held in 1955. Local elections were for a District Representative Council (DPD); Flores was a single administrative district until 1958. Although six political parties took part—*Masyumi* (Islamic party), PNI (Soekarno’s nationalist party), PKI (communist), PS (socialist) and the Protestant *Parkindo* party, in fact there was negligible competition for the *Partai Katolik*. There was no political campaign as such for few knew what ‘politics’ was. Politics was the concern of the intelligentsia and a few politicians who were dependant on the

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36 Raja Thomas da Silva died of a heart attack while in Ende for the visit of Soekarno in May 1954.
church hierarchy. Under the command of the clergy\textsuperscript{37} the Partai Katolik won overwhelmingly. Only those close to the clergy had any chance of being chosen as a candidate. Large pictures of kontas (Marian rosaries) were displayed in front of some churches such as in Nele, Maumere, where a slogan announced in the local tongue, “Mother’s rosary is my rosary.”

As political developments in Java heated up leading to the proclamation of guided democracy by Soekarno in August 1959, so clergy and their lay politicians, who came from the ranks of teachers and ex-seminarians, galvanised support under the slogans pro ecclesia et patria (Latin: ‘for church and nation’) and 100\% orang Katolik, 100\% orang Indonesia. Catholic social teaching was summed up in the words salus populi suprema lex (again Latin: ‘the well-being of all people is the highest law’) although, in practice, Catholic politicians were expected to represent their constituents, namely the Catholics of Flores. Religiously based political parties were inherently sectarian.

Mass adherence to the Partai Katolik consolidated the hegemony of those who were brought into prominence by the Dutch and the colonial church; in Flores this inevitably favoured a particular ethnic group. Those outside the establishment were at a considerable political disadvantage and had trouble finding an alternative political home without being ostracised by the clergy; such ostracism had serious socio-economic consequences. These ‘dissidents’ joined Soekarno’s PNI, calling it PNI Katolik, or joined the communist PKI. This was not an ideological choice but rather a political option and an economic preference by those marginalised by the political/ecclesial/ethnic establishment. This helps to explain, but not excuse, the massacre of 1966.

\textit{The tragic betrayal of 1966}

There is almost total silence about the massacre of ‘suspected communists’ in early 1966, and yet this brutal tragedy is emblematic of the Florenese church and the society in which it is embedded. In February 1966 the army cut off communications between the five kabupaten of Flores and then called on a few willing civil servants and teachers, as well as the services of Catholic youth, to ‘clean up the island.’ One of the very few written records to date is that of Paul Webb,\textsuperscript{38} although he misses the most brutal massacre of them all that in Maumere where between 800 and 2,000 people, almost all baptised Catholics, lost their lives.\textsuperscript{39} The root problem was ethnic politics. The Partai

\textsuperscript{37} The largest circulation daily, Kompas, was jokingly known as ‘komando pastor.’ See chapter twenty-one for this Catholic newspaper.

\textsuperscript{38} Paul Webb 1986b.

\textsuperscript{39} A fairly detailed account of the massacre in Maumere, complete with political and ethnic background, is found in an anonymous manuscript dated 1974. The author was probably one of the Catholic youth co-opted by the military. The narrative begins in 1950 and ends in 1968.
Katolik continued the pre-independence hegemony of the raja-dom of Sikka while those from the centre and east of the kabupaten joined the only available alternatives, PNI and PKI. To counter this development, in early 1963 Hendrik Djawa (1928–1996), parish priest of Maumere, formed Catholic youth groups in each parish, some 25 branches in all. For the next two years the youth demonstrated and counter-demonstrated on every available issue such as the confrontation with Malaysia (ganyang Malaysia). Following on the 30 September 1965 incident in Jakarta, local army commanders launched KOMOP, Operational Command for the Restoration of Peace and Security. This organised slaughter took place in Flores between February and May 1966. In Maumere Catholic youth leaders, intimidated and terrified of being slaughtered themselves, took part in the mass murder. Some villages, like that of Keut, were almost totally wiped out; men, women and children were brought into town by truck, hacked down and dumped in mass graves near Wairklau in the mission coconut plantation.

During the crucial months of February to May there was no ruling from church authorities. Only one young diocesan priest, Yosef Frederikus Pede da Lopez (b. 1936), had the courage to protest the arrest and imminent slaughter of 45 villagers from Wolokoli. Only two priests in Maumere, Clemens Pareira (1926–1970) and Frans Cornelissen SVD (1894–1983), were brave enough to administer the sacraments to those condemned by the kangaroo courts. After the local army commander threatened Pede da Lopez in writing, the young Sikkanese priest was whisked away to Ritapiret seminary and then to the bishop’s house in Ndona. Bishop Gabriel Manek, on 28 April 1966, sent a letter to the Dean of Maumere in which he defended the stand of the three priests.40

Ende also saw open brutality. Hundreds of people were herded onto the town green, including religious sisters and brothers, and forced to watch the killings; anyone who wept, or showed any other sign of ‘weakness,’ was accused of being a ‘fellow traveller.’ In Bajawa killings were few; the diocesan youth moderator, Isaak Dura (later bishop of Sintang, Kalimantan, 1977–1996) forbade Catholic youth to take part.41 This, and a few similar incidents, indicates that a strong stand by the church might well have halted, or at least

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41 The then dean of Bajawa, Adriaan Wetzer SVD (b. 1924), notes in his memoir, “Everywhere terrible things occurred. Many were killed without due process based on suspicion alone without the intervention of the district government who themselves were afraid. We could only give the sacraments to those held awaiting a decision on their fate. Everything was in the hands of the army in Ende.” (Wetzer 2000:32–33). He writes more as an onlooker rather than the one responsible for the deanery.
diminished, the slaughter. Minority groups such as Protestants (Parkindo) and Muslims (NU) were recruited into digging graves; every faction was allocated a task; nobody was left free to report. Nevertheless, many lives were saved by the quick distribution of Partai Katolik membership cards used as ‘material proof’ that one was not a communist.

This ethnically fired political massacre involved the Catholic youth organisation while most clergy stood aside as silent bystanders. The population was cowered for over twenty years; voices for justice remained mute. A tamed church was later co-opted as ‘partner in development.’ This tragedy, erased from the recorded memory of both church and state, defined more than any other incident the character the church would maintain for the rest of the century. Over thirty years later in 1999, after the fall of Soeharto, a Nusa Tenggara pastoral consultation at Ledalero seminary called for the recording of a memoria passionis, public repentance and the reburial of the dead.\footnote{Prior 2003:125–151.}

When the resolutions of the consultation reached the international press, church leaders in Jakarta and Ende voiced immediate apprehension. And so, as the century closed the church was not yet ready to admit the story of the tragic betrayal of its own defenceless members, or face the truth with remorse.

\textit{Soeharto’s New Order: partners in development}

From 1973 onwards all civil servants and teachers were obliged to join Soeharto’s Golkar party. These were the very people running the Catholic schools and parish councils. It was very apparent that there was a comfortable fit between the hierarchical, hegemonic church of Flores and the authoritarian regime of Soeharto. Restrictions on liberty already commonplace in church organisations were readily accepted in the institutions of the New Order. In practice parish policy dovetailed into government planning. Not infrequently the priest visited outlying villages together with local government officials, proclaiming unity between the development of the spiritual and material dimensions of life. Tensions between bishops and bupatis were over power and influence not ideology or direction, let alone human rights. Not a murmur was heard as the tragedy unfolded in Timor Leste from the invasion of December 1975 until the brutal withdrawal in September 1999. The Catholic mass organisations of the 1950s and 1960s were disbanded; Catholic youth now concentrated upon choirs, sport and picnics.

The first general election of Soeharto was held in 1971. The Golkar party won in West and East Flores through the use of government employees (teachers and petty civil servants) as well as police and army intervention. Church leaders were intimidated. One example, “the tyres of the jeep being used by
bishop Anton Thijssen were slashed with a razor, another jeep used by leaders of the Partai Katolik was stoned. The youth group was led by Hendrik Fernandez, later Governor of the Province (1988–1993). In Maumere the Partai Katolik still came out on top although the Kangä area, worst hit by the 1966 massacre, voted 100% Golkar. National politicians like Frans Seda came for the campaign; Seda walked through an enormous paper rosary, thus piercing it (tusuk) with his body as the people were expected to pierce their voting cards. However, within two years the Catholic Party was absorbed into the Democratic Party (PDI) with hardly a murmur and became a permanently junior partner to the regime. The elections of 1977, 1982, 1987, 1992 and 1997 went off as planned. Only after the monetary crisis of 1997 and the student agitation of 1997–1998 leading to the resignation of Soeharto on 21st May 1998, were alternative voices listened to. Of the ‘generation of ‘66,’ only Chris Siner Key Timu consistently spoke with a social conscience. He was the only Florenese member of the high level Petisi 50 Working Group sponsored by retired generals Ali Sadikin and Azis Saleh which, from May 1980 onwards, regularly called on the national parliament to return to the original ideals of the New Order and democratise the regime (KKPL 1991–1995). Quietly the public rights of this group were withdrawn: they were not quoted in the press or invited to public functions or allowed to travel overseas: burgerlijk dood—dead in the eyes of the law.

**A Friday to be remembered**

Very occasionally cracks in the church-government partnership became visible. One example is the church reaction to the beating up of a section of Maumere town by the army on 27th March 1993; one died (a Muslim visitor from Adonara), over 40 were wounded. Local officials colluded with the army to silence the media. Tensions ran high as rumour fed on rumour and men began to sharpen their machetes to defend their families. Ten days later Good Friday services in Maumere town were cancelled and replaced by a single ‘Stations of the Cross, Stations of Justice.’ Over five thousand processed through town in this updated four hundred year old Portuguese tradition. John’s passion narrative was divided into 12 stations and proclaimed as a word of truth and forgiveness to banish fear and reassert dignity. Jesus was condemned to death outside the army barracks, Pilate washed his hands outside the bupati’s residence and Jesus fell outside the police station. Despite the presence of armed troops newly arrived from atrocities in Timor Leste, and despite the impossibility of asserting justice through the courts, tensions eased as the facts were openly stated in the concluding homily when a massive

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cross was erected at the spot where the Muslim had been beaten to death. For five hours Maumere glimpsed a gaudium et spes church of human rights wedded to popular Catholicism, a contrast to the devotional-institutional church willingly co-opted into supporting an authoritarian state.44

The rise of social unrest with religious and ethnic implications

From April 1990 until November 1995 a series of 25 incidents of host desecration took place on feast days at major churches in East Nusa Tenggara.45 Although the most sacred symbol of the Catholic tradition was being defiled, in subsequent court cases judges handed down minimal sentences. These cases were witnessed by up to a thousand onlookers singing rousing hymns such as ‘Onward Christian Soldiers.’ As the desecrations continued so emotions boiled. In 1994–1995 three of the five courthouses and one prosecutor’s office were ransacked after unsatisfactory trials: Ruteng in 1994, Ende on 25th April 1994 and Maumere on 28th April 1995; two of the five market places were burnt down. Politically silenced, culturally marginalised, economically stagnant, the Florenese had only the church to support their dignity and identity. Ethnic-religious sentiments came to the fore and finally suspected perpetrators were simply murdered on the spot as happened in the cathedral parishes of Ende (Easter Season, 25th April 1994), Larantuka (Corpus Christi, 11th June 1995) and Atambua, West Timor (Advent, 26th November 1995). Agent provocateurs attempting to sway emotional crowds into ransacking mosques in Flores never succeeded, but the crowds did wreck and burn symbols of economic hegemony (shops of the non-Florenese and markets dominated by outsiders) and symbols of unjust law enforcement (three courthouses and the Maumere police station). Two weeks after the murder at Ende Cathedral the six bishops of Flores, Timor and Sumba published a letter urging restraint and called on the government to enforce the rule of law.46 In Ende prominent laity threatened to withdraw support for any priest who called for a non-violent response and an alternative analysis. Nevertheless, by the end of the decade a growing number had concluded that ‘horizontal’ conflicts had been instigated in order

46 Entitled “Pernyataan Umat Katolik Nusa Tenggara Timur tentang Pencemaran Hostia Kudus dan Sakral...” dated 10–05–1994 and published in the daily Pos Kupang and the weekly SKM Dian (3 Juni 1994). The letter was drafted by the provincial government and then given to the individual bishops to sign. The primordialism of the hierarchy coincided with the panic of the government. A week after the murder at Larantuka Cathedral a meeting was held in Ledalero (19–20 June 1995) between the bishops, top provincial officials and a few clergy. They produced “Refleksi dan Rekomendasi para Pimpinan Gereja dan Tokoh Umat Katolik Nusa Tenggara tentang Masalah Penodaan dan Penyelesaiannya,” which was drafted by the office of NTT governor and edited by Servulus Isaak SVD (b. 1944) and Domi Nong (b. 1957), diocesan secretary in Ndona (Ende). This document had limited circulation only.
to avoid a ‘vertical’ conflict by a repressed people confronting the political/economic/military establishment. As awareness grew of the *divide et impera* political background to the desecrations, so violent reactions ceased and the army lost credibility. A mass campaign in late 1999, in which church leaders were actively involved along with the SVD daily *Flores Pos*, and which was ‘crowned’ with a decisive ‘no’ from the district parliament of Ende, succeeded in preventing the transfer of the Korem 64 *Wira Dharma* army command from Dili to Flores.

As the new century opened, Flores witnessed a renaissance of local culture coupled with a reassertion of rights over traditional land. Meanwhile two of the three bishops of Flores had ‘twinned’ themselves (*saudara kembar*) to their local *bupati*. The colonial partnership of church and state, *mutatis mutandis*, was still intact, at least in elements of the church hierarchy, even as a grassroots social movement was gaining pace.

**Church and socio-economic development: church-centred agriculture**

As the second half of the century opened the concern of the church was still with the economic viability of church institutions: the upkeep of the priests, religious communities, the seminaries, the schools and student boarding. Thus each far-flung parish had its field for annual crops as well as banana, coconut and coffee trees. Larger institutions like the seminaries at Ledalero, Todabelu, Hokeng and Kisol developed farms with chickens, pigs and cattle. Large plantations from colonial times were run by the dioceses in Nangahale and Maumere (coconut) and Hokeng (coffee). Workshops run by SVD brothers were established beside the cathedrals in Ende, Larantuka and Ruteng to see to the building requirements of the mission and the maintenance of vehicles. These were the training ground for skilled workers and practical mechanics, including drivers, who are now commonplace in every village on the island. The first agricultural officials at *kabupaten* level in the 1950s were those who had followed courses in Java sponsored by the SVD.

In 1933 Bernard Lucas (1907–1934) had raised the issue of socio-economic development for the people; twenty years later the SVD sociologist Anton van den Ende again urged the church to become involved systematically in the socio-economic development of the island. The SVD agriculturalist Jan C. van Doormaal (1911–1996) became agricultural advisor (*Landbouwconsulent*) to the Dutch authorities and then to the independent government, first in Ende, afterwards in Kupang. In 1953 Van den Ende wrote up the *Flores Welvaartsplan* at the request of the Vicar Apostolic of Ruteng, Willem van

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47 Prior in Malipurathu 2002:80.
Bekkum (1911–1998). The plan aimed to make each farming family more or less self-sufficient.\(^4\) Together with Theodorus Thooelen, Van Bekkum set up a cooperative in Ruteng and opened up a branch of *Ikatan Petani Pancasila* (IPP). On the other side of the island, the 1950s saw Nicolaas Beijer (1910–1994) in Maumere and Jan Krol in Larantuka establishing *Kontas Gabungan* (neighbourhood rosary groups) which also had *arisan*—regular collections for each family in turn, an early form of credit union. Beijer also established an agricultural school at lower secondary level in Koting.

In the early 1960s at the initiative of the German government, the Flores-Timor Plan was drawn up by German specialists (1962–1963) and Van Doormaal was asked to run the office that implemented it (1967–1973). Van Doormaal was thus involved in the first government agricultural planning during the 1940s and 1950s and that of the church ten years later.

The Flores-Timor Plan carried out some 357 projects in seven sectors, namely 97 projects in agriculture and fisheries, 88 in health care, 75 in formal and non-formal education, 37 in cottage industries, 24 in organisation and personnel, 22 in housing and 14 projects in transport and communication. As the sponsors wrote, “The development should be conducted, if it wants to succeed, according to large scale economic planning and procedures…. The church has to allow herself to be guided by strictly economic considerations if she wishes to fulfil her duty effectively in bringing the people towards a well-balanced socio-economic condition.”

The sociologist Jos Peters came from the Netherlands to survey the reaction of the clergy to the plan, in particular the relationship between pastoral and development work in a church he classified as a *Volkskirche*.\(^5\) A permanent social delegate (*delegatus sosial*) was appointed for each diocese in 1963 and a coordinating office established in Nita for the whole of East Nusa Tenggara (*Lembaga Penelitian dan Pembangunan Sosial*—LPPS-NTT). In 1974 an evaluation was held in Ledalero seminary with representatives of the provincial government; this was immediately followed by an ecumenical consultation, the first of its kind.\(^6\) For the first time the three main churches of NTT, namely, the Evangelical Protestant Church of Timor (GMIT), the Protestant Church of Sumba (GKS) and the Catholics of Nusa Tenggara, explained their involvement in development to each other. They sought for ways to avoid the massive socio-economic projects of the Catholic Church becoming a means of bolstering its position vis-à-vis the others. This meeting also marked a change in the relationship between government and church; from here onwards the government would be the leading partner; if the government was hardly mentioned

\(^{49}\) Peters 1971–4:9–12.


\(^{51}\) Lang 1974.
in the Flores-Timor Plan, from here onwards they were calling the tune. Notwithstanding this crucial shift, throughout the 1970s the socio-economic commissions of the dioceses, still run largely by expatriate clergy, continued to seek and receive considerable funds from both Germany (Miseror) and the Netherlands (CEBEMO). Constitutions and detailed working guidelines were drawn up, corresponding to the organisational thinking of the New Order.

Aside from the numerous and large projects financed through church and government grants, mainly from Germany and the Netherlands, more grass-roots collaboration between social delegates and local government was taking place. Prime examples come from Maumere and Ende. Between 1974–1982 the social delegate of Maumere Deanery, Heinrich Bollen (b. 1929) and Viator Parera, head of the local agricultural ministry, terraced 20,000 hectares of hillsides with the lamtoro plant and planted more than two million lamtoro-gung (Hawaian Giant species); rice yields increased by 40% and the maize harvest doubled. Many kelompok usaha bersama (KUB, cooperatives) and kelompok swadaya (KS, self-reliant groups) were established throughout the island. Ende deanery set up the Ikatan Petani Pancasila (IPP). In the Ende and Ngada Kabupaten alone IPP was involved in developing two hundred KUB and over a thousand KS by 1988. While government cooperatives have been plagued by bureaucracy and corruption, locally-initiated credit unions and work-groups when linked to the church, and in particular when run by women, have enabled their members to see to school and medical bills or obtain the necessary capital to start small businesses.

In the 1980s the emphasis shifted from ‘projects’ to training. For instance, from 1980 until 1987 IPP Ende ran 196 courses. In Larantuka, East Flores, there were by the end of the century some 52 credit unions apart from 16 self-reliant women’s groups and 700 families networking to develop small home-based businesses.

The Soeharto regime had come into power in 1966–1967 and after the general elections of 1971 began implementing five-year plans. In Flores, socio-economic development between 1967 and 1975 was a virtual monopoly of the church. While the church was losing its control of education it briefly attained pre-eminence in development work. The aim was said to be to combat the danger of communism (although the PKI had been annihilated in 1965–1966) and make up for the negligence of the government. It also assured a central role for the church in Flores as ‘partner in nation-building.’ Wilhelm Djulei Conterius (b. 1956) is nothing but positive about the Catholic Church’s involvement in development work: many villages obtained water; cash crops

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52 Parera in Kang 1989:146.
53 Raring 2001:42.
became more general; paddy fields became common where feasible; transport became more regular.\textsuperscript{54} This is change but not the spectacular ‘green revolution’ envisioned by the planners.

But economic improvement humble as it might have been, brought with it cultural change. Beginning with the Jos Peters survey in 1969 right through to the diocesan pastoral assemblies of the late 1980s, a ‘split’ was observed between ‘socio-economic development’ with its underlying values of progress, thrift and competition, and pastoral work which promoted the traditional values of collaboration, generosity and sharing. There was never any real integration between the ritual Catholicism of the Florenese and development work that was loosening its social base.\textsuperscript{55} Two unintended results of this immense financial investment in Flores in the mid-1960s and early 1970s were a brain drain and the rise of an articulate laity demanding a more participatory church (see below).

Another unintended result was the spread of sleaze. Large-scale development by church and government brought systemic corruption to Flores involving Catholics, both lay and ordained, ecclesial and governmental. Few diocesan social delegates finished their term as honest men. Beginning in the late 1960s dioceses and larger deaconates such as Maumere and Ende established their own legal bodies (\textit{yayasan}) to channel funds from overseas. With the exception of \textit{Yaspensel} in Larantuka, which has remained with the diocese, other social foundations became the personal property of those running them. With the involvement of an increasing number of clergy in business, the church in Flores divided between an institution following the ethical standards of the governing and business elite, and a marginalised membership, some of whom were working to give voice to the silenced victims.

\textit{From development to advocacy}

By the 1980s, and for the first time, most socio-economic development in Flores was in the hands of the government. After the monetary crisis of 1997, and the collapse of the Soeharto regime the following year, hundreds of independent NGOs have mushroomed. In 1970 Maumere had two church-owned NGOs (\textit{Yayasan Karya Sosial} (YKS) and \textit{Yayasan Pembangunan Masyarakat} (Yaspem); thirty years later there were over 20, all outside church control. Perhaps this shift, as much as biblical conviction, has turned the attention of the church to the area of justice, peace, the integrity of creation and human rights. As faith-inspired NGOs and some committed clergy investigated corruption, so the contradiction became more glaring between a hierarchy in partnership

\textsuperscript{54} Conterius 1999.
\textsuperscript{55} Riwu 1991:200–223.
Schooling: from the centre to the sidelines

The Flores-Timor-Sumba Contract of 1913 gave the Catholic Church a monopoly on schooling on Flores while the Protestant church held the same in Sumba and West Timor. In practice Catholics virtually monopolised schooling in Flores until 1952. Such a monopoly by a minority religion, still largely in the hands of foreign personnel, became untenable in the newly independent country. At a meeting in the Department of Education in Jakarta on 5th July 1952, the mission, represented by Vicar Apostolic Anton Thijssen and P.J.B. Schouten, acquiesced in its abolition. The following year an arrangement was made at provincial level that allowed all extant schools with more than 50% Catholic intake to remain under the church, run by a single foundation. And so, Vedapura school foundation was established on 25th January 1955 under its first chairperson, a layman Petrus Nyo; almost all the other members were clergy. However, without a government subsidy that paid salaries, Vedapura never held much authority in the eyes of the teachers for whom their paymaster was the government.

During the 1950s and 1960s schooling was a pastoral priority. Clergy regularly visited primary schools during their pastoral rounds; many sisters and clergy taught religion; secondary schools had both sisters and clergy on their staff as well as running school asrama (boarding establishments). Pastoral guidelines for clergy involvement were laid down in the renewed Manuale Pastorale of 1957 (pp. 165–184). As the role of the church in schooling decreased from the 1980s onwards, so the pastoral supervision of schools declined.

Until the early 1970s schoolteachers retained their pre-eminence as key players not only in school, but as the priest’s closest assistant in the village. Many took over the leadership of Sunday worship from the ‘guru agama’ (village catechist). Clergy maintained close contact with teachers through regular liturgies, recollections and meetings. Teachers were also key figures in the Partai Katolik as both functionaries and members of the district parliament. However the teacher was never simply putty in the hands of the clergy. Back in 1957 SVD sociologist Van den Ende was already writing, “A teacher nowadays is becoming an increasingly independent leader whose influence reaches beyond the walls of the school. He is a member of many organisations and attends meetings and gatherings of this and that which inform him

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of a thousand and one problems.” The primary school teacher was the local ‘intellectual’ who backed-up both village-level government and traditional adat leadership; teachers saw to the implementation of both church and government policy while also explaining the local adat to both church and government. Thus they played a complex and creative role voicing the policies of the institutional church while articulating the ongoing relevance of the adat in an ever-changing society, and also increasingly identifying themselves as government employees. The post-independence generation was imbued with national awareness and self-respect. They could no longer be dictated to; many became critical of the institutional church and indifferent to church work; these latter were seen by some clergy as anti-clerical.

When in the 1970s the New Order ordered all teachers and the entire government administration to enter Golkar, teachers became the mouthpiece of the regime and helped engineer Golkar victories. Tensions with the clergy were inevitable.

*The sidelining of the Catholic network*

In 1949 there were 371 three-year primary schools with 53,445 pupils and around 600 teachers in a population of 600,000. Twenty years later (1971) there were just over a thousand six-year Catholic primary schools in Flores with 4,886 teachers and 154,770 pupils. This number has not increased, as in 1973 the government commenced a massive building programme opening 6,000 new schools (sekolah inpres) throughout Indonesia in the first year alone including areas already supplied by a Catholic school. The dropout rate from first to sixth class hovered around 50%; only around 17% of those who entered primary school left with a certificate. Pupils dropped out for economic reasons, but also due to the irregular appearance of teachers and the irrelevance of much of the curriculum. With a total population of 1,043,183 in 1970, some 14.5% of Florenese were in primary school.

In 1971 Vedapura, the lone Catholic school foundation was split into five, one for each *kabupaten*. A vision of *sekolah umat* (schools of the people of God) was explained in detail during an Orientation Week for Educators (1973), to heads of government, education departments and school inspectors as well as the five Catholic foundations. Catholic schools were no longer to be the preserve of the priest. However, this ‘Vatican II’ vision never really caught on.

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61 Cornelissen 1972.
62 Background in Djawa 1972.
In the mid-1990s the Archdiocese of Ende established a Catholic school fund sponsored by an annual collection; but the money needed was far beyond the ability of the people. The failure of the collection symbolises the inability, or unwillingness, of an agrarian people to support a church school arrangement that they perceive as virtually identical with the state system.63

In 1947 a lower secondary school was opened in Ndao (Ende) (since 1954 run by the teaching brothers of Utrecht (BHK), and another in Maumere, Yapenthom, run by Catholic laity, initially with SSpS sisters and SVDs on the staff. By 1970 there were over 150 lower secondary schools in Flores.

In 1953 the senior high school ‘SMA Syuradikara’ was opened in Ende, the ‘flagship’ school of the SVD through which the first generation of educated bupati and other officials passed. Not until the mid-1960s were other senior high schools opened in the other towns: Maumere (1963), Bajawa (1964) and Ruteng (1965) and finally Larantuka (1974); these were opened and run by Catholic laity.

To staff the burgeoning primary schooling the first teacher training school (SGA, lower secondary plus three years) was opened in Mataloko in 1951; the following year it moved to Ndao, near Ende. In 1957 a similar SGA was opened in Larantuka and the following year was handed over to the BHK who had arrived in Podor (to the west of Larantuka) the previous year. By 1971 there were some 1,206 students in 10 teacher training schools throughout Flores. While almost all the senior high school students were the children of townsfolk—petty civil servants, teachers and traders—the student teachers inevitably came from farming families in the countryside.64

In 1968, with a grant from CEBEMO, the Ikatan Petani Pancasila run by Willi Doi from Ende, opened a farming school at high school level (SPMA) in Boawae directed by Vitalis Djuang who obtained his degree in Germany. For long the only school of its kind in the Nusa Tenggara Province, SPMA Boawae has supplied staff for the agricultural departments of the various kabupaten. For years SPMA had a resident clerical chaplain. The SSpS-run hospital in Lela opened a nursing course in 1957. In 1972 the Ursulines (OSF) opened a course in development management (PTPM) which ten years later became an academy for community development (APM 1982; later upgraded to AAP in 1986 and finally to STPM in 2001). A technical school was started at Ndona in 1959 later upgraded to a STM (senior high school level). An STM was opened by the diocese in Larantuka (1976) and later handed over to the SVD; the local government opened an STM in Maumere in 1978.

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63 The introduction of school fees in the state sector in 2004 has made schooling at the primary level as expensive as in Catholic schools.
64 Cornelissen 1972.
In the 1950s Lambert Lame Uran took over the school foundation and edited a school journal *Pandu Pendidikan*. In 1956 he developed a syllabus for practical farming at primary school level, filling the slot allowed for *mata pelajaran kedaerahan* (local input).\(^6\) A proposed faculty of arts and agriculture planned by Anton van den Ende for 1958 was vetoed by the military. In 1956, with Frans Cornelissen, Lambert Lame ran a tertiary course to train teachers (PGSLP). Its status was enhanced in 1959 and in 1962 it was absorbed into *Nusa Cendana* University, Kupang, as a faculty of education. In 1980 the five *bupati* of Flores with support from the three bishops of Flores opened *Universitas Flores*, also in Ende. By the end of the decade it had an enrolment of over 1,000 students. While these institutions have helped to cater for students who could not get into more established universities, they have run on a minimal staff and negligible facilities.

**Loosing the key role of the school**

Since 1920 the church had used schools effectively to spread and implant Catholicism in Flores. In the 1950s the first government primary schools had made their appearance. Certain tensions arose during the democratic and intensely nationalistic period under the presidency of Soekarno, however tensions really came to the fore under the Soeharto regime, which had an ideological stake in controlling schools and their curriculum. Understandably, during this and the following decade, struggles between the hierarchy and the government were frequent and duly recorded in the SVD-run biweekly regional paper *Dian* (published since 1973 from Ende). On a number of occasions the bishops of Nusa Tenggara sat with the governor and the education department to iron out difficulties. While officially the church was recognised as ‘partner in education’ the influence of the church was gradually cut back as government schools increased in both numbers and importance. In the mid-1970s the Diocese of Ruteng threatened to hand over its primary schools to the local government *en bloc*; a few years later the Archdiocese of Ende seriously considered doing the same though in an orderly manner. Neither came to pass; the church hung on to its heritage, the government footing the bill.

In the 1990s the church lost its pivotal role in training teachers, although the Holy Spirit Sisters (SSpS) in Maumere, after having to close their SPG in 1990, opened a teacher training college (SGSD) in 1991 albeit without government accreditation. Without the necessary financial backing and increasingly without the loyalty of the teachers, the church found it inevitably lost the skirmishes: *Yayasan tidak punya gigi*—the school foundation had no teeth! If in 1950 schooling was more or less identical with Christianity, by 2000 the church’s

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\(^6\) Lame Uran 1984:256–257.
role in Flores was still significant though noticeably subsidiary to that of the government, just one of an increasing number in the private sector.

Without a shadow of doubt, schools opened up the isolation of the Flores interior; bahasa Indonesia fast became the second language of the whole island and the Florenese soon identified themselves as Indonesian citizens linked to both the nation and, initially through the church, to the wider world. Church schools enabled the Florenese to become a bi-cultural people, rooted in their adat while belonging to a wider community. Indeed Flores was one of the most educated islands in Indonesia during the first years of independence (1950–1965). This story is recorded in the pages of the biweekly Bentara (1948–1959) and argued out by its protagonists in the pages of Pastoralia (1947–1963).

As a result of the ongoing struggle with the government, almost all the energy, personnel and facilities by the end of the century were spent on maintaining the existence of the Catholic school network. As recorded above, under the democracy of the 1950s and early 60s the church still had the freedom to develop professional schools in line with the needs of this agricultural island. However, throughout the Soeharto regime (1967–1998) curricula were no different from those in the non-paying government schools. Little time was given to considering what type of education would be most appropriate. And so schools became a conduit for migration: from mountain to coast, from village to town, from district to centre, from Flores to Java and beyond. Those with a certificate, ability and financial backing continued their schooling; the majority dropped-out and went to find work in the cities of Java or on the plantations of Kalimantan, Papua or Malaysia. Until the 1970s all students who obtained a certificate from a senior high school in Flores found immediate employment or had little difficulty entering a university. By the 1980s an increasing number had difficulty to obtain a job in the towns and were too embarrassed to return to the village. As the population increased and hereditary land was subdivided between male siblings, so Flores began to experience the meaning of unemployment for the first time in its history.

**Educating clergy, religious and a lay elite**

The minor seminary (high school) of Todabelu (Mataloko), which traces its origins to the veranda of Sikka presbytery (1926–1929), was augmented in 1950 by a new seminary at Hokeng (Larantuka Diocese) and five years later at Kisol (Ruteng Diocese). In 1967 a three-year minor seminary was opened in Lela (Maumere Deanery) but closed in 1984; boarding for minor seminarians was opened in Maumere town in 2002. The SVD opened its own minor seminary in Labuan Bajo (Ruteng Province) in 1987. As numbers expanded so the SVD moved its novitiate from Ledalero to Nenuk (Timor) in 1986.
and opened a second one in Kuwu (1993, Ruteng). By 1980 some 21.6% of all clergy and the religious in Indonesia came from East Nusa Tenggara, just half of what one might expect given that around 40% of all Indonesian Catholics then lived in Nusa Tenggara.

In 1992 some 52.8% of the seminarians of Ritapiret and Ledalero major seminaries came from farming families; 26.2% from those of teachers and 11.2% from the families of government employees. The parents of the teachers and government workers would be from leading families in the villages. Compared to the intake of the 1920s-1950s there has been a gradual social ‘dumbing down’ of candidates. At the same time the more academically minded seminarians no longer continued to ordination.

St. Conrad’s house of brother formation was opened in Ende in 1955. Forty years later Indonesia was the one remaining area in the SVD world with a significant number of brother candidates. Their traditional professions on the farm, in the workshops and the printing press were augmented by expertise in other fields such as bookkeeping, computer programming, nursing and catechetics. The brothers run the senior technical school (STM) in Larantuka. St. Conrad’s has provided over 20 cross-cultural missioners in many countries in the southern hemisphere.

The first two cross-cultural SVD missioners left Flores for Papua in 1982. By 2000 there were well over 100 Florenese SVDs working in 40 countries on all continents. In 1996 of the 13 religious congregations of men and women sending members for cross-cultural mission overseas 65.9% were SVDs, and of these 77.8% came from Flores. The cultural values of friendliness, hospitality, togetherness and acceptance of everyone without any hint of superiority, has made them a welcome presence in each country, although the characteristic of merging with the crowd and not being noticed has not provided adequately for personal initiative or creative leadership.

In 1955 a separate community was formed within the SVD major seminary of Ledalero (1937) for diocesan candidates whose only ‘seen-difference’ from the SVD was permission to smoke! Then in 1959 the inter-diocesan seminary of Ritapiret was opened less than two kilometres away. Beginning with barely a dozen seminarians, Ritapiret grew so large that a second inter-diocesan seminary was opened in 1991 in Kupang for the dioceses of Atambua, Kupang and Weetebula. Carmelites (OCD) and Clarists also study there.

The students of Ritapiret and Ledalero study at the same SVD school, that received government accreditation in 1971 (STFK Ledalero). A masters’ course

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66 Boelaars 2005:264.
in contextual theology was approved at the turn of the century. Carmelites (O.Carm) opened a house of studies in 1995. A few sisters have also completed the first-degree course. At the turn of the century there were over 600 students at first and second-degree levels. Most parishes, pastoral centres and institutions were in the hands of diocesan clergy. The three dioceses of Flores have also supplied a few of their priests for work in Sumatra, Papua and Timor Leste.

At the initiative of Henry Heekeren (1931–2005), a one-time scripture scholar at STFK Ledalero (1975–1977), Ledalero has exchanged both staff and students with the Protestant faculty of theology at Artha Wacana University, Kupang (Akademi Teologi Kristen as it was then). That a mere two-week exchange had such a marked positive effect on inter-personal relationships over the past thirty years, makes one wonder what would have happened if the original dream of Heekeren had been realised, namely that the two faculties and student bodies collaborate and gradually integrate over the years.

Just 8% of the minor seminarians and less than 50% of the major seminarians go forward for ordination. Todabelu alone has produced over 4,300 alumni aside from the 368 who have been ordained. The biggest export of Flores has always been its people, in particular to Batavia/Jakarta: as slaves in the nineteenth century, as soldiers and police in the early twentieth century, as guards of storerooms and shops in the 1950s, known for their honesty and loyalty, and as ‘ready-to-hire’ gangs (preman) during times of unrest. From the 1960s onwards Flores has exported prospective politicians and businessmen, journalists and academics who have risen to the top of their professions.69 In particular Florenese in Jakarta and Yogyakarta have helped create a ‘national culture’ in the arts, philosophy and science. Jos Daniel Parera (linguist), Stefanus Djawanai (linguist), Robert Lawang (sociologist), Ignas Kleden (sociologist), Daniel Dhakidae (political scientist) and Frans Meak Parera (philosopher, book publisher) are among the more outstanding academics. The seminaries have never been limited to supplying priests, catechists and teachers.

Paul Arndt continued his linguistic and ethnographic research in Ngada until his death in 1962 as did Jilis Verheijen in Manggarai until 1997. Physical anthropologist Józef Glinka (b. 1932) arrived in 1965 and has researched and published for the past fifty years. This ‘anthropos tradition’ was re-birthed in the 1980s when a batch of Indonesian SVDs was trained in missiology and the social sciences. Ledalero seminary set up Candraditya research centre in 1987; within ten years there were four sociologists, three anthropologists and four missiologists on the Ledalero staff. In contrast to the lonely linguistic and ethnological studies of the pioneers, research became inter-disciplinary.

The *Candraditya* centre has translated works of the pioneers as well as the results of its own research in pastoral and human rights areas. Publications of both cultural and theological research increased dramatically as the century closed and the seminary launched its own university press. Thus, the church not only brought westernisation via the school system; it has also recorded local cultures and so contributed to their revival at the end of the century. Ledalermo has been an active node in national and continental SVD research networks.\(^70\)

**Pastoral strategies: ecclesiastical expansion**

In 1950 the islands of Bali and Lombok were divided from the rest of Nusa Tenggara to become a separate apostolic prefecture. The following year Flores was divided into three apostolic vicariates. The Timorese Gabriel Manek SVD, one of the first two indigenes of Nusa Tenggara to be priested in 1941, was ordained bishop of Larantuka in 1951. He was the second Indonesian-born bishop after A. Soegijapranata of Semarang. Anton Thijssen became bishop of Ende and Willem van Bekkum of Ruteng. In 1959 the Redemptorists (CSsR) took over the pastoral care of Sumba, which became an apostolic prefecture; the SVD missioners working there transferred to Flores and Timor. Ten years later Sumba was raised to the status of a diocese. In 1961 and in preparation for the Johannine Council (Vatican II), which opened the following year, the hierarchy of Indonesia was established with Nusa Tenggara one of the seven provinces. Gabriel Manek transferred from Larantuka to Ende to become its first archbishop (1961–1968). With the establishment of Kupang as a diocese separate from Atambua in 1967 and Maumere Diocese taken from Ende in 2005, there was a total of eight dioceses in the Nusa Tenggara Province including three of the largest in Indonesia—Ruteng, Ende and Atambua. In 1989 the three dioceses in West Timor and Sumba formed their own ecclesial province with Kupang as the archdiocese.

In 1951 just one bishop in Flores was Indonesian (Timorese), the others were Dutch. The first Florenese to be ordained bishop was Paul Sani (Denpasar 1961); he was followed by Gregorius Monteiro (1924–1997) in Kupang (1967); then Donatus D jagom (Ende 1969), Vitalis Djebarus (1929–1998 in Ruteng 1973), Darius Nggawa (1929–2008 in Larantuka 1974), Anton Pain Ratu (b. 1929 in Atambua 1982), Eduardus Sangsun (b. 1943 in Ruteng 1985) and G. Cherubim Pareira (b. 1941 in Weetebula 1986, transferred to Maumere in 2008). They were all members of the SVD.

The first diocesan priest to be appointed bishop was Abdon Longginus da Cunha (Ende, 1996); subsequent Episcopal appointments in Nusa Tenggara

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\(^70\) Prior 2005.
have been diocesan clergy (Kupang in 1997, Denpasar in 1999, Larantuka in 2004, Vincent Sensi in Maumere in 2006 and transferred to archdiocese Ende in 2007). Flores has also supplied bishops for dioceses in Kalimantan (Sintang), Sumatra (Pangkalpinang), Java (Bogor) and Papua (Jayapura and Sorong).

The SVD hold on Flores was loosening. In 1953 Bishop W. van Bekkum invited the OFM to take care of two parishes in his diocese. Archbishop Gabriel Manek invited the Carmelites (O.Carm) to Ende in 1969 and Donatus Djagom the OCD (the discalced Carm.) in 1982; they have since been joined by the Passionists (CP) in 2000. Larantuka invited the Missionaries of the Holy Family (MSF) in 1993, and the Redemptorists (CSsR) in 2001.

**Inter-island transportation**

Mission and pastoral work among the smaller isles off Flores and transport between Flores, Timor and Java was carried out through the acquisition of mission boats. *St. Theresia* was a 27 ton ship piloted from Australia by Br. Thomas, Br. Victor, M. van Stiphout and the future bishop Anton Thijssen; leaving Darwin at the end of August 1946 they made Kupang in two days. Bishop Gabriel Manek obtained *Siti Nirmala* for Larantuka in 1956. Three years later a 138 ton ship *Stella Maris* was donated by subscribers of the mission monthly *Stadt Gottes* in Germany and Austria. The same benefactors provided a 250 ton *Ratu Rosari*, built in Hamburg in 1964, which carried out uninterrupted service between Java and Nusa Tenggara until almost the end of the century. By the 1990s the government had finally instituted regular shipping and the slow-moving mission boats were decommissioned one by one.

**Sacramental ministry**

In an important, though neglected study Fritz Braun (1918–1997) 71 analysed the frequency and patterns of the sacramental ministry in the archdiocese of Ende. He shows that for much of the time most of the laity could not celebrate the sacraments regularly. The Eucharist was rarely celebrated on Sundays except at the main church, but rather on a weekday whenever the priest managed to call in the village on his extensive pastoral rounds. Baptisms and marriages also depended upon the availability of the priest rather than on the needs of the people. Often when there was a change of pastor, the new man would ‘tidy up’ his new parish by seeing to the backlog of baptisms and marriages. Confessions were largely confined to Advent and Lent while the anointing of the sick was rare. When the bishop came for confirmations, at perhaps five-yearly intervals, a thousand or more young adults would receive

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71 Braun 1984.
the sacrament including those already married. Thus although pastoral work has often been said to centre upon säkramen and säksemen (sacraments and a sack of cement), and even though ritual is pivotal to the identity of Florenese Catholicism, it is also the case that few laity celebrate the sacraments at that point in their life for which the sacraments were designed. Although by the end of the century the number of clergy had greatly increased, the ‘emergency pattern’ outlined by Braun still obtained in many places outside the parish centres; a majority continue to celebrate a liturgy of the word, rather than the Eucharist, as their Sunday worship.

Flores and the Johannine council

The church in Flores made a modest contribution to the Vatican Council (1962–1965). Willem van Bekkum of Ruteng had long pioneered the use of local melodies in his hymn and prayer book Dere Serani where the earliest hymns date from 1937; in 1998 the tenth reprint contained 220 hymns, many with Manggarai motifs, all in the local language. In the 1950s Van Bekkum had already introduced offertory processions with dancing in his ‘Waterbuffalo Mass’ (misa kaba). His talk at the first international congress on pastoral liturgy held in Assisi in 1956 outlined suggested changes to the rite of Mass, all of which were taken up by the Vatican council seven years later. At the end of the century the liturgical adaptations of Van Bekkum in the 1950s had become routine throughout East Nusa Tenggara. Meanwhile Anton Thijssen of Larantuka, in an intervention on the council floor, suggested the establishment of a body in the curia for relations with other religions; on Pentecost 1965 a secretariat was established by Paul VI. Gabriel Manek of Ende and Paul Sani (from Flores but bishop of Denpasar, Bali) returned from the council intent on the indonesianisasi of personnel and pastoral approach.

Negative reaction from the conventional church was strong. On graduating, the first Florenese SVD missiologist, Herman Embuiru (1919–2001), was appointed to Bali and only in 1977–1983 did SVD leader Henry Heekeren bring him in as rector. The second SVD missiologist, Piet Maku (1932–1994), was appointed to the high school in Ende; he later left the priesthood and worked in the Department of Religious Affairs. Immediately after the council a group of Indonesian lecturers at the seminary met regularly to work out how to contextualise the syllabus. Tensions arose between this group and the expatriates and their compliant clients. Although supported by archbishop Gabriel Manek they were dispersed by the SVD authorities in Ende. The ancien régime held back seminary reform for years.

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A bishop’s lot is not always a happy one. Both Gabriel Manek of Ende\textsuperscript{73} and Willem van Bekkum of Ruteng\textsuperscript{74} were pressured to resign in 1968 and 1972 respectively, officially for health reasons (which were real enough), but both also due to the indonesianisasi direction they were taking. However, replacing visionaries with compliant functionaries has not proved a happy solution either. Within seven years the successor to Van Bekkum in the major diocese of Ruteng (1972–1980) was transferred to the minor diocese of Denpasar; after a hiatus of five years (1980–1985) a successor was appointed in Ruteng who has had to endure visitations by the apostolic delegate from Jakarta and by an envoy from the Vatican.

Whatever the politics at the top, indonesianisasi remained a key buzz word and base communities a key concept throughout the 1970s, for instance during a series of annual study weeks (pekan studi) obligatory for clergy up to five years after ordination and held at Ledalero seminary from 1970–1975. The proceedings were written up in Pastoralia.\textsuperscript{75} As clergy numbers increased so these annual workshops disappeared.

\textit{From guru agama and catechists to pastoral planning}

The professionalisation of catechetics to supply sufficient teachers for the increasing number of schools, and later for parish catechetics and diocesan
planning, was supported by the opening of St. Paul’s Academy (APK, later STKIP) in Ruteng by Jan van Roosmalen SVD (b. 1920) in 1958. A decade later, in 1969, the bishops of Nusa Tenggara decided to establish catechetical commissions in each diocese. In the mid-1970s these commissions became the heart of diocesan pastoral secretariats and centres. Under the inspiration of diocesan priests such as Yosef Lalu Nono in Ende, Yosef Gowing Bataona in Larantuka, both with their catechist collaborators, and Br. Thomas Voets CSA and Sr. Marelin OSU in Ruteng, a discernable shift took place from a doctrine-centred to a life-centred catechesis. Concentration on school catechesis was balanced with creative work in katekese umat (catechesis in base communities). From the 1970s onwards two of the more creative and productive catechists were Alfons Sene, until 2005 lecturer at St. Paul’s Catechetical Academy in Ruteng, and Yakobus Papo of the Diocesan Pastoral Centre in Ende. Beginning in the mid-1970s catechists became pioneers of the biblical apostolate transforming rosary neighbourhood groups into bible sharing communities, at least during Advent, Lent and the national bible month of September. Life sharing and bible sharing in the base communities have provided a firm foundation for an ongoing dialogue between faith and life. However, inadequate church salaries and the pull of local government led most academically qualified catechists to leave employment in the dioceses and become government employees. Some were elected members of district parliaments; others appointed sub-regents (camat).

Sisters

The Missionary Servants of the Holy Spirit (SSpS), who had come to Lela in 1917, opened St. Elisabeth’s Hospital at Lela in 1935 to which a nurses teaching and training school was attached in 1947, receiving government recognition two years later. They also work in the government hospital in Ende and have many clinics in the parishes. In 1949 they opened their convent on the grounds of Yapenthom lower secondary school in Maumere town. Not until 1955 did they open their novitiate at Hukeng. Traditional work at both minor and major seminaries (kitchen and laundry) is being faded out. At the turn of the century they had two provinces in Flores with headquarters at Kewapantai and Ruteng. A majority of their newly professed were being appointed overseas; they have supplied a provincial for Australia (2003–2006).

Because the SSpS did not receive local recruits until 1955, as described above, in 1935 bishop Henricus Leven founded the diocesan congregation Serikat Pengikut Yesus—Sisters of the Followers of Jesus (CIJ). They began

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77 Beding 1996:79.
with seven sisters, all daughters of leading families. Thirty years later (1965) they numbered 168 sisters and a further 30 years down the road (1995) they had 327 members in a total of 53 communities: 22 in Ende archdiocese, 25 in 11 other Indonesian dioceses as well as six in Timor Leste. The CIJ live in relatively large convents and undertake conventional work in institutions such as schools, clinics and orphanages.

_Tarekat Puteri Reinha Rosari_—Daughters of the Queen of the Rosary—is a diocesan sisterhood founded by bishop Gabriel Manek in 1958 with three novices. In 1979 they opened their first convent outside the diocese (Timor Leste) and in 1988 their first foundation in Africa (Kenya). By the end of the century PRR had 293 members in 41 convents: 10 communities in their home diocese of Larantuka, another 25 in other Indonesian dioceses, four in Timor Leste and two in Africa (Kenya, Asiki). The PRR form small communities close to the people and engage in pastoral, educational and medical work.

In 1957 the Ursuline sisters (OSU) were invited to Ende where, the following year, they opened senior high schools (SMA, SMEA), teacher training (SPG) and later a community development academy (AAP now STPM). They later opened three convents in Ruteng. In 1961 the first five Franciscan missionary sisters (FMM) established a convent in Bajawa and later in Soa, both in Ende diocese.

The women’s secular institute _Alma_, centred on the _Institut Pastoral Indonesia_, Malang, sent its first two Florenese catechists to Ili, 12 kilometres from Maumere, in 1971, but within two years only Ibu Wis remained. After many difficulties, but with the support of internships from Malang, Alma finally began to develop in 1989 when they took over boarding for handicapped children in Maumere. They have extended their apostolates throughout the Ende archdiocese: Wairklau (1992), Nita (1993), Boawae (1994), Bornio (1996) and Bajawa (1997). Apart from parish catechesis the 25 sisters look after 60 or so children with disabilities and another 70 children in their homes in their _cari-bina-rawat_ (seek out, educate and look after) programme.

Congregations well established elsewhere in Indonesia have made foundations in Flores: The Clarists opened their first convent in Wudu, Ngada (1973). The Franciscans (OSF) took over the retreat centre in Detusoko in 1979, _Sang Timur_ (PIJ) came to Mauloo (1985), the Franciscans of Sambas (KFS) to Ngada (1986) and the Sisters of Mercy (SCMM) to Maumere (1986), the active Passionists to Ruteng in 1993. The Italian Holy Face Sisters (WK) came to Koting (1991) and later Ndona and seem to have established themselves. Dominican sisters (OP) opened their first convent in Waiklibang, Larantuka.

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78 Beding 2000.
in 1997. Flores was no longer the preserve of the SSpS and their two diocesan
offspring, CIJ and PRR.

The bishop of Ruteng has welcomed over 30 different religious congrega-
tions to his diocese since 1985, many of which had no other foundations in
Indonesia but came to recruit sisters to augment their dwindling numbers
overseas. At the turn of the century Flores was exporting around 200 sister
candidates a year to convents in Italy and the Philippines.

Seven Carmelite sisters (OCD), six of them Dutch, opened the first contempla-
tive convent in Flores at Bajawa in 1953 at the invitation of Anton Thijssen
as the sisters could not return to Lembang immediately after the war. Fifty
years later there were 19 sisters, all from Flores; a total of 36 Florenese women
had passed through the convent by the year 2000. OCD Carmelite priests
from Kerala, India, came to Bajawa in 1982, took over St. Joseph's parish in
town and in 1983 opened a novitiate; since 1993 they have sent their major
seminarians to Kupang, Timor. Their first nine Florenese priests were ordained
in 1999. Italian Passionist sisters (CP) came to Maumere in 1990; within five
years they had built their convent enclosure and within ten years had become
autonomous with eight Florenese sisters in final vows and just one remaining
Italian. A branch of the OCSO (Trappist) monastery at Rawaseneng, central
Java was opened at Lamanabi near Larantuka in 1995; the Holy Spirit Sisters
of the Perpetual Adoration (SSpS.AD) opened a convent in Ruteng in 2001.
Each of these convents remains small but apparently viable, at least for the
time being.

Diocesan programmes

In the wake of the Johannine council, pastoral initiatives emerged from
a number of remarkable clergy. In the early 1970s Hilarius Gudi SVD (b.
1931) pioneered the biblical apostolate in Ruteng; at that time also Yosef
Lalu Nono (b. 1936, in Nita and Ende), Bene Ragha SVD (1933–1997, in
Nita and Kewapantai) and Philip Loi Riwu SVD (b. 1943, in Maumere) first
developed the parish as a communion of base communities. A decade later
these grassroots initiatives were taken over by the respective dioceses resulting
not, however, in a network of base communities so much as parish wards or
branches serving the parish council.

The first systematic development of pastoral councils at parochial and
deanery level was undertaken by Hendrik Djawa SVD, Dean of Maumere
1966–1969.79 By the mid-1970s all parishes had councils, although at deanery
level the clergy alone met monthly, inviting lay representatives on occasion and
according to the topic under discussion. Larantuka diocese, dispersed among

79 Da Cunha 1999.
the islands of Solor, Adonara and Lembata as well as East Flores, had long gathered its clergy together twice a year; only in 1987 did Ende archdiocese, with three-times the number of clergy, do likewise.

Larantuka: self-reliance through base communities

Larantuka under bishop Darius Nggawa (1974–2004) was the first diocese in Flores to launch a comprehensive pastoral plan, compiled by the clergy, coordinated by a pastoral secretariat and evaluated during regular diocesan assemblies of laity and clergy. After five years of consultation these five-year plans (repelita) have run from 1980–85 (‘building cultic communities’), 1987–92 (‘building serving communities’), and 1997–2002 (‘building communities of solidarity’). Self-reliance became the key word in matters spiritual, personnel and material. Emphasis was laid upon building base communities as the building blocks of the parish, training lay leaders, inaugurating the biblical apostolate and continuing socio-economic development. The strategy moved from internal church concerns (1980–1992) to issues of social justice (since 1997). Initial inspiration came from the training kits of Lumko Pastoral Institute, South Africa. The first diocesan assembly was held in 1984. Participating were 35 clergy, 11 catechists, 63 teachers, 4 retired civil servants, two tradesmen, one fisherman, one farmer, one trader, one married woman, one nurse (sister) and 5 seminarians. A majority of the diocese consists of women as many of the men have migrated to look for work. The problem of mass migration was studied by SVD sociologist Franco Zocca. After 20 years of pastoral planning Piet Nong Lewar SVD, then chair of the diocesan priests’ council, suggests that the base communities largely remained ‘consumers’ of catechetical and other material produced by the diocese; that while the leaders are capable, their horizon had yet to encompass the world outside the church; that the diocese had yet to work out appropriate methods for social and cultural analysis in the base communities; that networking with NGOs, which are not part of the parochial structure, might well help to widen the vision and give life to the base communities apart from their role as branches of the parish.

Ende: mass-participation through diocesan assemblies

At the start of his episcopate in 1969 and in line with the indonesianisasi discussions of the time, Donatus Djugom of Ende initiated a triple programme of self-reliance in faith, personnel and finance. Towards the end of his long ser-

80 Kopong Kung in Hasto Rosariyanto 2001:30–32.
81 Sekretariat Pastoral Larantuka 1987:15.
82 Zocca 1985.
83 Nong in Sekretariat Pastoral Larantuka 1999:141–143.
vice (1969–1996), a series of five-yearly diocesan assemblies was inaugurated. The open process began in 1987 at base community level where hundreds of felt-needs were drawn up, the discussions continued at parochial and deanery level and finally in a diocesan assembly of 246 participants who gathered in the Cathedral parish of Ende. The assembly formulated a ‘liberating pastoral direction of freedom from the chains of dualism between a life of faith on the one side and daily life on the other,’ focusing upon the split between faith and local culture, the gap between internal concerns and economic development and the need to replace authoritarianism with a participatory leadership. The following year 320 participants gathered to turn the result of the previous assembly into a pastoral strategy outlined in *Keprihatinan Pastoral* (‘Pastoral Concerns,’ 1988). The split between faith and culture honed in upon the question of marriage (most, if not all, couples marry before seeking a church blessing); a renewed effort was made in the sphere of socio-economic development and courses were run on participatory leadership. Diocesan bodies were established to implement the programme.

**A tectonic quake and a momentary dream**

On 12th December 1992 at 1:35 pm for an excruciatingly long three minutes Central and eastern Flores was rocked by a tectonic earthquake 6.7 on the Richter scale leading to a massive tsunami on the north coast. Two thousand six hundred died and around half the buildings collapsed. Immediately afterwards Donatus Djagom wrote a stirring pastoral letter interpreting the quake as a grace-filled *kairos:* “the collapse of the old church... rigidly organised... with an overwhelming impression of triumphalism, arrogance and closed mindedness; a strong hierarchical leadership, often authoritarian, weakened the work of the Spirit in the live dynamics of the church as the whole people of God; laws and regulations were emphasised so that the church became legalistic.” The bishop continued on the theme of “building up a new church... the earthquake and tsunami brought not only disaster but also grace. A feeling of solidarity and love of each and everyone was released. Walls of division between ethnic groups collapsed; partitions between Christians and Muslims were torn apart; class distinctions between social groups crumbled. We were united in a common solidarity, a deep love, and competed in helping one another, especially those who suffered most.”84 This “prophetic and courageous pastoral guide and challenge” brought a positive response from the congregational leader of the SVD, Henry Barlage, “We would like the Archbishop’s message to influence our formation significantly: a formation close to the people, marked by a simple life style; a formation in an inter-confessional and inter-religious

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84 Djagom 1993:104–110.
(Muslim) context; a formation that helps form lay leaders.”

As humanitarian aid poured in from the Catholic world, the local church committee alone distributing 19.8 milyar (thousand million) rupiah between 1993–1997, so this dream of a church of the people sunk under the weight of the massive re-building programme.

Two years later (1994) a third diocesan assembly was held with 318 participants; the priorities of previous years were again renewed. It was admitted that socio-economic development had as yet had little impact on the lives of the 70% who lived in the countryside and that the horizon of many had yet to be widened by contextual theology. A jubilee assembly was held in Maumere in 2000, which emphasised leadership training in an era of uncertainty. Coming after the collapse of the New Order, issues of human and gender rights received attention for the first time. The assembly outlined a renewed strategy to transform base communities of prayer and catechesis into a network of communities of struggle and advocacy.

While the assemblies of 1987 and 1988 gave thousands of laity a voice for the first time and produced a dynamic momentum for renewal in the archdiocese, the routinisation of the five-yearly assemblies gradually led to their ‘take-over’ by the pastoral institutions of the diocese. Nonetheless, numbers of laity active in parochial and diocesan affairs were greatly amplified involving participants from every social and geographical sector. A process of revitalisation, reorientation and reorganisation was set in motion.

Ruteng: planning from the top

Ruteng Diocese held a synod in 1992 on the occasion of the 80th anniversary of the birth of the church in West Flores and 40 years since the erection of the diocese. Nine papers were read on the changing context and pastoral challenges, including one by the local bupati, one by the former bishop (Vitalis Djebarus), one by a lecturer in anthropology at the National University in Jakarta (Robert Lawang) and another by the SVD sociologist Paul Nganggung (b. 1938) from the Catholic University in Kupang. Manggaraians from outside the diocese were invited as speakers and to constitute the formulation committee. The latter produced a grid on which they placed a proposed pastoral direction until the year 2000 based on their strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (swot) and by means of thruputs, outputs and impact. Unlike the processes commencing from below in Larantuka and Ende, this was very much a seminar run by experts.

87 Sekretariat Pastoral Ruteng 1994.
While each of the diocesan plans has its limitations, it must be admitted that the ‘single-fighter’ tradition inherited from the ‘bush missionary’ has given way to a more collegial leadership among clergy, between clergy and laity and between parishes. Meanwhile, the consensus plans of the 1980s and 1990s, influenced by the homogenising ethos of the New Order regime, have since had to adapt to the much more fluid situation in post-Soeharto Indonesia. All the planning was ecclesio-centric.

Episcopal collaboration

The seven bishops of Nusa Tenggara Province embarked on more formal collaboration with the establishment of a common pastoral secretariat (Sekpasber) in 1980, first billeted at the Pastoral Centre of Ende (launched the same year) later moving to Kupang and then Larantuka. The bishops published a number of documents such as Working Guidelines for the Catholics of Nusa Tenggara (Kupang 1983), Guidelines for Parish Priests (Atambua 1990) and a rather conventional hymnbook, Yubilate, launched in 1990. This hymnbook is widely used both in Nusa Tenggara and by Florenese and Timorese Catholics throughout the country. However, it is debateable whether the pastoral guidelines for the people (1983) or those for parish priests (1990) have had any measurable impact on pastoral work. In tune with the ethos of the New Order, every organisation produced its constitutions and guidelines, while ‘on the ground’ little if any reference was made to them.

After a nine-year hiatus, the bishops met again, this time after the ousting of Soeharto. Preoccupation with internal church matters was put to one side. In Ruteng 1999 and more forcefully in Weetebula 2003 the bishops’ assembly with 130 participants, most of them laity, became a workshop on public and political ethics in an unstable society. Voices long silenced became articulate and helped to formulate a pastoral approach that aimed to distance the official church from too close a partnership with the political and business establishment and allow space for voicing the pain of the marginalised and a willingness to take up advocacy. Sociologist Huberto Thomas Hasulie SVD (b. 1962) and political theologian Amatus Woi SVD (b. 1958) from Ledalero gave sharp analyses at the 1999 Ruteng assembly. Women resource persons, Agustina Prasetyo Murniati, Protestant pastors Pao Ina Ngefak-Bara Pah and Karen Campbell-Nelson, and Sr. Eustochia SSpS, changed the ecumenical and gender equation at Weetebula. While no radical conversion was apparent, a few NGOs, clergy and sisters were taking pastoral concern out of the sacristy and into the turmoil of a rapidly changing post-Soeharto society. A similar tone informed the gathering in Denpasar in 2006. The inter-diocesan meetings

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88 Embu 2004a and 2004b.
in Ruteng, Weetebula and Denpasar were facilitated by Candraditya Research Centre, Maumere.

The numerical expansion, catechetical deepening and ecclesiastical maturity of the church in Flores has few parallels elsewhere. The conversion of Flores between 1920 and 1960 is undoubtedly a success story, albeit with a heavy price tag. As an SVD researcher explained: “...mission work in Flores ran at high speed and on a large scale...superficiality was inevitable.”89 The church felt it had to act fast as Islam was taking an interest in the interior of the island.90 Bader goes on to explain that a ‘new superficiality’ was endangering the inner growth of the church, “we easily become mere administrators of religion. We find satisfaction in exterior activities. The external industriousness takes up the Seelsorger’s time. During the last few years a great deal of money and effort has gone into material construction, school-buildings, churches and other socio-economic projects. But this can never take the place of fulfilling and integrating the spiritual life of the population.”91 He observed that, “Mentally and religiously the people either tend to return to the old traditional heritage (inspired by the national movement to return to its own national character) which for some has acquired an anti-foreigner flavour, or they, in particular the youth, merge into the stream of being madju (advanced) and they get uprooted from their old mental and spiritual treasury and find themselves in a spiritual vacuum.”92 In other words, the Florenese were never mere passive receptors of the missioners’ preaching; they continued to negotiate their conversion as creative actors and largely on their own terms.

Forty years later Florenese Catholics strongly identified themselves as such. This undiminished religious allegiance sprang from the comprehensive roles the church has played as both a nexus of religious symbolism and agent of social transformation. At the same time the laity was increasingly critical of the institutional church.93

The church and cultural change

Already before the Japanese occupation SVD ethnologist Paul Arndt was warning that a too drastic social change would loosen the people’s adherence to the Catholic hierarchy: “Through harsh and resolute prohibition we obviously hit the pagan religion itself; however at the same time we also hit the old social order...we shook up everything...held as supporting pillars. The new Christians are becoming off-putting and disobedient to their elders,

89 Bader 1965:18, 34.
90 Steenbrink 2002.
91 Bader 1965:17.
92 Bader 1965:17.
the authority-bearers, and defy the adat. This disobedience to authority is also being directed at Christian authority. The pastor may command, but the people do not follow.94

Within a couple of generations Flores had shifted from small-scale collectivism under a common adat code and the leadership of male elders to a more individualistic way of life partly derived from schooling and outside opportunities. Traditional Florenese society was religiously grounded while contemporary society was distinguishing between ‘religion’ and adat, ‘government’ and ‘church’, ‘private’ and ‘communal’. The seismic social changes initiated by the church were no longer under its control, if they ever were.

Flores like the rest of NTT has never been of economic or political importance to Batavia/Jakarta; it has always been Buitengewesten en Buitenbezittingen—marginal and extra.95 “Besides the sun and the sea, the mountains and the beach, and besides the simple and ever-smiling people, there is only one factor that determines the atmosphere in which work is done and that is the mission. The mission has been present helping and caring wherever the people are; the mission has been guiding them with special dedication on their way towards self-development. Without the mission the outlook might have been very different.”96

The church’s role as primary agent of modernisation also had its downside. During a visit to Flores in 1951 archbishop Albert Soegijapranata SJ commented: “What has the mission been doing all these years when we can still see a great difference between the impressive buildings of the mission and the hovels and shacks of the people?”97 A dozen years later an SVD visitor-researcher could still note: “All the huge buildings that one can see from the air flying over Flores belong to the mission…. Would not a non-Christian think the mission a super-rich institution striving for external greatness whose aim is exterior splendour?”98

Back in the 1950s the bishop of Ruteng asked, “What is the danger? The danger lies in the fact that with such an economy we (the church) form as it were a state within the state; and this has caused anger and jealousy among many enlightened Florenese…our own Catholic Florenese. They feel humiliated by the very fact that we achieve so much.”99 He further cautioned, “To be able to give a response to communism we need money. But if money is used in a capitalistic way, we on the contrary support communism.”100

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94 Arndt 1937.
96 Wertenbroek 1963:304–305.
99 Van Bekkum, Unpublished manuscript. Mid-1950s:11–12.
100 Van Bekkum Idem:14.
The urge to engage in socio-economic development did not come from the hierarchy alone; ethnologist Arndt commented: “It is as if rural life has hardly changed since time immemorial. It is still beyond the national government’s capacity; the country is too large and Flores is far from the centre…. Things always remain the same; primitive homes with the same simplicity and scarcity of utensils; the few things that they have are made by hand and for the most part by women.”

Piet Maku wrote up the first critical analysis of pastoral strategy by a Florenese priest-scholar. He distinguished between, “activities benefiting the mission itself and activities for the socio-economic betterment of the population.” The former, before the development plans of the 1950s and 1960s, “gave birth to triumphalism and mistrust,” while the second planning phase led to, “an overemphasis upon socio-economic planning according to the norms of the European sponsors. The spiritual side of ministry was neglected.” Maku concluded that, “economic planning is not an adequate response to the new situation, nor is it central to consolidating the local church. It must be more educative.” He himself proposed that development plans be re-rooted in the dynamics of the local culture.

“The first aim of the socio-economic activities of the mission of Flores should be to enhance collaboration through musjawarah and gotong-rojong in order to obtain a good, healthy, all-sided socio-economic self-development and self-sufficiency of the people and of the local church.” Maku’s voice went largely unheard and he himself was sidelined. Forty years later it should be added that, if, in spite of the enormous sustained contribution by the church, and regardless of the economic models employed, the economy of Flores has been unable to ‘catch up’ with that of Java, this is surely because much of the wealth Flores produces is sucked out again by the mechanisms of state capitalism and a globalising market.

Unexplored areas

One possibly important strand not touched upon in this chapter is an abiding interest in the thaumaturgical: with the miraculous (bleeding hosts, weeping statues), divine healing, mediums, dreams and apparitions. One or two bishops and not a few clergy play the role of dukun (shaman). As the social-cultural framework of the adat has dissipated, so an emphasis upon spirits and the extraordinary has increased. However, to date, there is no evidence of any conjunction between this thaumaturgical preoccupation and the charismatic

103 Maku 1967:239.
movement or a move towards Pentecostalism. Such incidents are quickly squashed by both church and government authorities.

A second area is that of the role of the seminaries in creating sexually immature clergy. While nothing has ever been published on this sensitive matter and there has been a deafening silence in the public realm, there may well be a link between authoritarian clerical leadership and psychosexual immaturity. There may also be a link between the necessity of keeping private life and public role separate and a lack of transparency and honesty in the church.

An unfinished transition

During the last half of the twentieth century the Catholic Church continued its role as a major agent of modernisation and an important player in state formation. Pioneering every type of schooling and heavily involved in socio-economic planning, the church retained a major stake in nation-building until the end of the century. And because a church led by foreign missioners brought Flores into the modern world, Flores has never known the anti-western or ultra-nationalistic rhetoric of Java and Sumatra, despite fears of the rise of ‘anti-clericalism’ in the early days of independence and during the turbulent 1960s.104

Through schools that opened up windows to the wider world, the Volkskirche of the 1950s has evolved into a more complex web of relationships, increasingly consisting of dispersed communities of choice rather than an ecclesial-ethnic Gemeinschaft. The common norms of adat and the pre-Vatican II church no longer bind; the people are struggling to develop a workable set of internalised values that are by no means uniform. The church is one reference point among many cutting across the pre-modern, modern and post-modern worlds in which the Florenese live. The de-institutionalisation of religion, so marked elsewhere, has also made its impact on this island of almost two million (1.6 million in 2000 census). In this context two ‘alliances’ have emerged. The first is that between a conventional ecclesiastical hierarchy, the government and a regressive co-opting of devotional Catholicism. The second is that between grassroots NGOs, a more biblical Catholicism and villagers demanding their rights over land and language.

Whatever one’s view of the conventional church and its traditional schools and seminaries, this church has given birth to Catholic scholars who, outside ecclesial structures and away from ethnic Flores, have been living and

104 Anti-western slights are more common among competitive clergy than the Florenese laity. The governments of East Nusa Tenggara have always supported the presence of the remaining foreign church personnel, thus neutralizing the implementation of Instruction Nos. 70 and 77 in 1978.
articulating their faith confidently and progressively in the multi-faith metropolis of Jakarta. It must be admitted that within Flores itself creative thinkers have always been successfully marginalised in the past, such as bishops Manek and Van Bekkum, seminary lecturers Clement Pareira, Lambert Paji and Kopong Keda, and missiologists Herman Embuiru and Piet Maku. And yet at the turn of the century the clerical institution is facing a progressively more autonomous laity in both village and town, with a small but articulate local intelligentsia who are seeking truth, goodness and beauty in a pluralistic world.

The Protestant and Pentecostal diaspora in Flores 1919–2000

In historical essays by Catholics on Christianity in Flores the Protestant presence on Flores is rarely mentioned. Histories of the Evangelical Protestant Church of Timor (GMIT) have also neglected their presbytery on this ‘Catholic’ isle. And yet the presence of GMIT, and more recently of other Protestant and Pentecostal churches, is of interest: a marginalised minority has steadfastly maintained its identity and refused to be absorbed by an overwhelming majority.

The GMIT presence in Flores was established in 1947 the same year GMIT was born. Thus the period covered here is concomitant with the first 60 years of GMIT as an independent church asserting its identity and discovering its place as one of the largest Protestant churches in Indonesia. In 1951 Flores became a presbytery with Rev. S.A.K. Therik the first moderator.

The Protestant presence is scattered widely along the coast as well as forming pockets in the district and sub-district towns. They first arrived as traders, skilled labourers, police, teachers and government employees from other islands in East Nusa Tenggara, in particular Sawu, Rote, Timor, Sumba and Alor, and also from further afield: Ambon, Manado, Java and North Sumatra. Government workers were regularly transferred resulting in ‘revolving congregations;’ the stable core consisting of those who retired on Flores and those traders who found a reasonable living, married and raised

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105 In the 319-page book commemorating the 75th anniversary of the Cathedral parish of Ende, where the largest Protestant congregations are found and where the earliest ecumenical work was done in the mid-1960s, there is no ecumenical reference; just one of the 68 photographs shows a Protestant pastor (Paroki Kristus Raja 2002:301).

106 The history of the Protestant and Pentecostal churches on Flores has yet to be written. These notes are based on interviews (January–April 2005) with past and present Protestant pastors and a reading of scattered archives. Three B.Th. papers and 14 internship reports have been written by student-pastors from Artha Wacana University, Kupang. These are valuable, though, due to inaccuracies, of limited use. Important facts have been double-checked.
their families there. Ende has the largest congregation and is the home of the presbytery moderator.

Becoming ever more heterogeneous as time went on, GMIT in Flores has accepted Congregational and Lutheran traditions into its Presbyterian fold: GKS (Christian Church of Sumba), GKJ (Christian Church of Java), GPIP (Protestant Church of West Indonesia), HKBP (Christian Protestant Batak Church), GPM (Protestant Church of Maluku), GMIM (Evangelical Protestant Church of Minahasa).

Each of today’s congregations and chapels started as a house-church. Although some families went to the local Catholic church on Sundays until they had their own leader, these mini-communities maintained their separate identity by gathering in each other’s homes on weekdays to pray and read the bible. For much of the period in question the synod appointed pastors who were still in their early 20s; neither the policy of the synod nor minimal stipends from small congregations made marriage feasible during their time in Flores. Almost all pastors supplemented their stipend through business activities.

From the first record of Protestants settling in Flores in the early twentieth century until now there has been hardly a single case of the conversion of a Florenese except of those Catholics who married into Protestant families. The clan system of Eastern Indonesia has maintained the identity of each denomination; customary neighbourliness and inter-marriage has buttressed tolerance both between Protestants and Catholics and also with Muslims, at least outside times of crisis; marriage and funeral customs cut across religious lines.

To gain acceptance, then, the early pastors spent much time developing good relations with both the local Catholic clergy and the district government. The overriding concern with acceptance and survival precluded a more prophetic role in society.

1919—The ‘Syaloom’ congregation in Ende

The first record of Protestants living in Ende relates how a group of skilled workers in stone, wood and gold sailed in from Sawu (also written as Sabu) in 1912. In 1919 worship was held for the first time for five households totalling some 30 members. This house church was led by laymen until 1927 when the first pastor was appointed; he was Sapulete from Ambon. In 1928 there was already a congregation some 500 strong.

Until the end of the 1950s most of the Sawu congregation lived in Ipi district by the coast and worked as carpenters and builders, cigarette vendors and producers of coconut oil. They formed around 80% of the congregation; the other 20% were government employees; half a century later just over half
the congregation were still from Sawu; they are known as the best skilled workers in town.

By 1959 there were 42 households in Ende and the congregation had become more diversified: from Sumba, Rote, Ambon, Timor, Alor. A few Sawunese had settled down as farmers, but the congregational leadership was drawn from the government employees, police, army and businesspeople. Chinese became Protestant through marriage. It has not been easy to unite such a diverse congregation: the Sawu workers willingly gave their time and never questioned church policy; the Chinese gave their money but little time; government employees, teachers and police ran the church council but were transferred regularly. Only in the 1970s with help both from Gideon and the Department of Religious Affairs were all families able to obtain a bible. During the same decade Catholics were embarking on bible sharing in their base communities.

In 1938–1939 the first church was built on land given by Raja Haji Usman who had once stayed with a Dutch Protestant family in Kupang when at school. The first stone of the church was laid in 1953 by the district head, Louis E. Monteiro and in 1959 was already in use but—due to lack of finance—only finally dedicated in 1970.107

The Syaloom congregation is the only Protestant community in Flores with its own schools, namely Syaloom kindergarten, GMIT primary school (1948) and a Christian lower secondary school. A man from Rote gave land for the primary school at minimal cost. Teachers had a high status in both church and society. Hendrik Kanalewe, at age 17, arrived to teach in Ende without knowing where Ende was! Later he became a school inspector and concluded his career as head of the local Education Department. His wife, also a teacher, was the first woman member of the district parliament for the ruling Golkar party (1977–1987). Around 50% to 60% of the primary school pupils are Muslim due to the school’s location; a majority of the students at the high school are Catholic.

The early 1930s were marred by a conflict between the Catholic priest and the pastor over the validity of Protestant baptism. However, gradually the Florenese Catholic majority came to accept the presence of these ‘outsiders.’ Until the 1960s there were cool relations between the Catholic priests and Protestant pastors. In the mid-1960s, due both to the positive influence of the Vatican Council among Catholics and to the uncertain political situation in the country, priests and pastors began visiting each other (silaturahmi); they have exchanged pulpits during the Octave for Christian Unity, and acknowledged each other’s baptisms; a joint choir has been established; there have been

seminars, and a tradition of celebrating *Natal Bersama* (Christmas Together) has been inaugurated.

This ecumenical climate was begun at the initiative of pastor John Jusuf. Jusuf was appointed to Ende as assistant pastor (1967–1969) when he was 22 years old; he was later to return to Ende as presbytery moderator (1976–1980). He cultivated good relations with the parish priest of the cathedral, Max Nambu, and later with Alo Pendito at the bishop's residence in Ndona. These relationships became important during an incident in 1968. A leaflet, purportedly from Makassar, was making the rounds claiming that Muslims were planning to burn down churches. Jusuf was suspected of being the provocateur and was detained by the police for two weeks. Despite intimidation, women from the congregation visited Jusuf in detention hiding a long supportive letter in a loaf of bread. Max Nambu gave moral support also. As tensions rose, weapons were confiscated from all the Protestant police. Post 1965–1966 was a turbulent time to be a young pastor.

Pastor A.M.L. Bakhu cultivated a good personal relationship with Donatus Djagom both when Djagom was director of *Syuradikara* high school (1960s) and later as archbishop (from 1969). Marriage has always been a sticking point; in general the Protestant partner, as a member of a minority, has to 'give in.' Although it was once agreed in Ende that nobody need transfer to another church at marriage, there have been no ecumenical weddings in Ende with the pastor and priest officiating together. Both the families and church leaders accept that families are more harmonious if both parents belong to the same church. As Hendrik Kanalewe, a long-retired teacher in Ende, wistfully put it, “Protestants learn their catechism before joining GMIT; Catholics join first and only then learn their catechism!”

1974 was proclaimed 'Year of the Ecumenical Movement' in East Nusa Tenggara by Catholic, GMIT and GKS church leaders. In 1994–1995 tolerance was strained through a series of host desecrations at the Catholic parishes of Onekore, Mautapaga and the Cathedral in Ende, which culminated in the murder of one suspect at the Catholic cathedral. As the political background became clear (divide and rule), so relations became more equanimous again.

John Jusuf returned to Ende as presbytery moderator (1976–1980), doubling as pastor of the Shalom congregation. He saw that the communities outside town had little formal education and so much of the church council's time was taken up with catechesis. Women members of the congregation increased as migrants came as household maids. Jusuf cooperated well with Bupati Gadi Djo whom he found to be 'understanding and moderate.'

Ecumenical relations in Ende have been warmer than in Maumere, although the initiative is almost always from the Protestant side. There are choir competitions, exchange of pulpits and GMIT/Pentecostal collaboration. There has been no cooperation with Muslims. While on the island of Alor whole villages can change their church allegiance, in Flores this has never happened.

Holy Communion is celebrated four times a year, Baptism twice. Diakonia involves, among other charitable works, support for 20 widows, elderly and orphans at the rate of 50 thousand rupiah a month; 300 thousand for bereaved families and 20 scholarships for school children.

**Outlying chapels**

Already in 1933 there was a small house-church in Wolowaru, a sub-regency town 65 km east of Ende, opened by Belo, a Chinese from Rote; he was just 18 years old. In 1950 a branch congregation was established from five households, mostly from the local police station. Only in 1969 was a temporary church put up which was replaced by a permanent structure in 1983; five years later (1987) the first pastor, G. Edu Sir, was appointed. In the year 2000 there were 17 households with 97 members of whom 41 were men and 56 women. On the road to Bajawa Nangapanda chapel was opened in 1982 with seven members; it was a house-church in the home of teacher M. Djala Maki. By the year 2000 they had built a semi-permanent church for the nine households, with 33 members. Maurole chapel on the north coast also traces its beginnings to 1982 as a mini-house church; a church was dedicated in 2002 for the eight households with 40 members. Forty kilometres from Ende Detusoko chapel began in 1980 as a house-church with just 18 members, and by the end of the century had risen to seven households with 44 members. A further chapel was established at Watuneso in 2003 with six households and 23 members.

At the end of the century the Syaloom congregation had a total of 4,204 members of whom 1,925 were men and 2,204 women who came from 783 households. The congregation was divided into 33 districts (rayon). This congregation was led by a 64-member council with 43 men and 21 women including two ordained pastors, a husband and wife team. The congregation was comparatively well educated with 75% holding senior high school certificates. While most of the congregation originate from Sawu many have been settled in Ende for over half a century.

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1927—The ‘Immanuel’ congregation in Ruteng

Only in 1909 was the government administration of Manggarai transferred from the province of Celebes to the Timor Keresidenan; the following year the Dutch carried out their first patrol from the coast (Reo) to the interior (Ruteng). Soldiers, some of whom were Protestant, were barracked at Ruteng in the highlands and at Labuan Bajo on the coast. In the 1920s there were seven households of some 30 members scattered widely in Ruteng (central), Borong (east), Reo (north) and Labuan Bajo (west). They gathered on Saturdays to pray in each other’s homes in turn (kebaktian rumah tangga). In Ruteng around six to eight people gathered for worship. Pariyama, a member of the Dutch military, was appointed the first minister (pelayan) in 1927. This house-church in Ruteng had members from the islands of Sawu, Timor, Ambon and Rote and continued as such for ten years with pastors visiting sporadically from Ende to celebrate the sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion. Raja Barukh (also Baroek) gave land on which the small community built a house for the minister.

At the beginning relations with Catholic Manggaraians were not good; Protestants would forbid Catholics from carrying their dead in the street, while the Catholic priest prevented Catholics from working on the Protestant church. J.T. Malole was appointed congregational teacher in 1936/37. For a short while his children were prevented from attending the mission school. And so he began the task of building good relations with the Catholic majority, with the adat elders and with Raja Barukh. Malole taught Arabic to Wilhelm Janssen SVD. It was also Malole who established the first church council (majelis). His transfer to Kupang in 1939 was deferred due to the outbreak of war; he remained in Ruteng until 1947. For those appointed ministers, life was simple; they lived from dry-land farming and perhaps a small rice-field. In 1942 there were 57 Protestant households in Manggarai, in 1947 around 65 households. Virtually all of these came from islands other than Flores, apart from some Chinese. In 1952–54 a semi-permanent church was built for the 150 members from 30 households. Twenty years later, in 1971 was the congregation led by an ordained pastor, N.S. Kalle. At the end of the 1970s numbers had risen to 65 households including those at Reo, Borong and Labuan Bajo. A decade later in 1989 the congregation was divided with a second centre established at Labuan Bajo; in 2003 a third congregation was set up at Reo. Each of these congregations has far-flung outposts. A new church was begun in Ruteng in 1995, the Bupati G.P. Ehok laying the first stone; the finished building was dedicated in 2003.

This small Protestant community has had to reconcile different church traditions according to the origin of its members: HKBP (Lutheran), GPIB, GMIM as well as GMIT (Presbyterian). There have been occasional rifts but
no permanent schisms although the danger of fragmentation was never far from the surface. For instance, in 1977 the pastor of Ruteng refused to transfer. In Reo in 1981, some of the elders complained that the woman pastor was associating too freely (di luar batas) with male members of the congregation. The synod sent John Jusuf to mediate; the pastor was removed but she continued to minister to part of the congregation while the new pastor led the remainder. Not dissimilar problems inflict most small, heterogeneous, migrant communities.

Each community retained the loyalty of its members. For example, in 1932 there were just two or three households in Lembor, west Manggarai; far from the nearest Protestant congregation they went for Sunday worship in the local Catholic church without transferring their allegiance. They were ‘discovered’ during a visit by a minister in 1951; finally a place of worship was built in 1989. Only in 1992 did a Manggaraian Catholic family convert to the Protestant church outside of a marriage arrangement. There was evidently little but marriage to motivate a change of ecclesial allegiance either way; ethnic-denominational identity remained secure.

Relations with the government have been fostered over the years. Towards the end of the century the chair of the church council was also chair of the government evaluation board of the town. In 2000 there were 1,100 church members in Ruteng consisting of 557 men and 543 women with 262 married couples, a better gender balance than in previous decades. There has been steady growth, but no roots have been set down. Apart from Sunday worship family services are held twice a week. Holy Communion is celebrated three times a year and Baptism twice. There was regular catechesis, youth activities, six choirs, and organisations for both women and men. The congregation helps out at occasions of bereavement; the more prosperous members are encouraged to assist with school scholarships for the children of the poor. There is also the Ephata congregation at Reo with chapels at Dampek and Pota.

The ‘Gunung Salmon’ congregation of Komodo (Labuan Bajo and Lembor)
The Labuan Bajo congregation hails from Sawu, Rote, Sumba and Timor, with a few from Alor, Ambon, Toraja, Java and North Sumatra (Batak). Thus there are also a number of different church traditions within the one congregation: GKS (Protestant Church of Sumba), GKJ (Protestant Church of Java), GPIB (Protestant Church of West Indonesia), HKBP (Batak Protestant Church), GPM (Protestant Church of Maluku) and GMIM (Evangelical Protestant Church of Minahasa). Through marriage, there are also a few members with a

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111 Sine 2004:16.
Catholic, Muslim or Hindu background. There is little or no friction between churches and religions.

Relations with the government are fostered, leading to the local pastor being appointed ‘penyuluhan agama’ (religious animator) by the district government, thus assuring both his position in the wider society and a guaranteed income. He loyally attended government meetings when invited. Problems between members and the pastor or church council are sometimes ‘solved’ by the person transferring to another Protestant church (such as Bethel) or to the Pentecostals. Holy Communion is celebrated every three months; Baptisms at Christmas and Easter, or according to need. On Tuesdays and Fridays there are prayers, bible reading and catechesis in the local wards. Women have their own service on Fridays.113

1935—The ‘Calvary’ congregation in Maumere

The modest beginnings go back to 1935 when Dominggus Haba landed from Sawu, a gold craftsman. Three sisters also arrived, Yuliana, Elisabeth and Martha Hege, who found work in Chinese shops; they married into the Chinese families. On Sundays they worshiped in St. Joseph’s Catholic church; at night they said their prayers and read from the bible. Pastor Sapulete briefly made an appearance from Ambon in 1937, but seeing little chance of expanding the mini-community he did not return. Benyamin Pandy with his wife Yuliana Lamongi and seven children arrived from Rote in 1939; he headed the post office. In 1941 one of their children, Adriana, married Yakobus da Silva who was a son of the Kapitan of Nita. This connection with a prominent family was useful in obtaining a strategic site south of the raja of Sikka’s town residence on the west side of the town square. The post office was built on land adjoining it further south. In 1941 Robert Kaunang arrived as public prosecutor and other civil servants were appointed to Maumere bringing the total to ten households. Worship was held on Tuesdays and Fridays in Pandy’s home. Others arrived from Timor, Alor and Sumba.

With around 30 households and a hundred members, mostly from Sawu, Benyamin Pandy requested a pastor from the synod and in 1951 Robert Tahun of Oinlasi, Timor, was welcomed as their first pastor (1951–1960). He was 23 years old. He stayed in elder Pandy’s house where all activities took place: Sunday worship (later in the front garden), Sunday school, meetings, classes, receiving guests. The congregation had no hymn books or bibles. The lively family atmosphere did not encourage much thinking. If in 1951 there were around 30 members of the congregation, by the end of the decade the number has risen to 45 households and 135 members. Tahun survived financially

113 Frare 2003:8–9.
by obtaining a license to export copra. To visit outlying families he cycled the seven kilometres along the coast road to Geliting and peddled a similar distance up the hill to Nele.

Pastor Tahun acknowledged Catholics as ‘elder brothers’ and often went with his questions to one of the clergy both in town and at the major seminary. He printed his Christmas cards at the Catholic press in Ende. He accepted invitations to Catholic events.

In 1952 a church building committee was formed. Prominent Protestants in Kupang such as I.H. Doko, who headed the education department, and the governor in Singaraja, Bali, assisted with corrugated iron, cement and nails. This, together with much hard work by the local congregation and their Catholic neighbours, led to the first church (28 × 8m) being dedicated in 1957 with both government personnel and Catholic clergy present. The following year a semi-permanent house for the pastor was built next to the post office. Everything went smoothly, for Protestants ran a number of government offices.

Pastor Tahun left Maumere in 1960 to complete three more years of theology at SoE, Timor. He later married the fourth woman pastor ordained by GMIT who was also the first women pastor to minister to inland congregations in Timor. At that time there were no women school directors or village heads; in this regard GMIT was a path blazer.

In 1978 a committee was formed to build a new church. Bupati Daniel Woda Palle laid the first stone. Virtually the entire budget came from the local congregation. The church was finally dedicated thirteen years later but collapsed the following year during the tectonic earthquake of 12 December 1992. Temporary barracks were put up on the site to house five families made homeless; another five were housed on the new housing estate to the west of the town. Others were permanently relocated to Nangahure, ten kilometres west of Maumere. The stricken congregation changed their name from ‘Faith, Hope and Love’ to ‘Calvary.’ With government help the church was rebuilt and a second church built at Nangahure for the 26 relocated families. A chapel was built in Geliting after initial suspicion by some Catholics was overcome.

During the 1950s and 1960s most Protestants ‘automatically’ voted for Parkindo, the Protestant political party. This party was co-opted, as were Catholics, into involvement in the army-instigated massacre of 1966. The following years saw strained relations with Catholics. However, internally the congregation matured. In 1969 the via dolorosa choir was established. The church council was headed by Napoleon Therik, the police commander. Numbers rose to 80 households with just 235 members ministered to by three elders, three deacons and one sexton.

In the 1950s and 1960s inter-church couples were asked to join one church. Only in the 1970s was an ecumenical wedding celebrated. In 1974 Natal
Bersama (Christmas Together) was celebrated in the town square in front of the GMIT church; both Catholic parishes as well as the Pentecostal congregation took part. However, this did not become a regular event.

When Mesakh Ratu Woen was appointed pastor in 1979 he found a cooperative priest at the local parish of St. Thomas More. The two congregations commenced bible sharing, held a joint bible exhibition, celebrated ecumenical marriages, and led each other’s Liturgy of the Word on Sunday. Meanwhile Protestant wards and Catholic base communities prayed together and assisted each other. Pastor Mesakh maintained warm relations with both staff and students of the major seminaries of Ledalero and Ritapiret. This was facilitated by the annual exchange of lecturers and students between Ledalero/Ritapiret and the Protestant theology faculty in Kupang since 1976. This developing ecumenism in Maumere did not survive the transfer of the Catholic priest in 1981 and pastor Mesakh in 1983; church leaders returned to ‘studied negligence.’ Many Catholics considered Maumere ‘their district’ and the non-Florenese Protestants as ‘intruders.’ Nevertheless wider contacts remained: seminarians calling at the pastor’s home, religious sisters staying overnight, Catholic students staying with the pastor while studying at lower secondary school. Since his transfer, Mesakh has continued his ecumenical outreach from his base at Artha Wacana University.

Pastor G. Edu Sir transferred from Larantuka to Maumere in 1982. When the local Catholic dean was seriously ill, Sir went to pray over him. He celebrated the Week of Christian Unity with Catholic seminarians. Unlike in the 1970s, ecumenical initiatives always had to come from the minority community. The pastor’s voting paper at the general election of 1982 was marked as the government suspected that he might not vote for their Golkar party. After two years Sir moved to Ende to become presbytery moderator (1984–1987); the going-away celebration was hosted by Golkar, not by the local congregation!

At the beginning of the 1980s there were 187 households with 530 members ministered to by five elders and five deacons. Suspicion and disputes over money arose; the more diversified the congregation and the bigger the building programme, the greater the problems with both management and honesty. These were partly solved by appointing two treasurers.

In 1993 the first woman pastor was appointed, Ena Umpenawany; she led some 395 households with 1,185 members. When a second male pastor was appointed the following year, the two proved unable to work together, suspicion and recrimination led to their both being reappointed elsewhere.

At the turn of the century there were 28 wards (rayon): two in Nangahure, 22 in town, four others outside town. The congregation was being led by a husband-and-wife team, both graduates from Artha Wacana University, Kupang. They were ministering to 487 households with 2,250 members out of a total population of 236,220 Catholics and 20,045 Muslims. Protestants were
working as government employees, teachers, bank clerks, police, army, businessmen, doctors and traders. A high proportion takes part in worship. There are chapels at Geliting (17 households), Talibura (9 households), Nangahure (26 households), Lela (24 households) and Paga (two households).\textsuperscript{114}

**GMIT congregations in Ngada**

Aimere on the south coast should be mentioned first, both as the gateway to Ngada but more importantly as the first Protestant community in Ngada. Already in the 1930s a house-church had developed there among settlers from Sawu. This was turned into a chapel in the 1950s when police and army posts were established. By the mid-1970s there were 30 households. The first church was built in 1976–1977. In the 1970s the pastor for the whole of Ngada lived in Aimere; in 1983 he transferred his headquarters to the regency capital of Bajawa in the interior.\textsuperscript{115}

In the 1950s there were just 11 Protestant households in Bajawa, nine of them police and army personnel, the other two government employees. There was no pastor before 1969. A permanent church was built in 1976–1977 by pastor John Yusuf. To raise funds the small congregation obtained a fishing net (one third of the harvest was given to the church) and later 1.6 hectares of land, and a few cattle. The present church was dedicated in 1989.

From 30 households in 1976 the Bajawa congregation, at the turn of the century, had increased to 116 households with 528 members. This is augmented by seven chapels or branch-congregations, namely those at Mauponggo (19 households, 71 members), Boawae (14 households, 89 members), Nangaroro (5 households, 25 members), Mbay (34 households, 130 members (including Riung), Mataloko and Soa.

The chapel ‘Victory’ in Mauponggo is 43 km from Bajawa. In the early 1960s there were already 60 settlers from Sawu. They were augmented by Protestants among the police, army and teachers when Mauponggo became a sub-regency administrative centre (kecamatan) in 1962. Within two years regular worship was instituted. In 1967 pastor W. Fangidae visited the chapel but the next visit was not until 1972. Only since 1982 have there been regular visits for sacramental and catechetical ministries. 1997 saw the third renovation of their church. At the end of the century there were 22 households with 86 members.

In 1941 there was a single Protestant family in Boawae, Kornelis Kote Luy Koan, who worked at the telephone exchange. Three Sawu travellers arrived in 1945. The house-church became active in 1949–1955 initiated by the head of


\textsuperscript{115} Tameno 2004:6.
the public works department. Boawae became a sub-regency in 1962 bringing in government employees and police. After the 30th September 1965 incident in Jakarta and the subsequent army control of the country, an army post was established in Boawae, which increased both the numbers and the profile of this fledging community. When the Catholic Church opened its farming school (SPMA) in 1968, the only one of its kind in the East Nusa Tenggara Province, many of its intakes from Timor and Sumba were Protestants. Sunday school was led by these students. A few pastors managed to visit the Boawae community between 1969–82 so that the congregation took the initiative to build a church. The sub-regent (camat) laid the first stone in 1984; the temporary church was finished within three months. In 1997 the first stone was laid for a permanent church, which was dedicated two years later. At the turn of the century there were 23 households with 113 members including Catholics who transferred to GMIT on getting married.

Bait-El chapel in Nangaroro is near the border between Ngada and Ende regencies. In the mid-1960s the three Protestant police and army families travelled to Ende for Sunday worship. They established their own community in 1979 with 60 members. In 1980 they built their own church (5 × 3m). Three years later, with assistance from the sub-regent, they upgraded their place of worship.

Ebenhaezer chapel in Mbay. In 1960 seven households settled in Mbay from Sawu who were augmented by three police and army families. In 1986 Mbay became the centre of a government relocation programme; as part of this transmigrasi programme the government built a church for the Protestant community.

In 1998 Catholics formed 92.18% of the population of Ngada, Muslims 6.89% and Protestants 0.84% of whom 72% had high school certificates.

1937—The ‘Ebenhaezer’ congregation in Larantuka

A house-church was birthed by Dutch army and colonial personnel and settlers from Sawu. This GMIT congregation has remained small. The first church was dedicated on New Year’s Day 1938 for the nine households and just 20 members. Forty years later there were 111 members, five years later 155. Pastor Edu Sir (1977–1982) maintained good personal relations with the parish priest of the Catholic cathedral, Paulus Due. Given the time needed to travel round the islands of East Flores, Sir’s ministry was largely sacramental; catechesis was left to the local elders. Sir could travel on the diocesan boat Ama without having to pay. The 300 or so widely scattered congregation was fairly united as no one ethnic group dominated.

Being so small, the Larantuka congregation had never been host to meeting of the Flores presbytery. However, they did so in 1980 without any financial
assistance from the government. The Catholic bishop, Darius Nggawa, lent the boarding house of the technical school for accommodation. The congregation brought in food each day. While the synod in Kupang had decided on a monthly stipend of Rp. 80,000 in the late 1970s, the Larantuka congregation could only supply Rp. 30,000. Nevertheless, Edu Sir married in 1979 without the blessing of the synod and without an increase in stipend. He boarded with a policeman, and he himself baptised his two children. The temporary pastor’s house was replaced by a semi-permanent building, without begging from local traders; it was completed in eight months. Stories of such simplicity and struggle are heard throughout Flores from the beginning until the 1980s. The congregation is now ministered to by two ordained pastors.

By the end of the century there were 120 households with 480 members, of whom 54% were adult and 46% children, with 20% in government employment and 80% in business and NGOs. Educationally the congregation is above average: 53 with university degrees, 23 with senior high school certificates, others still in school including 21 in kindergarten. They are ministered to by a pastor and a church council of 17 members. Apart from the usual catechisis for Protestant government employees, for youth, for first communions (sidi), there is also a ‘Protestant pulpit’ slot on the local government radio station at five in the evening.116

Other chapels

The chapel of Imanuel at Waiwerang (Adonara) began with five households, 68 members; by the turn of the century there were 30 households and 90 members. The chapel of Imanuel at Boru (East Flores) has 8 households with 32 members and a further four households on the isle of Konga. The chapel of Eklesia at Waiwadan consists of fisher folk and farmers, settlers from Sawu. The chapel of Menanga in Solor was established in 2003 with four households of 20 members plus six not yet married. The chapel of Solafide is a Chinese community at Lewoleba, Lembata, with an outpost at Blauring. Formerly the house of the police chief was used for worship, Baptisms and Holy Communion; at the turn of the century they had one ordained pastor.

Pentecostals, Bethel and others

A brief mention should be made of other churches. Most references are to Maumere; the situation is similar in other towns. In 1974 the Gereja Pantekosta Pusat Surabaya was opened in Maumere by pastor Paulus Mite, a Florenese

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from Ngada; his wife hails from Java. They use Javanese at home. Mite began his congregation at Losmen Bogor; in 1985 they moved to Beru district in the newer area of Maumere, where they have built an impressive church. There are lively services six days a week as well as choir and band practice. The congregation of 50 families is primarily Chinese with a few coming from Java, Rote, Sawu, Timor and Palue.

1989 Bethel congregation, Waidoko.—Pastor Dominggus is a Sawunese from Kupang (Timor). He attended Bible College for a year in SoE, Timor and then did his six-month practical, paying for the schooling himself. He was then commissioned by the Badan Pekerja Daerah (Regional Body of Bethel) to open the first Bethel Church (Gereja Bethel Indonesia) in Maumere in 1989, a few months before Pope John Paul II’s visit. He began in a bamboo hut beside the Wini Rai Hotel. They moved to Waidoko in 1996 having received a grant of land from the district government. Their striking church was begun in 2000 and opened by Bupati Alex Longinus in 2003. “We are neighbours,” explained the bupati, “We are a single family.”

The Bethel congregation began with a couple of families from Sawu; through marriage with Chinese traders, the congregation slowly increased. There are also a few government employees. At the turn of the century Bethel had around 50 members, almost all Sawunese from Kupang. An assistant pastor is in charge of the local TVRI station. They have a church council of three. They admit: “We are simple newcomers we must adjust ourselves in order to live peacefully.”

Since his commissioning to Maumere, Pastor Dominggus has eagerly proselytised among pastorally neglected Catholics. He initially obtained a number of Maumere women from among the salt-makers near Waidoko (kampung garam); however, these have since returned to the Catholic fold. Some of his congregation hail from the nearby isle of Palue; he attracts locals through his healing services and a gospel of the here-and-now. The pastor obtains income from pig rearing while his wife sells goods in the marketplace. There are three assistance pastors. One of them, John Galuci, once worked as a cook in a hotel.

There is little ecumenism between this proselytizing church and the majority Catholic community. Relations, such as they are, have been formalised through the government-based ‘Pastors’ Forum’, of whom the Catholic member is Islamologist Bene Daghi pr, of Ritapiret seminary. They are happy to attend Catholic functions such as first communions but decry the ‘arak culture’ and the ‘culture of getting drunk.’

117 Mite’s family was harassed during the massacre of February-May 1966, not because of communist sympathies but almost certainly due to their denominational affiliation.
1995 *Gereja Pantekosta di Indonesia*—Pastor Ibrahim and his wife and four small children came to Maumere and established their Pentecostal church in 1995. They began in a small house in the government housing estate (*Perumnas*), moving to their present location in 2000. The small congregation of around 30 members bought the land. The congregation hails from Java, Rote, Sawu and Timor.

**Other ecclesial communities**—There are also small congregations of Adventists and Assemblies of God in Maumere. The pastor of the latter, once a pastor in GMIT, transferred to Bethel and now has his own church. Apart from Maumere, there are Pentecostal congregations (*Gereja Pantekosta di Indonesia, GPdI*) in Ruteng, Labuan Bajo and Ende. Bethel also has a congregation in Ruteng, Aimere, Bajawa and Lembata, all of which have their own land. The Bethel congregation in Ende still has to rent a place for worship. The New Testament Church is also present in Ruteng.

According to statistics in the office for Religious Affairs in Maumere, the total number of Protestants in the Sikka regency in 2004 was 6,910 of whom over 5,000 belonged to GMIT. It is not easy to obtain accurate figures as the Protestant congregations belong to largely shifting populations. Also some, possibly many, are counted as members of more than one church.

The appearance of Pentecostal and Charismatic churches preoccupied with healing in the towns of Flores raises the interesting possibility of a ‘Latin American’ scenario whereby a certain percentage of Catholics might find their home here in smaller congregations and in a church which answers their everyday needs through blessings and healings. However, despite active proselytizing and the temporary attraction of some poor women, it has to be said that, at the turn of the century, such a development has not (yet) come to pass.

At the start of the twenty first century there were eight GMIT congregations in Flores with a total of around 13,250 members served by 15 pastors; both Maumere and Ende had husband-and-wife teams. However, it has to be admitted that this was ‘growth without roots’. That these small, scattered minority communities maintained their identity is of interest. As their leadership came from the police and local government, not surprisingly, their horizon has been limited to maintenance and internal strengthening (*missio ad intra*) rather than to a wider societal, let alone prophetic, *missio ad extra*.

If in the early 1950s the main concern of the pastors and elders was the influence of adat on church belief (spirits, healing), fifty years later they were concerned with a more complex world with the conflicting claims of culture, politics and the economy. If half a century ago the pastor was accepted in all sincerity as ‘the voice of God’ and held a high status and received gifts in kind from the congregation, then at the end of the century he had lost any special
position and, as he receives a regular salary, many in the congregation see no point in giving gifts in kind.

In a way the reminiscences recorded here are all ‘minor’: who first arrived and when, who married whom, how influential contacts were made and church buildings erected. There is no grand narrative. These incidents have emerged from the memory of a surviving and slowly consolidating minority. At the time when GMIT had barely been born, young pastors with minimal theological education were commissioned to serve diverse, far-flung migrant households in a not too friendly environment. The story takes us from barely equipped but dedicated pastors in the 1950s to university graduates ‘doing a job,’ who felt educationally on a par with their Catholic colleagues. GMIT moved from a male clergy to an inclusive pastorate; from preoccupation with internal problems of the cohesion of a motley and revolving congregation to achieving an honourable place in the wider society. Flores has been the place where many newly commissioned pastors earned their stripes before returning to Timor to minister to larger, more established congregations. While the ecumenical impact of collaboration between the theological faculty of Artha Wacana Christian University in Kupang and the seminaries of Ledalero and Ritapiret near Maumere has been recorded, there is no testimony as yet on the impact, positive or otherwise, on Protestant-Catholic relations in Timor resulting from the young pastors’ experience in Flores.118

If GMIT has refrained from proselytism among the ethnic majority, efforts by more recent churches, such as Bethel and the Pentecostals, have met with no long-lasting success except among the Chinese. Religious affiliation and ethnic identity are still tautly interwoven.

*The solid development of a weak germ: Protestantism in Timor*

The Indonesian province of NTT is often divided into a northern and a southern section. Flores is the largest island of the northern section. Timor and Sumba are the largest islands of the southern sections. While Catholicism has become the dominant religion in Flores (with quite strong Muslim communities in Solor, Adonara and Alor), in Sumba and Timor it is Protestantism that has become the dominant tradition of Christianity, although with some larger minorities of Catholics in Sumba and a Catholic majority in the north-eastern

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118 One long-serving pastor opines, “With few exceptions, pastors who have served in Flores are more sensitive to Catholic-Protestant relations wherever they are serving. On the other hand, it should be admitted that they often feel like they are ‘coming home’ when they move to a Protestant-majority area.”
districts of West Timor, where the diocese of Atambua has an overwhelming Catholic majority. As was the case in Flores, also in Timor there was a first spread of Christianity in the sixteenth and seventeenth century, as sketched in chapter four and five.

The Gereja Masehi Injili di Timor, GMIT or Protestant Evangelical Church of Timor, is by far the largest Protestant church in the whole of NTT. Some of its features in Flores were already sketched above. It had in 2003 some 850,000 faithful against 173,000 for the major Sumbanese Protestant Church, GKS. The small islands of Rote and Sawu are important districts of this church that resulted from the Dutch domination since 1613. Rev. Matteus van den Broeck was in 1614 moved from Ambon to Solor and he was probably the first Protestant minister in this region. We saw in chapter five that the weak military and political position of the Dutch VOC did not really do much for the spread of Protestantism in Timor before the twentieth century.

A longer lasting and more successful preaching took place in the island of Rote in the 1740s and later. Christianity had started in Rote with the baptism of chief Poura Messa, raja of Thie, and his family in 1729. Poura Messa died soon after the baptism, but his son Benyamin Messa wanted to continue the spread of Christianity. He asked for teachers to be sent to Thie. Johannes Senghaje and later Hendrik Hendriks, probably Ambonese, were sent. Thereupon a second chief (out of the 18) asked for baptism: the raja of Loleh, to whom was given the name of Zakarias Dihua. He was followed by the raja of Baa, Tudaka Lilo, and the raja of Lelain, Naho Dali. When a raja converted he prepared also the baptism of his family and village, and asked for a school to be opened.

In the district of Thie there were already four congregations in 1741, with 964 baptised members and 182 candidates for baptism. The Raja of Lole asked baptism for 700 people. In 1760 there were already fifteen congregations in Rote with 5,870 members. The largest congregation was Thie (1,265 members), the smallest was Landu (54 members). 1,445 children went to school. People on Rote asked for an ordained minister, but the VOC could never send one. It was the school masters who led the congregations. The collective conversions resulted in a poor quality of Christianity because of the secular motivations.

119 The word Masehi in the title is from the Arab Masih, a Quranic title for Jesus that is related to the Hebrew Messiah. It is like the word Kristen used quite exclusively for Protestants in contrast to Catholicism in Indonesian. Evangelical in Indonesian does not have the modern English conservative connotation, and is more akin to German ‘evangelisch.’

120 Fox 1977:106–109; Enklaar 1947:48. Dutch and Indonesian Reformed make a distinction between members who are only baptised and those who have (mostly at the age of 16–25) also confirmed their membership through a formal personal confession. In Indonesian they are sidi-members (from Arabic shahid for ‘witness,’ perhaps also from Sankrit sidi for ‘full’).
for the change of religion. This was clearly stated in 1828 by J.C. ter Linden, the first missionary of NZG in Rote.\(^{121}\)

There are only a few hard facts that prove that Christianity was spread in Sawu at this period too. The minutes of the church council of Batavia show for 1756 that there were 600 people prepared to receive baptism. In 1760 five congregations in Sawu were mentioned with 826 members. If these notes are true, then nobody subsequently promoted Christianity for when Rev. W. Donselaar settled on Sawu in 1870 he had to start from zero.\(^{122}\) In Timor itself there was no real missionary work until the late 19th century. The only Timorese Christians lived in the castle of Kupang. Only in Rote there was a continuity of Christianity from the eighteenth century.

Also during the first two decades of the nineteenth century not much progress was made. Raffles is said to have established an Auxiliary Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Kupang but information about this body is very meagre.

**NZG Missionaries in Timor and Rote (1819–1860) and Sawu (1872–1901)**

NZG missionary R. le Bruyn was in 1819 the first minister to arrive in Kupang since 1775. He was nominated by the colonial officials to be the regular minister of Timor. He found the Christians in Timor in a desolate state and reported in 1820 that there was no full copy of the Bible available and that the school in Kupang only counted eight pupils, who received a very low quality of education. The church had been destroyed by an earthquake and had not yet been restored. In general the scattered Christians did not differ much from common pagans. Le Bruyn started to reform the congregation of Timor and with the help of Resident Hazaert, the church was restored in 1826.

Le Bruyn translated Dutch hymns (*tahlil*) and the Psalms into Malay and they were printed in 1825. In Kupang he established a branch of the Bible Society of the Indies that distributed Bibles and religious books. He published also simple sermons. Together with Resident Hazaert he established the Auxiliary Society for the Propagation of the Gospel. The first goal of this body was the erection and administration of schools. In 1824 there was a Dutch school in Kupang, besides a Malay school with Ambonese Lukas Pattinasarani as teacher. There was also a special school for children of slaves in Kupang.

In Babau, a centre of migrants from Rote who had constructed wet rice fields, 20 km east of Kupang, Le Bruyn started a new congregation. He also opened a school in Babau. The same happened in Oesapa, 10 km east from Kupang. Le Bruyn was a true rebuilder of the Protestant church of Kupang. He

\(^{121}\) Abineno 1978–I:104; Cooley 1976:11–32.

died 21 May 1829 in Kupang where he was buried. After his death Johannes Coenraad ter Linden was moved from Rote to Kupang, while in 1830 NZG sent D. Douwes to look after the schools. Douwes left Kupang in 1832, Ter Linden died on 30 May 1833. Thereupon missionary Heijmering was moved from the small southwestern island of Leti (close to Kisar) to Kupang. He could extend the number of schools with new ones in Pariti, Usao and Ulio. In 1838 he could report a total of 2,000 pupils in Timor. Most of the settlements where the schools were found were inhabited by migrants from Rote. In 1840 a first school for Timorese children was opened in Ukabiti, soon followed by some more in Baun, Pola and Bakunase. The local chiefs had asked for these schools. Heijmering reported in 1841 that there were more than 300 Timorese children in these schools and he saw a good sign of progress for the spread of the Gospel in the fact that it was children of rajas who were in these schools.\footnote{Maandberigten NZG 1841:198.}

The NZG continued to send missionaries: H. van der Wulp in 1839, W. Donselaar and J.D. Vermaassen in 1843. The latter, however, died in 1844. In 1847 the inspector of the NZG mission, L.J. van Rhijn, visited Kupang. He noticed that the majority of the 2,000 Christians were from Rote and that there was very little done for the original population. There were 29 schools with 520 pupils, but the overall quality of the congregation could not be praised. There was a feeling among NZG leaders that missionaries should better be sent to other parts of the archipelago. Some of the missionaries, especially Donselaar, protested against their relocation to other regions. Donselaar nevertheless was moved to Bonthain in South Sulawesi where he worked between 1852 and 1861 when he was allowed to return to Kupang, but in another function, as minister of the \textit{Indische Kerk}. This was the end of the efforts of the NZG to missionise in Timor. The work in Kupang and other congregations was transferred in 1854 to the \textit{Indische Kerk}, basically the church of the Europeans and Eurasians. The schools were taken over by the colonial administration. Heijmering was accepted as minister within the \textit{Indische Kerk} and retired in 1859.

When Le Bruyn visited Rote, soon after he was appointed to Kupang in 1819, he found a very sad situation. The schools and congregation lacked discipline but Le Bruyn was convinced that Rote was open for the gospel. In 1825 eight new schools were opened, in Landu, Termanu, Baa, Dengka, Unala, Thie, Loleh and Talae. The teachers came from Ambon: Joseph Huteuli, Dominggus Sahertian, Johannes Matteus, Laurens Hans, Pieter Talahatu, Louis Ayal, Christoffel de Fretes, Willem Talahatu, Markus Hitiahubessi and Louis de Fretes. In 1827 Ter Linden was moved to Rote, where he worked only during one year before he was moved again to Kupang. He found the morality
of the teachers very low and dismissed a number of them, whereupon many schools were closed down again.\footnote{Maandberigten NZG 1827 no. 7:120–124; Dicker 1964:20.}

As long as Ter Linden was minister of Kupang he never visited Rote. Only his successor Heijmering restarted the visits in 1833. He re-opened schools, like in Ringgouw, Upao and Bilba and in 1833 the number of pupils has risen again to 1,122. In 1839 F. Hartig, and in 1841 G. Noordhoff were nominated for Rote. The latter died within eight months, while Hartig was moved to Minahasa. Also other missionaries could not work for a longer period in Rote. The last missionary was withdrawn in 1851 and Rote also was surrendered to that large institution administered by the colonial government, the \textit{Indische Kerk}.

The name of colonial official and Kupang Resident Isaac Esser, besides that of Rev. W. Donselaar, is connected to a successful mission in Sawu that started in the early 1870s. As Resident of Kupang, Isaac Esser opened a first school in 1862 and placed an Ambonese teacher, a member of the Manuhutu clan, in Sawu. He was followed in by S. MaE (1866) and W. Patti (1869). In this period the colonial administration also stationed a \textit{controleur} in Sawu. The teachers and the colonial official had a decisive influence on the process of evangelisation in Sawu.

In 1869 there was a cholera-epidemic that killed two-thirds of the inhabitants of the island. This caused the survivors to accept Christianity. When Rev. Donselaar visited Sawu in 1870 he could baptise hundreds of people. He asked the NZG to send missionaries and the first to arrive was M. Teffer, son of the former Resident Teffer of Kupang.\footnote{At old age this remarkable man became a Catholic in Semarang, see chapter fourteen.} He worked in Sawu until 1883 and was followed by several other missionaries. The ministers of Kupang supported this work in Sawu also. In periods when there was no missionary, they sent the assistant ministers of Kupang to visit the schools and the congregations. Finally the NZG was not happy with the development and in 1901 surrendered Sawu to the \textit{Indische Kerk}. Once again, the last missionary, J.H. Letteboer, became an assistant minister in the \textit{Indische Kerk}, and continued work in Sawu until 1903. Most of the teachers in the service of the NZG came from Ambon and Manado. There were in this early period two teachers from Sawu who became well known: Rudolf Meno Radja and Yakob Riwu Lobo.

\textit{The Indische Kerk in Timor, Rote and Alor (1860–1947) and in Sawu (1901–1947)}

Initially in Timor it was not regular ministers, but (former) missionaries who lead the congregations of the \textit{Indische Kerk} after it had taken over the
missionary congregations of the NZG. Heijmering and from 1867 until 1883 Donselaar were minister in Kupang, while Gossner missionary Fr. Pape (a teacher) became the minister of Babau until his return to Germany in 1869. Donselaar started a training programme for teachers in his house where, among others, Mesak Hendrik Pello was trained. He served later in the congregations of Babau (1873–1883) and Kupang (1884–1904). Another missionary who became assistant minister of Kupang was J.F. Niks, who in the 1870s built the great Protestant church that is still the pride of the congregation of Kupang. Because missionaries had no academic theological training they could not be nominated as full ministers. Niks worked in Timor until his death in 1904.

In 1907 a fully educated and ordained minister was nominated for Kupang, S.A. de Vries. He became the head of the Indische Kerk in the whole Residency of Kupang (including Sumba and Timor), but these functionaries never stayed longer than four years. In 1908 the Indische Kerk opened a new station, inland 50 km eastwards of Kupang, in Camplong, where F.A. van de Wetering started his work. It was a sign that evangelisation of the Timorese themselves should be taken seriously. In 1916 another station was opened in Kapan, some 150 km southeast from Kupang. Kapan would become the starting point for a true missionary activity in the southern section of Dutch Timor.

The great stimulator for the mission among Timorese was Pieter Middelkoop (1895–1973). Taking advantage of the education for missionaries provided in Oegstgeest, Middelkoop had learned proper Malay and soon after his arrival in Timor (1922) he was placed in Kapan where he did pioneering work in West-Timorese (Dawan), wrote down many oral texts, translated the New Testament and many hymns into Timorese and after independence, also, the full Old Testament. The poetic parts of the Bible were translated in the rhythmic ritual language that Middelkoop knew so well that he could recite long sections of the traditional Timorese ritual for the dead. The hymnbook composed by Middelkoop, Si Kniko Unu Ma Suni, was still in use in the first decade of the twentieth-one century, in the traditional rural areas of Timor, where Timorese was still used in church services (in contrast to the urban congregations that preferred modern standard Indonesian). Middelkoop started the practice of group baptisms in the countryside of Timor. It was not unusual that he baptised more than 400 people in one ceremony. Kapan and Camplong became the main centres for the expansion of Christianity in inland Timor, with SoE as a third centre after the foundation of the theological college there in 1936. The period 1920–1940 was the time of quick nominal adherence to Christianity, after the pacification of the inland districts in the first two decades of the twentieth century. This development was greatly

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126 Swellengrebel 1978–II:222.
stimulated by the Flores-Timor agreement of 1913, already discussed above, that transferred all authority and finance for education in NTT to the missionary parties whether Catholic (in Flores or the north-eastern section of the Dutch section of Timor) or Protestant. In 1938 the Timorese section of the 

Indische Kerk counted 172,000 baptised. This included the members in Sawu and Rote and other islands.

A similar development took place on the island of Rote. In 1860 the 

Indische Kerk took over the former missionaries Franz Pape and August Jackstein, both ‘tent-making ministers’ from the Gossner mission, and they became, as ministers of the 

Indische Kerk, government officials. The often interrupted history of the evangelisation since the 1730s had resulted in a nominally Christian community. Because of the presence of schools, many people migrated, becoming elsewhere government official, teachers, or simply seeking a living in agriculture. In Baa a college for the training of teachers was established in 1903 by Le Grand (STOVIL, School tot Opleiding van Inlandsche Leraren). It provided teachers and native ministers for the whole residency of NTT in the first decades of the twentieth century. The 

Indische Kerk gave much attention to the small island of Rote (1226 sq. km) that could be seen as its ‘favoured child.’ Because of the training school better qualified assistant ministers were sent to the island. One of these was Rev. I.E. de Vries who served in Baa between 1912 and 1920. Jeheskiel Sjioen was the first native assistant minister to be placed here in 1921. In 1922 there were 34 congregations in the island with 21,426 members. Most of the congregations were led by school teachers or lower level catechists.

Sawu, about one third the size of Rote, was handed over to the 

Indische Kerk in 1901 as mentioned above. It was, after that year, placed under supervision of the (assistant) ministers in Kupang or Rote. J.H. Tentua who was here inlandsch leeraar (native teacher) was given the authority to administer the sacraments, notwithstanding his low place on the scale of the pyramid of hierarchy in his church in the 1910s. But after his period of service had ended visiting assistant ministers from Rote regularly came to administer the sacraments in Sawu, until Abraham Haba Kore, a native from Sawu, was nominated as assistant minister. Haba Kore died in 1932 and was succeeded by a long row of native ministers.

In the twentieth century the 

Indische Kerk could extend its work to the northern islands of Alor, Pantar and Pura. Rev. J.F. Niks visited Alor in 1901 and could baptise Willem Hatsarani as one of the pioneer Protestants in the island. Growth of Christianity was strengthened with the nomination of

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128 For the pyramid of the hierarchy in the rather bureaucratic 

Indische Kerk see also chapter ten.
Meulemans as posthouder or junior colonial official in Alor in 1910. In the early 1910s many people could be baptised and some teachers were sent from Rote to maintain the influence of Christianity there. In 1916 an assistant minister was placed in Kalabahi (Alor) who also could stimulate the development of education. Missionary A.N. Binkhuizen worked there between 1917 and 1922. He was succeeded by a native minister, I.L. Hehanusa. This was also for Alor a period of group baptisms. People had to promise to follow religious courses for two years, to throw away their idols and to follow the directions of the teacher. In the early 1930s Rev. A. Boeken Krüger could already report that, with the exception of the approximately 25% of Muslims, the whole population of Alor had accepted Christianity. In 1939 the statistics for Alor (2120 sq km, nearly twice the size of Rote) and Pantar (720 sq. km) showed 66,850 baptised. There were 30 schools with 2,552 pupils there. These numbers show that about one third of the Protestants of the Indische Kerk in NTT were found on these two rather small islands.

During the period of the Indische Kerk a spectacular growth of Christianity took place in Timor and surrounding islands. Above we have already stressed the two main reasons. Firstly, the ‘pacification’ or actual imposition of Dutch colonial rule that made travelling safer and more secure. Secondly, the Flores-Timor Agreement of 1913 and the subsequent spread of education through the Catholic and Protestant churches in the regions that were allotted to them. For the region of the Indische Kerk some special reasons must be added here. All personnel of the Indische Kerk was nominated and paid by the colonial state. This enlisted the loyalty of the whole bureaucracy for the spread of Christianity in this region. The government officially promoted Christianity and contained the spread of Islam. This is quite different from what happened in West Indonesia, like in Batakland, where colonial officials could not so overtly support Christianity. From the 1910s on the Indische Kerk spread Christianity in a more systematic and even aggressive way. The strict hierarchy was from that time lead by the Senior Minister (pendeta ketua) of Kupang who planned the whole strategy for his large district. At all levels more personnel became available for church and schools. The STOVIL of Baa, founded in 1903, moved to Kupang in 1926 and then to SoE (1936).

The Japanese period started for Timor on 26 January 1942 with an attack by aircraft on the plane that was used by Assistant-Resident Ch. Weidner and Controleur L. Goodhart to seek refuge. They died when their plane was hit. On 19 February the Japanese landed in Baulesa, south of Kupang. The foreign missionary personnel were put in detention camps and church property was confiscated by the Japanese. Many churches were transformed into government warehouses. Three Timorese ministers were killed by the Japanese: S. Dekuanan and L. Riwu were drowned in the Mutiara Street, close to Kalabahi on Alor, while Bernard Sau was killed in inland Timor, suspected of being a
Dutch spy. In this period a spiritual revival took place in Nunkolo, an isolated place in inland Timor. It started with a teacher and his wife. This movement could not develop fully because the leading figures in Timor set themselves firmly against it.\footnote{129}

This period also brought steps in the direction of maturity of the church. Three districts (South Timor, SoE and Alor) established a governing body for the administration of their congregations. On 10 August 1943 for South Timor even something like an independent church was founded, Badan Gereja Masehi Timor Selatan (litt.: The Body of the Christian Church of South Timor). The Japanese administrator of the region attended its institution. Its chairman was N. Nisnoni, the raja of Kupang.

\textit{The Autonomous Protestant Church of East Timor: Gereja Masehi Injili Timor (GMIT), 1947–2000}

After the capitulation of Japan the Dutch ministers returned: A. van Alphen, Pieter Middelkoop, Rev. Mollema, Rev. Roti and Rev. Durkstra. The STOVIL was reopened in SoE in 1946. Steps towards autonomy were soon taken: on 31 October 1947 the first synod meeting took place. The congregation in NTT became an autonomous church within the \textit{Indische Kerk}. Rev. E. Durkstra became chairman of the synod with the Timorese Rev. E. Tokoh\footnote{130} as its secretary. The GMIT was divided into six \textit{classes} or districts: Kupang, Camplong, SoE, Alor-Pantar, Rote and Sawu. The congregations outside these regions (the town of Kupang, Flores, Sumbawa) were given a special status.

This process towards autonomy had already begun in 1935 with the creation of district councils as advisory boards to the assistant minister of that district. In 1938 a mixed Dutch-Indonesian board for the whole residency advisory council had started, which discussed a new church order. This development was not yet finished when the Japanese invasion took place. GMIT was the last missionary section of the \textit{Indische Kerk} to receive its autonomy, because Minahasa (1934) and the Moluccas (1935) had preceded it. Nationalism had reached Timor also in the 1920s and 1930s. One of the reasons for the closure of the STOVIL in Kupang in 1931 was that its students showed a strong nationalist spirit and considered the school directors as just instruments of Dutch colonialism. The ministers in Timor heard the example of their colleagues and after the Japanese period and the Indonesian declaration of independence the development no longer could be halted.

\footnote{129} A detailed history of the Nunkolo revival in Middelkoop 1982:186–217.
\footnote{130} Classis is the Presbytery in the English speaking Reformed and Presbyterian church order. It brings together some 10–20 local congregations.
The position of E. Durkstra as chairman of the synod proved that the Dutch ministers were not yet prepared to initiate a full transfer of responsibility, but in 1950 the next chairman was Timorese Johannes Ludwig Chrisostomus Abineno who lead GMIT until 1960.\textsuperscript{131}

The Timorese Protestant Church was financed by the colonial and later the Indonesian government until August 1950 when President Soekarno declared the separation of state and religion. The GMIT received a lump sum of two million rupiah as a buffer to arrange its own finances. This money had run out in 1955 and a severe financial crisis arose, that lasted until the economic recovery of the country in the 1970s. Although salaries were often not paid, the church workers continued to fulfill their duties. In order to find new finances the GMIT encouraged gifts, payment of 10\% of income, promises and other means.

The rapid development of the church had also caused a shortage of qualified workers. As a result evangelists with only a little training were ordained as ministers. In 1949 in SoE a school for leaders of congregations was opened, that provided two years of training after primary school. This apparently was not enough for a minister in a modern congregation. In 1957 this school was upgraded to become a Lower Theological School with a curriculum of five years. In 1962 this school was moved to Tarus, close to Kupang, and it closed in 1975 following the opening in 1971 of the ecumenical school, a project of GMIT and GKS in Kupang. This school developed into the full theological seminary and is now the Faculty of Theology of the Artha Wacana Christian University.

The number of GMIT members rose to 253,501 in 1953 and 517,779 in 1971. This quick growth is not only related to the expansion of the population but also to the increase of Christians, especially after the political turmoil of 1965. As in other places, also in Timor there were many members of the church and even some ministers who were member of the Communist Party. After the banning of the Communist Party it was strongly urged that all Indonesian citizens apply for membership of one of the five recognized religions. This increased the willingness of many people to become members of GMIT or another Christian denomination.

The rise in number of Christian baptisms had a special history in Timor where a high-spirited revival took place in this period starting from the town of SoE. From mid-1963 on there was a long drought that increased the tense and nervous condition of the people. From mid-1964 on a teacher of Rotenese descent, Johannes Ratuwalu, started to preach in public that people should convert and speak aloud their confession of sin. Ratuwalu claimed that he had

\textsuperscript{131} For a broader picture of Abineno as a pastor and theologian see chapter sixteen.
received his first vision to preach the Gospel and heal the sick on 10 April 1961. He later approached the Synod of GMIT and this body recognised him on 8 July 1864 as a true preacher. He was joined in early 1965 by a pastor of GMIT in SoE. In July 1965 Detmar Scheunemann, a lecturer from the Institut Injil Indonesia, came to preach in Timor with a group of his students (on this evangelical institute, established in 1960 by Petrus Octavianus, see also chapter eighteen). A quite important figure in this revival was also Ms. Hennie Tunli’u who had been reared in the house of Rev. Pieter Middelkoop in SoE and later educated at the Christian University of Salatiga. She was, in 1965, in SoE on vacation and later joined Scheunemann in Batu. This revival lasted from 1965 until the early 1970s, but it was most active until 1967. There was much talk about miracles like healing of sick, dead who had risen, water changing into wine, visions seen by people and more of these exceptional gifts. People confessed their sins without shame or fear. People were stimulated to share their conversion, guided by the Holy Spirit. Children left their school, government officials left their job in order to go preaching under inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Some went to Sumba, Flores and even as far as Papua, Java and Sumatera.132

There was a heated debate within the GMIT leadership about the policy to be taken in this case of a revival that had started from the bottom up and had strong links with the Evangelicals of Batu, in East Java. Finally many people saw that the revival met a very broad response, that people started to do more Bible reading and that the increase in members was very spectacular. Therefore the movement was welcomed within the structures of the GMIT.

The early 1970s were again difficult years for GMIT that experienced a change of leadership. The ‘Abineno generation,’ educated at the theological school of Jakarta, were taking the place of the older generation that had only an education at the lower theological schools of Rote and Timor. This made a special synod in 1975 necessary, but since then GMIT could see a more stable development, concentrated on consolidation of a majority church.

Education continued to be the major social contribution of this church, although the GMIT was no longer the sole player in this field as had been the case between 1913 and 1942 under a contract with the colonial government. In 2004 the GMIT foundation for Protestant education had the responsibility for 102 kindergartens, 340 primary schools, 30 junior, 9 senior high schools, and two vocational schools. But more and more education is seen as the first responsibility of the government and church activities as good complimentary enrichment. The same can be said of health care and development aid. In the 1950s GMIT started cooperation with American Mennonites for agricultural

training and development. These activities were continued with many other partners after 1967, when GMIT started an NGO with the name of Alfa Omega Foundation. It is active to the present and has developed along the lines of similar institutions. In the 1990s it was a major critical voice against the corruption of the New Order Government. In 2000 it cooperated with the Catholic Archdiocese of Greater Kupang to constrain Muslim-Christian conflicts and to channel the rising problems between refugees from East Timor and the poor population of the Western, Indonesian section of the island. In the field of health education special action was taken in the island of Alor, where in 1971 a small hospital was erected. This foundation later was surrendered to the government, as has happened with more initiatives in this field, because development aid is usually given as a temporary project and continuation is often difficult. But in the case of the two orphanages of GMIT in Kupang and Oeba, there is still a guarantee that this work will go on.

For the first decade of the 21st century GMIT has to face the following challenges as heritage from its past: Firstly, because of the practice of the Indische Kerk first to administer baptism and to provide Christian education later, the knowledge of Christianity is often not very accurate. Group baptisms are not the best road to a vivid and well-instructed community. Many practices of paganism still continue. Baptism is often seen as a ticket to enter heaven; bread and wine at the Lord’s Table are seen as magical and healing food. Christianity has become the majority religion in NTT, but still much education and instruction has to be given. Secondly, in south Timor the hegemony of GMIT has become weaker. Through the many internal migrations within modern Indonesia many people from the majority Muslim regions of the country have settled in Timor. Most of them are Javanese or Buginese and Makassarese from South Sulawesi. Besides, within Christianity there is a strong movement towards the more emotional Evangelical and Charismatic movements and streams, away from GMIT that is often considered as rather dry and bureaucratic. Thirdly, we have seen in this section that there were several revivals in Timor, especially in the periods 1916–1920 and 1965–1970. On a less spectacular scale this movement continues. There are within GMIT many prayer groups (persekutuan doa) that hold special meetings. Most of their members remain GMIT member and join the regular activities of this church as well, but there is still the risk that they may break away from the main church, because many of their activities are not supervised or directed by ordained ministers. Fourthly, the rise of Evangelical and Pentecostal streams has also influenced the confession of the church itself. It is felt that its theology has become less outspoken. Fifthly, GMIT members nowadays have a quite diverse ethnic, traditional and language background. There is a wish that GMIT should be divided further along ethnic and language lines, but up till now this has been rejected by GMIT leadership.
The Indonesian half of the island of Timor is divided in three southern districts that have an overwhelmingly Protestant GMIT majority and two northern districts with an enormously Catholic majority (in 2000: 93.5% out of a population of 416,039, meaning 389,364 Catholics in the diocese of Atambua). The division between the two denominations has its cause in the Portuguese past. The present diocese of Atambua observes the year 1556 as the beginning of Christianity. This history has been described in chapter four. In the second half of the nineteenth century there were only little remnants of this rather tumultuous past, but it remained a cherished heritage that deeply influenced the self-understanding of these Christians.

The Dutch missionaries of Larantuka already in the early 1860s heard messages about old and new aspects of Catholicism in the sections of Dutch colonial Timor that were close to the Portuguese territory. Some Dutch priests had paid visits to the Portuguese capital of Dili. Atapupu, the small harbour town on Dutch territory, was not only a permanent stop for the Dutch steamers that travelled to Dili, but also it had a Catholic raja. The first missionary to visit the inland region in 1879 was the Jesuit Jacob Kraaijvanger. Bishop Claessens reported in 1881 about his findings in a request to start a permanent mission post in Atapupu:

> It became clear to the visiting priest that the natives of these areas still foster the memory that their ancestors were Christian. Crosses, rosaries and other objects of the Roman Catholic liturgy, which are conserved with great care, confirm this tradition.… It is highly desirable that a minister should settle in a realm whose chiefs and population are so inclined to embrace Christianity. This is very promising both for the religion as well as to the government. The Christian religion brings loyalty to the government, because people will realise that this government is the major guarantee for civilisation, law and order, and prosperity.

In a later period, when the missionaries had learned Tettum and could communicate better with the population, it turned out that there were old stories and myths that had incorporated several Christian elements into common Timorese tradition. The most impressive was a hymn in the sacred liturgical language of Timor that uses the method of ‘speaking in pairs’ in a way similar to old Hebrew poetry of the Psalms. A hymn on the cross was noted down with the help of local translators by SVD anthropologist B. Vroklage in 1938,
O, parents and ancestors, our fathers and our lords
Lo, here are your loyal children, your faithful grandchildren!
Noble ancestor Bau Taë, Lord of Halimama
Thee we follow, thou preceded us.
Like you, we make the cross; we erect it as you once did.
The noble Lord Bau Taë, Lord of Halimama
Travelled comfortably and arrived safe in Larantuka.
Here he made with skilled hands, with competence,
His cross called Korloli or Bau Saë.
When the vertical beam was cut and hewn,
He made the horizontal beam and cut ornamentation in the lower parts.
The horizontal beam fitted in the hole of the vertical one, was fixed.
He took the cross on his shoulder, he bore it
To Baurato, to Baulili, where he was born.
He brought it to this mighty house, this lofty house.
Then he entered this mighty house, this lofty house,
To pay offerings in the manner and custom of his ancestors.
A great pig, a pig with long tusks,
As well as a castrated or uncastrated buffalo, a heavy one he took,
The scrutiny of the liver was promising, the veins ran right.
In this way the sacrifice was ended, so it was performed.
At the central house Babulu or Leo Loro
Its cross, named Korloli or Bau Saë,
Was planted and erected propitiously.
Now the cross stands there and shows off
Together with the royal house, the precious house.
They fit together, they belong together.
In this house the dynasty of the Raja found its beginning and origin.
Here were his roots, from here he came.
They fit together, they belong together, the house and the cross.
They are both equally good, equal in value.
All details are attended, everything is in order.135

According to the researcher Vroklage this use of the cross could not be seen
as the result of modern-day evangelisation, which had not yet reached the
areas of his inquiries. “I suppose that the Portuguese missionaries frequently
used the cross as a symbol of salvation and protection against evil.”136 Very
few advocates of inculturation and very few contextual theologians will accept
this ritual text of the cross as an exemplary or even legitimate case of appro-
priation of the traditional Christian symbolism; nevertheless this is the course
the religious development of the population of Central Timor took.

The island of Timor is linguistically divided in a Tetun (in former times
also called Belu or Tetum) speaking northeastern and a Dawan-speaking
southwestern section. The dividing line does not coincide with the boundary

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between the Indonesian and former Portuguese, now independent Timor Leste territory. It is in the middle of the Indonesian part of the island and can be located some 50 km west of the line Besikama-Halilulik-Atapapu. This means that it runs through the ‘Catholic’ part of Indonesian Timor. This means that the former Portuguese enclave of Oikusi is Dawan-speaking, as also the region of Maubesi and Noemuti. Protestantism arrived here from the southwest, Catholicism from the northwest. In 1916 the Dutch colonial government signed a last treaty with the Portuguese colonial power, defining the central boundaries and also that of the enclave of Oikusi. The status of Noemuti, now finally under Dutch control, became disputed between Protestants and Catholics. Prefect Noyen even made comparisons between the Catholics of Larantuka in 1859 and later where the Dutch Catholic clergy was an element to soothe the population with the transfer of power. He emphasised that the children of the raja of Noemuti had received their education in Dili with the clergy and one daughter even had gone to Macao together with the Catholic nuns who were chased from Portuguese Timor after the 1910 revolution in Portugal where an anti-religious government has taken the lead. In a letter to the governor general, sent through the intermediary of the Kupang resident, Noyen wrote in late 1915 with reference to the special permit for missionary work under article 123 of the Constitution of the East Indies and the factual ban of double mission for Protestants and Catholics in one region,

In former times the Catholic clergy went to that region and there is already a considerable number of Catholics. I have to remind Your Excellency, that we have to go to Noemuti to serve the Catholic faithful, whatever may be the final decision. This regular religious service is always permitted and not depending upon art. 123 of the Colonial Constitution. Such a situation would be undesirable for us and for a possible future Protestant mission working in this region. I now already wish to declare that the parents will make use of their right to withdraw their children from religious education, if schools would be erected by the Protestant mission. It is known that the people of Noemuti are really attached to their faith, although not really active in the regular practice of several aspects of Catholicism because of certain circumstances.\textsuperscript{137}

The outcome of this process was that the boundary between Catholic and Protestant mission was in the midst of the Dawan-speaking population, some 20 km west of Noemuti.

A quite spectacular remnant of the ‘Old Catholicism’ in this region was the discovery of the cave of Bitaoni, near Maubesi. During their first field trip in this region, the SVD priests Noyen and Verstraelen were led to this place by the local people. It was a place with two altars, a crucifix, a statue of

Mary and some candlesticks. People told them that they celebrated Easter in March or April, after the harvest at the end of the rainy season. Sometimes people had come from here to the priests of Atapupu to ask the precise date of Easter for that year. On the Wednesday before Easter the cave was decorated with banana leaves. On Maundy Thursday the raja with his chiefs would come to pray in the cave. On Good Friday and Saturday people were not allowed to wear head scarves, a sign of grief in memory of the “death of God…. On Easter, however, there is a merry celebration with buffaloes and pigs slaughtered, partially offered to the crucifix, but mostly eaten with dancing and drinking of gin.” Noyen noted that the raja asked to send a priest, to instruct the population better about the religion.138 The raja of Insana, the district of the cave of Bitaoni, told that he was baptised at the age of 12 by an old woman.139 In this area the station of Oilolok was opened in the late 1920s. At 6 km distance the cave of Bitaoni was then developed as a place of pilgrimage for St. Mary, with 15 August as the most important day. The celebrations of Easter were transferred to the proper church of Oilolok. The SVD priests had much less respect for the old Portuguese Catholic remnants than the Jesuits in the previous period.

Not only older memories were found. Also new arrivals from the Portuguese section of Timor influenced the development of Catholicism. The boundary between the Dutch possessions and the Portuguese colony was not controlled very strictly and at some places it was even not always properly defined. At the great revolt of 1912 the government buildings in Dili were looted by the resistance, but later the insurgents were severely hit by the army. Many were killed or imprisoned, but many also sought refuge in the Dutch section of the island. Quite a few of them had been educated at a mission school and baptised. Piet Noyen, the first SVD missionary to work in this region after the Jesuits had left in 1912, doubted whether they would be of any use for the Dutch Catholic mission in this region.

As in Flores, it was not the memory of a Christian past, mostly among the elite and chiefs, but it were the schools built in new villages, that was the real start of the spectacular increase of Catholics. In 1912 the statistics only could show 2,554 Catholics here, while it showed there were some 40,000 in 1940. They were first directed from the mission centre Lahurus, then Halilulik (from 1917), but finally the mission also followed the colonial government that established the administrative town of Atambua from zero in the mid-1910s. Only in 1935 did the Catholics move to this new centre.

Until 1936 this region was under the administration of the Apostolic Vicar of Ende. In 1936 Jacob Pesser (1896–1961) was nominated the first Vicar Apostolic of Atambua. He was succeeded by Theodorus van den Tillaart (1961–1985) and Anton Pain Ratu (1982–2007). In 1967 the Archdiocese of Kupang was separated from Atambua: this is the diocese for the overwhelmingly GMIT territory. In 2002 out of the total population of Southwestern Timor and attached islands (total population 1,187,912) only some 10% were Catholic, much less than the 93.5% for the Atambua diocese. The colonial policy of double mission has still its effects on the present division of Christian denominations in Indonesia.

The Catholic Timor mission experienced a tremendous increase in the number of baptised in the period 1920–1940, related to the exclusive control over education in that period, as in other regions of NTT. In the 1910s the mission had to rely on scores of Minahasan Catholic teachers who were sent from Woloan by educator-priest Anthonius van Velsen. The six first arrivals of 1913 are still honoured in Timor: Arnold Wanget, Yafet Tinangon, Aris Makalo, Albert Nangung, Osef Weweng and Z. Makalo. They are seen as the Indonesian missionaries who joined this educational endeavour beside the major Timorese teacher, Joseph Atok Serani, who was instrumental in finding the first Catholic rajas in inland Timor in the early 1880s. Atok Serani was taken to Larantuka for further education. He was the founder of an important Catholic ‘dynasty’ of teachers and later also priests.  

For the second half of the twentieth century there was first a process of consolidation. Within the new Indonesian Republic Catholicism in the Atambua diocese behaved somewhat like in Flores: a strong majority religion with a firm position in various sectors of society, especially in education and health care, but also in agricultural development. There were never such grand development plans in Timor as were designed in the 1960s for the cooperation between western governments and Catholicism in Flores. Still, bishops Van den Tillaart and Pain Ratu have been strong promoters of a Catholic involvement in social and economic development. Nearly simultaneous with the age of development, this region was influenced by the Indonesian occupation of East Timor in 1975 and the cruel oppression of all opposition in that region until the referendum of 30 August 1999 that was the beginning of independence for Timor Leste.

As in Flores, also in this Catholic region there were many cases of true or only imagined desecration of the host since the early 1980s. There is some kind of hysteria, a mixture of a strong sense of sacredness attached to the Eucharist and the host, as well as the strong feeling of separate existence of

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the various religious communities. As in Flores the fear of desecration of the host increased tensions between the religious communities, in the Atambua region more between Catholics and Protestants than between Muslims and Christians. In the late 1990s Muslim-Christian tensions occurred mostly in the town of Kupang and on the southwestern coast.

The unequal fight between traditional religion and Christianity in Sumba

The island of Sumba is one of the three or four larger islands of NTT (besides Timor and Flores, and sometimes including Alor). Since 1958 Sumba has been divided into two regencies (kabupaten), East Sumba with the capital of Waingapu and West Sumba with Waikabubak as its capital. In 1950, when Indonesia was formally recognised as an independent state, Sumba was part of the province of the Lesser Sunda Islands, with 16 semi-independent feudal kingdoms. The last remnants of the feudal structure, still maintained by colonialism, were abolished in 1954.

With a surface of 11,152 sq. km Sumba is about double the size of Bali. It had in 2000 two airports, Mauhau (the oldest one and already built in the colonial period) in the east, and Tambolaka for West Sumba. The capital of East Sumba, Waingapu is also its main harbour. For West Sumba a good natural harbour is more difficult to find, but that of Waikelo is the best developed.

In history the most important product of Sumba was its sandalwood (Cendana) that could be found in large quantity until the end of the eighteenth century, but at that time the island was already barren, because most trees were cut. Since then the major export of the island had been cattle for meat consumption and the small but strong and tough horses, that are also known as sandalwood horses, a name given by Samuel Roos, first colonial controleur in 1866.

There is one Sumbanese language with a number of different dialects, although there is more homogeneity in East Sumba, where the Kambera dialect is spoken. In West Sumba the dominating dialect is Waijewa, after the largest and most populated district, but there are several other dialects. Protestant missionary and linguist Dr. L. Onvlee therefore made translations of the bible in Waijewa and Kambera (published between 1938 and the 1970s).

Traditional religion in Sumba is called Marapu, after their name for the High God. The proper name of this highest God is not known to common people. He or she has created heaven and earth and everything. This God knows and hears everything, forgives and loves, and does justice. In daily life, however, this High God is not so much venerated, because the daily contact is with the spirits of the ancestors. For the veneration of the Marapu special pillars of
adoration have been built. These stone pillars (or *menhirs*) can be found in the dry and wet rice-fields, in the villages, along the coast and in other places. Sumbanese people, as in many traditional cultures, do not accept a separation of religion and local traditions. Implementation of traditional directions is believed to be the best way to a happy life, here and in the hereafter. Therefore Sumbanese are very strongly attached to their old traditions, especially to those related to marriage and burials. They do not so much care about being called “people without religion” as being labelled “people without a proper traditional culture or adat.” This has been a great hindrance for the spread of Christianity in Sumba, which is one of the few regions of Indonesia where there is still a rather significant number of people adhering to traditional religion. At the 1970 Indonesian census NTT had by far the highest number of ‘others’ (i.e. besides the ‘Big Five’ of Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Protestantism, Catholicism): one third or 33%, while South Kalimantan had at that time 28% of ‘others,’ Riau 13%, East Kalimantan 3%, and all other provinces a negligible amount. Probably on the basis of these numbers the Catholic church in 2000 estimated roughly that in Sumba the number of all kinds of Protestants was about 40%, Marapu 35%, Catholics 20% and 5% for the rest. The official census for 2000, however, saw a drastic reduction in the number of ‘others’ to 3.8% for the whole province of NTT, still by far the highest number for the whole of Indonesia. The influence of traditional religions is not only a matter of numbers. We will see below that in all Christian denominations there are still many influences from traditional religions. Therefore we should also take into consideration the reality of double or even multiple religious identities. It is without doubt that the Marapu are in a weak position: whatever may be the outcome of the struggle for souls, it is an unequal fight for traditional religion even when it is as tenacious as in Sumba.

There are few Hindus and Buddhists in the island of Sumba and nearly all of them are migrants from other regions. Christianity is spread in various denominations with the *Gereja Kristen Sumba*, GKS or (Protestant) Christian Church of Sumba as the largest. This church is called the *Gereja Besar* or Great Church. Therefore in this section most attention will be given to this church.

In Sumba people are divided along three social classes: a feudal class, free people and slaves. The raja and the nobility were and in many cases still are the ruling class. They owned the cattle and the slaves. They were rich and practised polygamy. The middle class or free people were sometimes also rich and led a polygamous life. We will see below that polygamy has been an

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important issue in the GKS. In the countryside this division of society into three classes still plays an important role.

Sumbanese and outsiders: background for the beginnings of Christianity

Western colonisers were not the first outsiders to come to the island of Sumba. They were preceded by Sawunese, Bimanese, Endenese and Chinese. Most of these migrants are found on the northern coast of the island.

There are genealogical bonds between people of Sumba and those of the small island of Sawu. According to a myth of origin, they come from two ancestors, Hawu Meha and Humba Meha. Hawu Meha gave birth to the Sawunese who initially lived in the island of Sumba but later migrated to the small (461 sq. km) island of Sawu, between Sumba and Timor. The offspring of Humba Meha remained in Sumba. Sawunese were already soldiers in the army of the Dutch East India Company, VOC, before 1800. They were placed in Sumba in order to prevent the slave trade by the Endenese of Flores. The closest ties are between Sawu and the western coastal regions of Sumba, Mangili and Waijelu. In 1848 there was a sudden great migration from Sawu to this region. The newcomers integrated into the Sumbanese society through marriage. In the late nineteenth century the colonial government organised massive migrations from Sawu to the north coast, Kambaniru and Melolo, but this latter group did not really merge with the Sumbanese people. They established settlements of their own, and they were used by the coloniser to fight against the traditional rulers of Sumba, such as in the Lambanapu War of 1901. Most of them lived in settlements on the north coast and some also in West Sumba. Most of them, also, were already Christian before they migrated to Sumba and now the Sawunese are all Protestants. Many congregations of the GKS in East Timor are pure Sawunese communities.

In the seventeenth century the power of the Sultan of Bima reached as far as the island of Sumba. Therefore a number of Bimanese still live on the west coast and in the western hills of Waikabubak. Most of them are traders and fishers. The Endenese originate from Flores. Many of them married Sumbanese women and they live on the north coast of Sumba. Like the Bimanese, all Endenese are Muslim.

It is difficult to determine when the Chinese arrived in Sumba, but they must have been there for a very long time. This can be proven through archeological findings of very old Chinese ceramics in Sumba. The Chinese usually stay in the larger towns as traders and most of them are Christian.

There have been some famous Arabs in Sumba. One of the first must have been Sharif Abdurrachman bin Abubakar Algadrie who was the official representative (posthouder) of the Dutch colonial government in Sumba in 1843. After him many other Arabs settled in towns in Sumba as traders. All of them
are Muslim. Finally, members of nearly all the ethnic groups of Indonesia have settled in this island as traders or government officials. These groups have made Sumba a heterogeneous society at least in some regions.

The relation of Sumbanese people with the West began with the Portuguese and the Dutch. The Portuguese built a fortification in Tidas, on the south coast, but they had no frequent contact with the population. In 1750 a first formal contact with the Dutch resulted in an oral contract between Daniel van den Burgh, opperhoofd of the VOC in Kupang and eight chiefs of Sumba who formally recognised the Dutch trading company and promised that they would sell the products of their land exclusively to the VOC. In practice, however, the rajas of Sumba did not worry about this pledge. In 1769 the first VOC official, J.J. van Nijmegen, was posted in Mangili, but this did not really increase the interest of the VOC in Sumba.

Dutch interest was only resumed in 1866 with the placement of a controleur, Samuel Roos in Sumba (1866–1873). In 1875 Sumba became a district of the Residency of Kupang, with Waingapu as its capital. After the pacification of the first decade of the twentieth century there was an Assistant Resident in Waingapu and further divisions of the Sumba territory followed, with more colonial officials appointed. Karuni became the capital for North West Sumba, Waikabubak for South West Sumba. Central and East Sumba then became united in the district of East Sumba with Waingapu as capital. This division into various subdistricts also had its effect on the spread of Christianity because it was during the more intensive colonial period that the spread of this new religion started.

In 1942 the Sumbanese made contact with the Japanese army who arrived in Waingapu on 14 May 1942 under S. Nagata. On 8 November 1945 the Japanese surrendered to the allied forces of NICA. The memory of the Japanese is that of a very cruel time, where they had to do much forced labour in order to build fortifications, roads and airstrips. Many women were brutally raped by Japanese soldiers. After World War II the Dutch returned. Although the political ties were cut off in 1950, religious relations continued until 1990. Since then also many Western tourists and researchers have arrived, to start more secular relations with Sumbanese people.

Christianity restrained in the circle of Sawunese Christians (1876–1912); Protestant and Catholic failures

Christianity was not something altogether new for Sumbanese people. They knew that the Dutch colonisers were Christian. They also knew the Sawunese migrants who moved under compulsion around the 1870s. These Sawunese were transported by Isaac Esser, former Resident of Timor (1862–1864), as a method of evangelisation and also in order to improve their income. Esser
was very concerned to see an end to the continuing state of war, theft of cattle and killing of people in Sumba. He assumed that the Sumbanese were people without culture. They had to become subjugated to colonial society and brought into a proper culture. The only way in that direction was by the process of converting them to Christianity. The Gospel would make them people with a culture.

Most of the Sawunese migrants were Christians. They settled in two places, in Kambaniru (close to northern Waingapu) and Melolo in the east of the island, where they were looked after by the missionary of Sawu who, in 1877, also appointed two teachers, Eduard Thenau for Kambaniru and David Hutuhuli for Melolo. The teachers were not sent to evangelise the Sumbanese but to serve the Sawunese in Sumba. In that period, the only Sumbanese who wanted to become Christian were run-away slaves who sought protection in the Sawunese villages.

The religious isolation of the Sawunese on Sumba also had a social and political impact. The Sawunese were not put under the authority of the Sumbanese chiefs, but under their own raja, who as an assistant raja represented the chief of Sawu. They also followed the traditional custom of Sawu and its culture. They formed a colony, even a ghetto, isolated and separated from the people of Sumba.

Isaac Esser also directly contacted the missionary organizations in the Netherlands, to start a mission in Sumba. This resulted in the sending of the first and only missionary by the NGZV, *Nederlands Gereformeerde Zendingsvereeniging*, J.J. van Alphen who arrived in Sumba in 1881. He did not work among the Sawunese but approached the Sumbanese, but, because of the disorderly situation in Sumba, Van Alphen stayed in the village of the Sawunese. The Sumbanese chiefs showed an unfriendly attitude towards this foreigner who arrived with a foreign religion that would destroy their social structure and their old traditions. Only the chief of Melolo noticed the friendly attitude of the missionary and through him Van Alphen was able to make contact with some Sumbanese. But he was rather disappointed to hear that the Sumbanese were not interested in the Gospel or any message of salvation. They asked only for medicine, food, the sirih drug and similar needs and did not express to him their spiritual needs. Van Alphen was struck with tragic disasters: his wife died after giving birth to her first child, and Van Alphen caught malaria and in consequence left Sumba after two years, to seek recovery in Java (1883). He remarried in Java and in 1885 came back, no longer as a NGZV missionary because that society had concentrated on Central Java. He now came for the ZCGK, the Christian Reformed Church. Also the two existing posts in Kambaniru and Melolo were put under the authority of this orthodox Reformed mission.
After his return to Sumba, Van Alphen noticed that the chief of Laura in West Sumba was open for the Gospel. He travelled to that place, and made an agreement with the raja that he would open a missionary post in that region. But transport between the various places on the northwestern and northeastern coast was very difficult, over land as well as by sea. Van Alphen fell sick again and sought recovery in Java for a second time. In this period the Catholics in East Flores (Larantuka) and Central Timor (Atapupu) had heard about possibilities in Sumba. They were stimulated by negotiations between the apostolic vicar in Batavia and the governor general about new openings. These discussions were quite far removed from the local reality in far away Sumba and on 24 June 1888 Governor General Van Rees permitted the Catholics to start a mission in West Sumba. The Jesuit priest, Bernard Schweitz, arrived in Laura in April 1889, together with a Dutch lay brother and seven young men from Larantuka, who would build the mission station and work as teachers. In August the baptismal books already recorded 758 baptisms of children below the age of seven years, who were baptised under promise of the chiefs of Laura that they would be educated as Catholics.

After this promising start the Catholic mission also experienced many difficulties. Communications with other parts of the islands, let alone of the archipelago, proved to be very troublesome and expensive. There was a steady but very slow development. The Jesuit priest Anton van der Velden did linguistic work and compiled a grammar of Sumbanese as spoken in Laura. The number of children in school slowly rose, but all of a sudden, in 1898, the decision was taken in Batavia that this Catholic mission was a failure, that it was too expensive and the missionaries were withdrawn. Some twenty Sumbanese boys accompanied the priest Van der Velden to Timor and later to Larantuka, to finish their primary schooling. The 1897 annual statistics of the Catholic mission mentioned 922 Catholics for Laura. In later statistics the Catholics in Sumba were not mentioned, until the return of the clergy in 1929.

Van Alphen, the unlucky Protestant missionary, arrived for a third time in Sumba to work in the Sawunese village of Kambaniru, between 1889 and 1893. In September 1893 he was dismissed from the mission as unfit to do this job. He challenged this dismissal and a long legal process followed, lasting until 1925. But, in 1905 Van Alphen’s name was cleared by the synod of his church in the Netherlands. He never returned to the mission.143 In 1889 the ZCGK sent a second missionary, Willem Pos, to Sumba, for the post of Melolo. Pos opened a clinic and a school in Mangili, with an Ambonese and also Titus Djina, a Sumbanese, as teachers. This Titus also made the first

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143 Van den End 1987:5.
translations in Sawunese, of the Ten Commandments, Our Father, and similar texts, but the school was set on fire during one of the many local conflicts. A third missionary, C. de Bruijn, was sent to work more specifically among the Sumbanese, but in his long period of duty (1892–1927) he also concentrated on the Sawunese in Kambaniru.

The last decades of the nineteenth century were a period of turmoil and schism in the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands. This caused a regrouping of missionary societies, the outcome of which was a strong congregationalist emphasis on the organization of the mission. The island of Sumba was entrusted to three northern districts (classes) of the Reformed Churches of the Netherlands (the plural churches was chosen to accentuate that reference was not to the national church, but the local congregation of the true church). They sent, as ZGKN, Douwe Klaas Wielenga to Sumba after his study of theology and some additional training in practical medicine, Malay and Sumbanese. Wielenga arrived in Sumba in 1904, and stayed for some time in Kambaniru. From here he opted for Payeti as a truly Sumbanese settlement. He opened a medical clinic and built his own house as a missionary post among the Sumbanese. The house was burnt down before it was finished. But Wielenga continued his efforts and moved to Payeti on 30 September 1907, leaving the circle of Sawunese that had for so long restrained the spread of Christianity to minister to proper Sumbanese.

Wielenga’s strategy focused on health care and education. He sought good contact with the chiefs of Sumba like the rajas of Napu, Memboro, Laura, Waiewa and Lauli (West Sumba), initially without much success. Until 1912 there was not much progress in his work. Why were the Sumbanese so resistant? There were four reasons. First, there was no public security in Sumba. There was a constant war between the petty rulers. The pacification of Sumba had started in 1901 with the so-called Lambanapu War. In 1906 the raja of Memboro attacked the raja of Laura and this was the reason for the colonial army to start the pacification of West Sumba. Only in 1912 was the whole island of Sumba considered safe and under Dutch rule. Second, the first missionaries had no good knowledge of Sumbanese, had a poor idea of its culture and customs, and they had no training in health care, agriculture and other practical matters. Third, there was suspicion from the side of the Sumbanese, who supposed that the missionaries came to destroy their social structure, belief and culture. Fourth, there was suspicion that the missionaries had a double agenda: besides evangelising the Sumbanese (to estrange them from their culture and belief) it could also be their purpose to bring Sumba under Dutch rule. The Sumbanese and the missionaries kept their distance and suspected each other.144

144 For this whole section see Djara Wellem 2004.
Christianity approaching Sumba society and the intensive evangelisation of Sumbanese, 1913–1942

The pacification of Sumba and the administrative division of colonial rule in the island gave room for the evangelisation of this society. Besides, there was a strategic division of the missionary work between the fundamental service (hoofddienst) and supporting service (hulpdienst). The evangelisation was not only carried out in words, but also through concrete service, in the field of health care, education and community development.

In this period the whole island of Sumba became a target of evangelisation. The territory was divided into areas that were under the supervision of a missionary minister. They were the leaders of the missionary activities. In Payeti (Central Sumba) it was D.K. Wielenga (1904–1921), and P. Lambooy (1924–1940); in Melolo (East Sumba) it was F.J. Colenbrander (1913–1927) and S.J.P. Goossens (1931–1938); for Karuni (West Sumba) it was L.P. Krijger (1913–1924) and W. van Dijk (1921–1942). Between 1932 and 1942 Rev. P.J. Luijendijk served the new district of Waibakul in West-Central Sumba. Together with the ministers as directors, the school teachers and the evangelists were executing their duty in their local conditions. The work in the local communities was done by the indigenous helpers, who could directly understand the concrete needs of the people of Sumba.

Before the arrival of Van Alphen there were already schools, in Kambaniru, Melolo and Waingapu, but their pupils were nearly all Sawunese. Pos and Colenbrander already tried to establish schools for the original population of Sumba, but they did not yet receive a positive response. Sumbanese people withheld their children, for various reasons, from attending the new school. A school that was opened in Lai Handung was burnt down soon after it opened. Also the school of Waijelu did not attract enough pupils. Still, it turned out that Sumbanese people were starting to accept school for their children. Thanks to the agreement with the colonial government, the Flores-Timor agreement of 1913, already discussed above, the whole field of education in Sumba was entrusted to the Protestant mission with full financial reimbursement by the colonial government. The qualified teachers Tjalling van Dijk (1913–1938) and Jacob Erkelens (1938–1947) were the inspectors of education in Sumba.

Basic education was taught in a course of only three years. In 1914 the missionaries already opened an extended primary school in Payeti and in 1920 in Karuni. Also in 1914 a special teachers’ training course was set up in Payeti by Tjalling van Dijk. It gave (after three, later five years of primary education) a course of two years to become a teacher, but also included an additional theological year for those who would fulfil the double position of

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145 Wellem 2004:156.
school teacher and leader of the local congregation. Initially a number of teachers had arrived from Ambon and Timor, but the goal was to educate enough local people to work for the development of education. In 1925 a vocational school for agriculture and cattle breeding was started.

The development of evangelisation stimulated the missionaries to start theological education at a higher level than the simple teachers’ training. Therefore a theological school was opened in Karuni in 1924. Lodewijk Krijger (1924–1934) and Dr. Hendrik Bergema (1938–1942) were the principals of this school. Most of the students were sons of chiefs, of the nobility and of freemen, besides some Sawunese. There was, until Indonesian independence, no son of a slave in this school. This school graduated 58 evangelists up to the Japanese occupation. They had an important role in the further spread of the Gospel in Sumba, where never more than five ordained European ministers worked at one moment.

The mission also gave much attention to health care. In all districts a clinic was opened, while there was a government hospital in East Sumba and a mission hospital in West Sumba. The Dutch missionary society not only sent ministers and teachers, but also some doctors and nurses who immediately started to train Sumbanese personnel.

The Christian mission did not arrive in a country without culture or tradition. It was exactly this traditional culture that made the integral acceptance of Christianity very difficult in the first decades of the missionary endeavour. There was a great interest among the first missionaries to study the culture and languages. They wanted to know the way of thinking of the Sumbanese and to truly understand their language. Therefore, in 1926, Dr. Louis Onvlee, a linguist, was sent as a member of the missionary team. He wrote a dictionary and a grammar of Sumbanese, translated the New Testament in the dialect of Kambera (published in 1961) and of Waijewa (published in 1970). Also the Psalms and many hymns were translated in these two Sumbanese dialects. In 1942, when the Japanese conquered Indonesia, there were already seven autonomous congregations and 47 missionary stations where a community of 5,855 members of the Protestant churches came together.

A second arrival of the Catholic mission. The beginning of the fragmentation of Sumbanese Christianity, 1929–1942

There was something like a gentlemen’s agreement about the ban on “double mission” in the Dutch East Indies. It was strongly supported by the Protestant mission that was very loyal in maintaining it. It was also supported by the colonial government that had to issue permits for missionary work by European people and would only give permits to Catholics for ‘Catholic territories’ and similarly to Protestants for the territory of ‘their mission.’ The Catholics,
however, never fully and whole-heartedly accepted this agreement. The most painful case probably is the history of Minahasa. Another complicated case is Sumba.

Until 1921 there were no visits of Catholic priests to the island of Sumba, although a number of those baptised in Laura remained committed to the Catholic faith after the priests had left in 1898. Very few Catholics embraced the Protestant faith, but many more returned to traditional religion, or rather continued practices that they never had fully given up. Quite a few continued to cherish a warm and vivid memory of the ‘Catholic decade’ at the end of the nineteenth century. In 1913 the departing Resident of Kupang, C. van Rietschoten, mentioned the vivid and warm memory of the short period of Catholic missionaries, “In West Sumba a small number of Roman Catholics are found who still cherish the memory of the former mission post, left empty for many years.”146 After many applications, the Catholic priests of Flores were, from 1921, allowed to visit those who had remained Catholic. We have a quite curious description of these visits (in 1923 and 1924), written by the Protestant missionary in Karuni,

In August last year the Catholic missionary also paid a visit to our house and more or less discharged himself: it was not really worth the visit for him to come to Sumba and to enter our territory, because there were only very few Catholics here, but he was sent by the bishop, etc. Later I heard that he also administered baptism, but I have no proof that he baptised other children besides the offspring of the former Catholics. He was again here recently for a visit of several weeks. And now I receive information that he goes around to evangelise and administer baptism. His method is as follows: he carries a big bag with the sirih-pinang drug, enters a village, and collects people who of course are curious to meet such a foreigner. He presents the sirih-pinang, looks friendly and talks with people with the help of an interpreter. At the end of such a party he suggests that he should baptise them and their children. Of course, they enjoy this very much. He administers baptism and writes down the names. I heard that there were some hundred baptisms in Tana Riwu, children and adults, of course still absolutely pagan, but already received in the bosom of that ‘holy’ church. I think that this number is exaggerated but in this way it is quite easy to make the whole of Sumba Catholic in a few years through three visits per year…. But who will prevent them to enter Sumba for permanent stations, when so many are already baptised by them?147

Quite understandably, the Catholic reports of the visits are different, although they are also dominated by the friction between the Catholic and Protestant mission. The Sumbanese series of conflicts between the two missions was

146 Steenbrink 2007–II:130.
probably the longest after the even more difficult and continuing conflicts about Minahasa. Basically there were five points of disagreement between the Catholics and Protestants. First, there was the question of the first permit: Protestants claimed that the Jesuits entered in 1889, when Protestant missionary Johan Jacob van Alphen left the mission (where he had begun in 1881) only temporarily due to personal problems. The Jesuits claimed that they had received government permission to visit Sumba and start work there on 20 January 1878. Second, who arrived first? The Protestant Van Alphen arrived first on (East) Sumba in 1881, but the Jesuits arrived in 1889 in West Sumba. Third, the division of territory: the Jesuits understood that they would work on West Sumba, but this restriction was never formally given to either party, it was only a gentlemen’s agreement dictated by the Resident of Kupang. Fourth, was the practice of baptism: the Protestants criticised the Catholics in that they conferred baptism on those who had not yet received sufficient instruction. The Catholics answered that they did give good instruction and that they considered baptism necessary for salvation, a good reason not to wait too long with this sacrament. Fifth, there were different interpretations of the interruption of the Catholic mission in 1898: the Catholics considered this a temporary stop only, while the Protestants interpreted the departure of the Jesuits as a final decision. Only a new permit by the governor general could change things again. The usual local expression for Protestants was Sorani Muda, or New Christians, while in local Malay the Catholics were called Sorani Tua for Old or Traditional Christians. This terminology involved an acceptance that the Catholics were the original and genuine believers. There were some complaints by Protestants about the use of this terminology.

In October 1929 SVD priest Heinrich Limbrock started a new Catholic station in Weetebula, in fact outside the regular existing villages. It was a new creation where a grand mission station with a great school, dormitory and much later also a church was built. This was the start of the new beginning of the Catholics in West Sumba. In 1942 there were about 3,000 Catholics and some 6,000 Protestants in the island. At that time this was not yet 10% of a population of some 120,000. Compared with Timor, or even more with Flores, this was a small number of Christians. This would remain so later as well.

During the Japanese occupation, 1942–1945, the Catholic (like the Protestant) mission in Sumba suffered much more than in Flores. The village schools were closed and the great mission compound in Weetebula was confiscated by the Japanese army. There was also some overt anti-Christian propaganda by the


Japanese authority, declaring that “Christ had died and now also Christianity should pass away. Christianity must be seen as a religion of the past, because it is the religion of the Dutch and the Americans.”

After the Japanese surrendered there was a period of recuperation. The SVD then realised that they had not enough personnel for the whole of NTT and they sought other people for their most difficult mission, Sumba. In 1956 German members of the Redemptorists (CSsR) order arrived. Their mission in Argentina became autonomous and after options for Norway, Ethiopia and Columbia were rejected they accepted work in Sumba, where they were quite successful. In 2001 they had 30 CSsR priests in Sumba, only nine of them of German descent (the youngest born in 1948, most of them from the 1930s; the oldest Indonesian was from 1942, but most of them were from the 1960s and 1970s), while there were 38 CSsR students, mostly from Sumba, undertaking their study of theology in Yogyakarta. The CSsR could not yet provide a bishop and in 1975 the Javanese Jesuit H. Haripranata was elected. After his unexpected death in 1980 it took five years before there was a new bishop appointed, the Florinese SVD priest Girulfus Kherubim Pareira (born in 1942 from an old elite family that used Portuguese names, in Lela close to Sikka).

As the ‘smaller church’ (in comparison to the GKS), the Catholics built a solid community, where much attention was given to slow expansion and even more to consolidation. Inculturation, the discourse with traditional religion, is much more prominent than ecumenical relations that seem to be in a deadlock with a minimal agreement on mixed marriages and the ceremonial common Christmas celebration. A quite unusual study on Sumbanese traditional religion is by CSsR priest Dr. Edmund Woga (born 1950) who defended his German language dissertation in 1993 on the concept of God in Sumbanese tradition. The High God of Sumba is not the creator, but some kind of ancestor: both mother and father, as the highest being in a permanent caring relation to mankind.

Progress in a period of suffering: 1942–1945

After the German attack on the Netherlands, in May 1940, communication between the Dutch missionary organisation and Sumba was halted. But the Batavia district of the Reformed Churches could still provide financial help. On 7 December 1941 World War II was extended to the Pacific through the bombardment on Pearl Harbour. Because of the remote location of Sumba the missionaries expected that the Japanese would not come so far, but soon they

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150 Haripranata 1984:351.
151 Woga 1994.
were afraid that Sumba would be used as a station on their way to Australia. On 1 February the first bombs fell on Waingapu. Therefore Rev. Luijendijk asked that the evangelist of Payeti, H. Mbay, should be prepared to be ordained as the first native minister of Sumba. The ceremony took place on 3 March 1942. Also the leader of the congregation of Rara, H.M. Malo was ordained, on 16 March 1942. At that time there were already scores of ordained ministers in Timor. Compared to the European ministers in Timor (members of the *Indische Kerk*), the ministers of the Sumba Mission were quite orthodox and conservative, and must be seen as somewhat paternalistic. They wanted a very thorough theological training for ministers and formulated such difficult requirements that until the emergency conditions of 1942 nobody could fulfil their wishes.

On 14 May 1942 the Japanese occupied Waingapu. The European missionaries and colonial officials were arrested and put in prison. They were later transported to Makassar and brought to a detention camp in Pare-Pare. Their wives and children were also brought to South Sulawesi, first to Malino, later to Kampili. Their houses were burnt down, or used by the military.

From that time the congregations had to be directed by the Indonesian evangelists, while the administration of the sacraments was handled in an orderly way by Rev. H. Mbay in Central and East Sumba. The usual meeting of the teachers in Payeti continued, but was closely observed by the Japanese. In July 1945 Rev. Mbay was killed by the Japanese, his body was concealed and never found. Rev. S.H. Dara, the evangelist (*guru injil*) of Melolo took over the responsibility of the Eastern and Central congregations.

The congregations of West Sumba were led by Rev. H. Malo, who was able to maintain better relations with the Japanese authorities. He was even decorated by the Japanese with a paper medal, with the promise that after the Japanese victory, this medal would be changed for a golden one. Rev. Malo could preside over the regular meetings of the teachers and during the Japanese occupation he baptised 409 people. The council of teachers had already taken the decision that the evangelist of Waikabubak should be called as their minister, but this decision was not executed because of the end of the war. They also declared their meeting to be the council of an ecclesiastical district or *classis*. They also opened an education programme for evangelists, led by Rev. Hama himself. These decisions could not be fully implemented because of the end of the war.\(^\text{152}\)

The Japanese occupation was a period of much suffering for the Sumbanese Christians, but also a time of ripening. They learned how to lead the congre-

\(^{152}\) Wellem 2004:244–245.
gations themselves and proved to be able to maintain their faith without the foreign missionaries. This troubled period also fostered the spirit of self-reliance. After the Japanese capitulation on 15 August 1945, it took some time before the allied forces took over authority on Sumba. In West Sumba as well as in East Sumba a Council for Safety and Peace was constituted before they arrived. Later the Dutch contrôleurs for both regions arrived in order to restore colonial rule. But they met strong opposition from the rising nationalist movement. The traditional chiefs of Sumba constituted a Federation of the Island of Sumba, with a Council of Rajas as the highest body, while the administration was run by the Executive Board of the Council of Rajas. A spirit of independence had started among the people of Sumba and this also influenced the Christian leaders.

Towards the end of 1945 the foreign missionaries were preparing their return to Sumba. They wanted to rebuild the missionary institutions that were destroyed by the Japanese but they had not followed the new developments in Sumba. They thought that as many foreign workers as possible should be sent to Sumba, at least some twelve persons. In the first years after the Japanese capitulation 18 foreign workers arrived, more than ever had been working in the island before the Japanese period. The missionary leaders estimated that still some 20–25 years were needed in order to prepare the church for self-reliance, but things developed more quickly than expected.

After the Japanese capitulation the congregations started to nominate their own evangelists and ministers. The congregations in Central Sumba (Kambaniru, Payeti and Waingapu) were already establishing their own classis. Kambaniru and Payeti already had Sumbanese ministers, Mb Ratubandju and S.J. Piry. In 1946 a classis of East Sumba was established and Melolo nominated its own minister. This was the reality that was found by the returning and new missionaries. Whether they liked it or not, they had to accept this situation. They soon agreed and found their new role as advisors. This resulted in the formation of the synod of the GKS, Gereja Kristen Sumba in Payeti, 15–17 January 1947.

The Protestants Sumbanese church after autonomy

The autonomy of the GKS did not involve a breach with the foreign mission. The GKS remained financially dependent and its top leadership was still in the hands of expatriate missionaries. These foreign ministers were no longer confined to their congregations, but they also had a function as advisor of a classis, especially for missionary work. Their role remained for the time being very decisive. At the time of the first Synod in 1947 the foreign personnel were six foreign ministers, five specialists in the field of education, two medical doctors and three nurses. The GKS soon developed: the two ordained ministers
of early 1947 had grown to a number of 15 one year later. At that time there were seven classes and 22 congregations. The general meeting of missionary workers was transformed into a Missionary Council in 1953, with an advisory function only. More and more tasks were transferred to the Sumbanese themselves. Because of the conflict between Indonesia and the Netherlands about the status of New Guinea (Papua), the full responsibility for education was taken over by Sumbanese. The Batak W.H. Siregar became the director of the teachers’ training college, succeeding W. Duker. The Dutch ministers were succeeded by missionaries from the *Altreformierte Kirche* in Germany, which sent B. Alsmeier (construction engineer), and the ministers H. Alsmeier and H. Baarlink. The first Sumbanese principal of the theological school was M. Jiwa, as successor to P. Luijendijk.

From 1955 on the Communist Party had a branch in Sumba and attracted quite a good number of Christians who became members and even took local leadership. The GKS held a firm position and opposed the party at the 1956 Synod in Petawang, where Christians were asked not to join this atheist party. After the failed Communist coup of 1965, membership of the church increased sharply, because of the government policy of recognising only five religions. Marapu was not recognised as a religion and GKS membership rose to 38,075 in 1969 and 43,1231 in 1971.

The movement towards formal membership of Christianity continued during the 1980s and until the end of the century. As a consequence the practice of communal baptism could not be prevented, although there was much debate about large groups who were baptised at one ceremony. Many ministers of the GKS had the feeling that harvest time had come and that they should not hesitate to reap the fruits. In 1994 the statistics showed a membership of 180,000 for the GKS, that increased to 256,094 in 2004. At that time the church had 151 ministers, 230 evangelists, 27 assistant evangelists, 428 active lay people (see below) and 38 temporary lay people. This movement caused the GKS to begin a course for lay evangelists, that soon had to be upgraded to a somewhat higher level to meet the standards of modern people.

*Several GKS activities, 1947–2004*

Since the autonomy of the GKS, the church has been active in many fields, in a holistic way, in fact covering all aspects of the life of people in Sumba. This broad focus was already established in the period of the foreign missionaries, but was intensified during the last half century. We may discern the following fields:

**Evangelisation.** This was the first concern of the GKS. The foreign missionaries in the various classes considered assisting of local ministers for
evangelisation was their first duty. In order to enhance this field, the education of evangelists was continued. In 1950 the school moved from Karuni to Lewa and in 1973 it was closed because of the merging of several institutions into the newly developed Theological Academy of Kupang that was founded by the GKS in cooperation with the Protestant Church of Timor, GMIT. This academy has already produced evangelists who are working all over Sumba. Because of the shortage of evangelists, the GKS also appointed assistant evangelists who had followed a shorter theological course.

The GKS was in the 1950s and 1960s not yet able to pay for all these workers and therefore the Dutch ZGKN paid them until 1972. Since then the GKS has taken responsibility for the remuneration of the evangelists. The category of assistant evangelists was changed into Active Lay People (Kaum Awam Aktif) who did not receive a salary from the central board of the church, but nowadays they receive some payment from the local congregations where they work. Their number is double that of the evangelists. The statistics for 2004 showed 24 classes in the GKS, 74 central congregations, 492 affiliated congregations and 124 evangelisation posts.

Education. The activities of the foreign mission society were continued by the autonomous church. Until 1957 the foreign teachers were still the directors of education. They opened a junior high school in Waikabubak, led by R. Wybenga (1947–1952) and W. Popma (1952–1957). At the initiative of the Protestant political party Parkindo, a junior high school was opened in Waingapu, and a GKS foundation opened a senior high school in Waikabubak in 1960. A vocational school was started in 1949 in Melolo, led by D. Zwitser (1949–1959). This school later moved to Payeti and was finally taken over by the government.

Education for girls also received more attention. The United Christian Women’s Organization started a vocational school for girls in Waikabubak in 1948. Also, this school was later taken over by the government. For the management of the GKS schools a special foundation was set up, YAPMAS, Yayasan Persekolahan Masehi Sumba. An agricultural school in Lewa, East Sumba, was put up by another foundation, also established by the GKS, the Yayasan Kesejahteraan Keluarga GKS. This school is still under GKS management.

The GKS not only organised formal education but also informal courses like training in the field of agriculture and car maintenance. In 1948 the engineer B. Abels came to Sumba to lead the development of agriculture training. In 1967 a Christian Agricultural Training Centre (PLPK, Pusat Latihan Petani Kristen) was opened in Lewa, East Sumba. Also a repair shop for cars and agricultural machinery was opened. For the set-up of the PLPK in Lewa ZGKN sent two Dutch engineers. As is often the case with development projects that are sponsored by foreign money, after the Dutch support was halted the centre
soon discontinued its activities. In the period after 1965, when the relations between Indonesia and the Netherlands were restored, the Reformed mission sent seven more workers for Sumba. For general social needs the GKS itself established the White Horse Foundation for Prosperity (YKPS, Yayasan Kuda Putih Sejahtera) that gave training, information and economic help.

**Health Care.** Missionary planning gave attention to health care from its very beginning. After the autonomy of the GKS a special foundation was founded for this field that after some changes was called the YUMERKRIS (Yayasan untuk Menyelenggarakan Rumah sakit-rumah sakit Kristen Sumba) in 1971. Several foreign doctors and nurses came to Sumba, to work in the Lende Moripa Hospital of Waikabubak and the Lindi Mara Hospital of Waingapu. The name of both hospitals means: ‘Bridge of Life,’ in two dialects.\(^{153}\) After the last foreign worker left the hospitals in 1972, this work was continued up to the present by local personnel.

There was a strong wish from the side of the parsons of the Dutch Reformed mission to make the GKS a strong and well-provided Sumbanese church. This effort, and foreign generosity, also caused a mentality of dependency. There were no strong efforts to make the GKS really independent. This tendency was re-enforced by the new stream of money that came from the development aid given by European governments from the mid-1960s. Therefore it appeared as if the foreign mission planned and executed many projects, with the people of the GKS only as ‘helpers.’ Many activities were brought to a standstill after the European partners left the country and stopped their financial support. For many projects there were also no Sumbanese personnel available. Only when the Dutch Reformed mission stopped financial support in 1972, could the GKS really become an autonomous church.

**The GKS and ecumenical cooperation**

The GKS had many partners, national as well as international. The closest cooperation on the national level was with the Timorese Protestant Church, GMIT. In 1971 the two churches set up a Theological Academy in Kupang, that later became the theological faculty of another common endeavour, the Artha Wacana Christian University. Since 1950 the GKS has been a member of the Indonesian Council of Churches (see chapter seventeen). The relationship with the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands, whose mission was most important for the start of the GKS, also continued and GKS also became a member of international Protestant bodies such as the WARC, REC and WCC.

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\(^{153}\) For the names of doctors and nurses: Van den End 1988:22.
Challenges for the GKS

Quite a few problems are not yet solved for the GKS. This is partly related to the fact that traditional religion has remained much stronger in Sumba than in various other regions of Indonesia.

Polygamy. Sumbanese society was and partly still is polygamous. This has been an important factor that prevented a quick growth of the GKS. The position taken by the foreign missionaries was that a polygamous man could be baptised together with his wives, but had to divorce them all, except one. He was also prohibited from taking another wife in the future. In practice, however, not only former adherents of the Marapu religion took more wives, but also many baptised Christians. The GKS took a strong position in this matter, by applying church discipline for the rest of their life. There were many debates on this matter at the yearly meetings of the synod of this church. Those who were affected by a disciplinary measure quite often remained loyal to their church and asked that the penalty should be lifted. In the synod there were two viewpoints: hardliners versus those who proposed a softer policy. In 1976 the Synod of Wai-Wei decided that the decision for measures against polygamous men could be left to the local congregations, but an agreement of the classis was needed. This synod also stressed that the church should continue preaching against polygamy. The acceptance of polygamous people should not be understood as a token that the GKS endorsed polygamy. This caused some congregations to lift the measures against polygamous people, while this was not done in other places.

Traditional Custom. It has already been repeatedly stated that Sumbanese people like to remain loyal to the old traditions. At the beginning of the preaching of the Gospel in Sumba the missionaries considered Sumbanese tradition to be an adoration of the devil. After the foreign missionary ministers had learned more about language and tradition, this attitude changed. They found also many positive elements in Sumbanese traditional customs, besides aspects that were clearly opposed to the Christian faith. The positive aspects should be maintained, the negative ones should be removed. There was no agreement in this respect among the various ministers. In the 1930s the strongest hardliner was Rev. S. Goossens. This difference of opinion caused a schism within the missionary body and a free church was started in Sumba by Rev. Goossens in 1938. The GKS continued on the path towards contextualisation.

154 A list of negative and positive aspects by Rev. P.J. Lambooij in Wellem 2004:203.
Autonomy. In 1947 the GKS became an autonomous church. This involved ideally a self-governing, self-supporting and self-propagating church. But the practice was different. Like other young churches in Indonesia, the GKS remained for several decades dependent upon its mother church in the Netherlands and GKS leadership was still ‘eclipsed’ by the missionary ministers from abroad. This could be seen most clearly in the financial dependence of the GKS. Until 1962 all salaries for GKS ministers were paid by the Dutch mission and for evangelists (guru injil) and assistant evangelist this continued until 1972. In that last year, however, the Dutch partner really wanted the GKS to become financially independent. At that time the GKS designed a five-year-plan and every year the foreign partner reduced its subsidies by 20%, until that period when GKS would no longer receive financial help from their Dutch partner. There was a strong protest within the GKS against this plan, but the Dutch side was very strong in its decision. We have to acknowledge, however, that the GKS has not yet succeeded in attaining full financial autonomy. There is still a strong need for foreign help. This is most clearly felt at the level of the synod: its expenses were in the period 1991–2002, 92.7% funded by foreign gifts and only 7.3% came from Sumbanese donations. Factors that caused this continuing dependence are the lack of capacity to find local resources and management, the poor economy of the island, a low understanding of what a church should be and do, and finally a crisis of faith.

Group Baptisms. We have already discussed at various places the tremendous increase of GKS membership that took place by group baptisms, especially in the late 1960s. This pattern of group baptisms was adopted because of theological and non-theological motives.

Ecumenical Relations. We have seen that the GKS is the largest church in Sumba, but it exists besides various other Protestant denominations and side by side with the Catholics who had their first entry already between 1889 and 1898 as sketched above. In 1921 the Catholic clergy returned. This time it was not the Jesuits, but the SVD order, succeeded in 1957 by the Redemptorist Congregation. It should be openly acknowledged that the relations between Catholics and Protestants are not warm. This has been the case from the very beginning. Only in 1974 was an official ecumenical meeting arranged, with the signing of the Guidelines on Ecumenical Affairs by the GKS and the Catholic Church in Sumba. This cooperation has started in the field of health care, social work and education. The two churches agreed on a common Writing

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on Mixed inter-church Marriage that was accepted by both churches in 1974, but the ecumenical relationship was halted because the GKS considered that the Catholics did not keep to the text of the agreement. Sheep stealing is still a common practice and this makes the ecumenical relationship very precarious. The relation of the GKS with the other denominations is also very problematic. Also between these churches the many cases of sheep stealing affect the relationship.

1975–2002: East Timor as a special challenge in Indonesian Christianity

During the 19th century the political division of Timor in a western Dutch and eastern Portuguese territory was consolidated, as we have seen above. In the 20th century relations between the two regions remained poor. This small remnant of a great empire developed into a region where the elite spoke Portuguese, was baptised as Catholics, and were separated from the common population who mostly lived in a subsistent economy. There were several periods of strong anti-clericalism in the colony, but after 1926 the Portuguese Minister and President António Oliveira de Salazar supported Catholicism.

In January 1967 José Joaquin Ribeiro (1918–2002) became the new bishop of Dili. He represented the Catholic Church when in April 1974 the government of Salazar had to step down due to the Carnation Revolution, after which the remnants of the Portuguese colonial empire also collapsed. Ribeiro, who had lived in Portugal until 1965, never learned Tetun. He rather supported the Portuguese officers of the UDT, the Timorese Democratic Union, than asking for compromises and a harmonious solution between conflicting parties in the political vacuum. He sharply disagreed with the Jesuits who were critical of the colonial system and supported Timorese nationalism. He saw in the other major party, Fretilin, only anti-religious communists. In later years Bishop Belo would comment: “How can the Church say in such circumstances that it won’t offer to mediate?” UDT was quickly defeated by Fretilin (early September 1975), but an anti-Fretilin lobby in the international forum, especially also amongst Catholics in Indonesia and the Catholic-dominated CSIS, Centre for Strategic and International Affairs in Jakarta, suggested the Indonesian government to intervene and seize power after Fretilin had declared East Timor independent on 28 November 1975. There are good arguments to accept that neither Soeharto nor his vice-president Adam Malik were eager to attack East Timor. It had never been on the Indonesian nationalists’ radar. It may have been Catholic Chinese (anti-communist) tycoons and Catholics in the army and politics that wanted the ‘integration.’ The Indonesian invasion took place on 7 December 1975. Soon afterwards Ribeiro showed himself an

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156 Kohen 1999:11.
outspoken opponent of the Indonesians who “came down from heaven like angels, but then turned into devils,” according to his words.\footnote{157} He resigned in May 1977.

With Martinho da Costa the first native priest was nominated to the leadership of the diocese after Gregório Barreto, of the mid-nineteenth century. Da Costa (1918–1991) originated from Manatuto, for a very long time the most thoroughly Catholic region of the country. Initially he took the strategy of quiet diplomacy with the Indonesian army, discussing the atrocities and their effects, starvation, distress and poverty, in private talks with army generals and political leaders. In 1981 he was convinced that this had no effects and he started to write letters to international media, asking for attention to the dark fate of his people. He criticised the conscription of 50,000 men (of a population of a mere 600,000) to form the human chain to help crush the Fretilin guerrilla resistance. He also made public the massacre of 500 women and children at the shrine of Saint Anthony in Lacluta, September 1981. He could, however, not communicate the precise details of the major assaults of the Indonesian army in 1976 and 1979 through which the population was reduced from over 700,000 to about 540,000. The Catholic leading army general, Leonardus Benny Moerdani, was suspected of persuading the Papal Pro-Nuncio in Jakarta to advise the pope to request the resignation of Da Costa Lopes, who was never formally nominated as bishop but only as Apostolic Administrator. Da Costa Lopes resigned in May 1983 and went into exile to Lisbon where he died as a lonely fighter for his far homeland in 1991. The religious of East Timor, in a statement of 1981 said:

\begin{quote}
We do not understand why the Indonesian Church and the Universal Roman Church have up till now not stated openly and officially their solidarity with the Church, people and religious of East Timor. Perhaps this has been the heaviest blow for us…. We felt stunned by this silence which seems to allow us to die deserted.\footnote{158}
\end{quote}

Carlos Filipe Ximenes Belo became the fourth bishop of Dili. Born in 1948 in a village on the north coast of Timor in a pious Catholic family, he enrolled in the minor seminary, where local languages were forbidden and Portuguese was the only means of communication. From 1969 until 1981 he was in Portugal and Rome for the study of theology, apart from short periods of practical training in Timor and Macao between 1974 and 1976. From a beginning as a young and inexperienced priest, considered rather timid and shy, he developed soon to become a true advocate of his people. He was educated as a

\footnote{157} Durand 2004:89.  
\footnote{158} Smythe 2004:1. Smythe took the title of his book, \textit{The heaviest Blow} also from this quote.
very traditional sacrament-oriented clerical ecclesiastic who was “catapulted” in a public role. Even the Vatican, though not recognising the “integration” of East Timor into Indonesia, gave its priority to the much larger number of Indonesian Catholics. A representative from the Vatican is quoted to have said to assistants of Belo, in the course of the preparation before the papal visit of 12 October 1989: “We are not going to sacrifice all of Christendom on account of 400,000 Catholics in East Timor.” At Belo’s inauguration as administrator in 1983 (he was only nominated and ordained as a full bishop in 1988) the majority of the Timorese priests did not attend the ceremony because of his supposed submissiveness, but five months later he protested vehemently in a sermon in the cathedral against the brutalities of the Kraras massacre. In early 1989 he published worldwide a call for a UN referendum for the East-Timorese “who were dying as a people and a nation.”

In October 1989 Pope John Paul II visited Indonesia and he was also in Dili for a few hours where he said Mass and attended the first widely publicized demonstration against the Indonesian occupation. While looking for more opportunities to draw the attention of the international community, Dili activists seized the opportunity of the visit of some international observers to organise, on 12 November 1991, a funeral procession for a student, Sebastião Gomes who had been shot by Indonesian troops the month before. This procession commenced like a peaceful demonstration, with students who unfurled banners calling for independence. As they entered the Santa Cruz cemetery of Dili the Indonesian troops opened fire. 271 were killed, 382 wounded and some 250 disappeared. The presence of two American journalists and a British cameraman made it possible to gather information about the event that made the Timor case known worldwide. In later years Bishop Belo recorded that he must have been the only person in East Timor who had not known what was planned. But it was logical that he did not know: in his difficult position as Catholic leader he would have tried to stop it.

In the mid-1990s the Indonesian government tried to smooth the feelings of the East-Timorese by building a giant new cathedral in Dili, the largest church of Southeast Asia, and by constructing the world’s second colossal statue of Jesus, 46 metres high and placed on top of a hill overlooking the harbour and bay of Dili. Bishop Belo did not really welcome either of these monuments that were not given ‘lulik’ or sacred character from the side of the local population. Ten years after construction the statue was already neglected. It was neither a shrine nor a monument and was in a state of disrepair.

In December 1996 Belo received the Nobel Peace Price, together with José Ramos Horta “the leading international spokesman for East Timor’s cause since 1975,” according to the committee. They received the prize in Oslo, 10 December 1996. Since the Noble Peace Prize was announced, in October 1996, the Catholic establishment of Indonesia felt embarrassed: there were no hearty congratulations from the Indonesian Bishop’s Conference for their colleague in East Timor. At the ceremony in Oslo only one representative of the Indonesian Catholic Social Office, and the architect, novel-writer, activist and Catholic priest Mangunwijaya, were present as the personal guests of Bishop Belo. Mangunwijaya wrote a column with the title: “Are religious leaders allowed to be active in politics?” Seeking an answer, Mangunwijaya distinguished between the politics of power and politics in the meaning of concern for the common welfare. In the second meaning, religious leaders not only should have the right, but even the obligation to be active in public life, but certainly without violence. The money from the Nobel peace was spent for the building of a new seminary.

In November 2002 John Paul II accepted Belo’s resignation as Vicar Apostolic of Dili, after the bishop himself had asked for the end of his term “due to health problems.” Belo had already several times offered his resignation, in disappointment with the lack of support from the Vatican. After seeking to regain his health in Portugal, Belo went to Mozambique, but was very much hoping to return to East Timor again from 2003 on, thinking about becoming a candidate for the presidency of the Catholic University.

The East Timorese suffering did not have a great impact on the majority of the Indonesians. First, there was a heavy censorship in Indonesian newspapers until the end of the Soeharto regime in 1998. Until the mid-1990s special permits were required to enter the territory. Therefore, the general public in Indonesia, also amongst Catholics, were not conscious of the tragic fate of the East Timorese. Then, Indonesia is a vast country: from East Timor to Java is a long and expensive flight, more than 2,000 km, and people of Java, Sumatra of Kalimantan seldom feel united with the far away territories like Papua, Timor and other islands.

In the late 1960s the great majority of the East Timorese still belonged to their traditional religion. There were 5,300 Chinese traders, just 490 Catholics among them. There were also only 380 Muslim traders (some of Arab descent like Mari Alkatiri, President of independent Timor Lorosae from 2002–2006) and a mere 100 Protestants in the capital Dili. Around 1970 the statistics showed only 20% of the population as Catholics, most of them among the rich and the officials, because to be baptised was more or less similar to be assimilados, to have become culturally Portuguese. There were 44 priests, 30

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diocesan, 9 Salesians and 5 Jesuits. Of these only seven were Timorese. There were 37 sisters, only six of them Timorese, and 12 Brothers.

After the ‘integration’ the number of Catholics rose quickly due to the strict obligation imposed by the Indonesian government to fill in one of the five recognised religions on official documents and civil registration. But Catholicism soon became also a shelter for the population against the new colonizer. In 1996 official statistics showed 83% Catholics. There was also a quick rise of Muslims and Protestants, arriving as military or government officials, or just small-business people, but relatively much less than the Catholics. Therefore, some people even stated that “Soeharto made them Catholic.” In 2004 statistics even showed 94% of Catholics for the country, because many of the recent migrant Muslims and Protestants had left the country. Many of the Portuguese clergy left the country, but Indonesians often replaced them. The Divine Word Missionaries came in 1980, joined by Franciscans, Carmelites and other orders.

After the 5 September 1999 referendum, when 78% of the population voted for independence, foreign troops under UN supervision had to rescue part of the population from the devastating action of ‘pro-integration’ hired militias. The new government of independent East Timor of 2002, however, brought together many of the former anti-clerical leaders of Fretilin, and the position of the Christian religion, especially the Catholic Church, became uncertain again. Apparently there is not yet an end to the turbulent development of Christianity in East Timor.

John Prior with Eduard Jebarus (Flores 1950–2000); Karel Steenbrink (Flores until 1950; Catholic sections of Sumba and Timor), Frederik Djara Wellem (Protestant sections of Sumba and Timor)

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