

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### CHRISTIANITY IN PAPUA

Christianity in Papua (successively called Papua land or Tanah Papua, Nieuw Guinee, Nederlands Nieuw Guinea, Irian Barat, Irian Jaya, West Irian Jaya/Papua and West Papua) represents the response of Papuans to the introduction of the Christian faith by missionaries, mainly from the Netherlands, Germany and the United States. To understand this response we must provide some introduction to the characteristics of Melanesian and Papuan culture and religion. The history of Christianity in Papua is quite different from that of most other parts of Indonesia. Until the last decades of the twentieth century there was hardly any active political role by Muslims. Missionary work started in the 1850s and has continued slowly since then. About the early 1960s Christianity was the dominant religion of the people and of the government. Papua still is the province with the highest percentage of Christians in the population.

Christian mission began in Papua in 1855, almost half a century before the Dutch colonial government entered the territory to establish its first permanent government posts there. Systematic external interference in Papuan indigenous political and social institutions came late and has been, until recently, quite limited. Traditional ways of life could be preserved, especially in the Highlands, where 40% of the Papuans live. Only in the early 1960s did the Indonesian Government and army begin to intervene intensively, often using considerable violence, in the culture, religion and economy of the Papuans. This was strongly resisted by the Papuans, who used Christian values and concepts in their struggle for freedom. Since the 1990s Papuans have used mainly non-violent methods, aiming at reconciliation and dialogue as means to solve their conflict with the Indonesians. The movement is nevertheless harshly suppressed by the Indonesian army and police. From 1970 until 1998 Papua was designated a Military Operational Territory (*Daerah Operasi Militer, DOM*). This means that the security forces exercise supremacy in society, in politics and in the economy.

Papua is the western part of the island of New Guinea. Its area is 420,000 sq. km, the size of California or one quarter the size of Indonesia without New Guinea. It had in 2004 about 2.5 million inhabitants of whom an estimated 1.6 million (about 65%) are Papuans. The remainder are 'newcomers' (*pendatang*), who came after the incorporation of Papua into Indonesia in the 1960s. There are three categories of these: a. the transmigrants, who have been settled in Papua by the government as peasant farmers, b. the 'free'

migrants, who came as traders, taxi drivers, craftsmen, shopkeepers, salesmen and women at the market, miners and so on, and c. government officials and army and police personnel, who were sent there on a tour of duty. Some of them bought property and stayed after their retirement. Most of the migrants are from Java and by religion Muslim.

The Papuans are Melanesians who have probably lived there already some 30,000 to 40,000 years. The origin of the Melanesians is uncertain. They may once have occupied the whole of Indonesia. In Indonesia there are still a few pockets of people who are ethnically and linguistically similar to the Papuans, e.g. in Timor, the interior of Seram, Tanimbar and other islands in East Indonesia. The local myths of the Sentani people and the Me of Paniai tell that the Papuans came from the East. However, when arriving at the place where they settled they found people or remains of people who lived there before them. The enormous linguistic diversity of Papua is evidence of a long history of scattered settlements without much contact. Papuans speak more than 250 vastly differing languages. Some people on the North coast like the Biak and Numfor people speak Austronesian languages, which are members of the large language family to which also Malay, Malagasy and the Polynesian languages belong. Most Papuan languages are grouped together as “Papuan languages.” These language groups are small or very small with at times no more than 100 speakers. The largest language groups are: the Dani (229,000), the Me (also Kapauke or Ekari, 100,000), the Asmat (59,000), the Biak-Numfor (40,000), the Sentani (25,000) and Moni (Paniai, 20,000). Smaller groups include the Yali, the Marind-anim, the Amungme and the Ayfat.<sup>1</sup>

The peoples on the North Coast and in Biak, the people from Numfor and Yapen (islands in the Cenderawasih Bay), as well those of the South coast of the Bird's Head, live from cassava, fishing and hunting. The Highlands, unexplored until the 1940s and 1950s, is twice the size of Switzerland. The people of the Highlands practice a fairly sophisticated form of agriculture, with terracing and the making of stone fences. The Papuans were among the first cultivators in the world. Their main crop is the sweet potato (*batatas*), a crop originating from Middle America and brought to East Indonesia by the Portuguese in the early sixteenth century. The introduction of the sweet potato, replacing the yam (*keladi*), enabled the Papuans to settle in the Highlands, which are too cold for other crops. The sweet potato is here the main staple food for the humans and for the pigs. The pig has a very important role in society. It is used to pay a bride price, to compensate for damages and to

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<sup>1</sup> Peter J. Silzer and Helja Heikkinen Clouse 1991. These figures may be dated. Moreover, in education and public life Indonesian (*Bahasa Indonesia*) is becoming dominant. Indonesian is used in church services, except for most churches in the highlands.

establish peace between rival groups and villages. Someone who is able to organise a pig feast enhances his status. In regular pig festivals a large number of pigs are slaughtered and eaten. Here, traditionally, the archetypal pig is honoured, as a saviour hero who sacrificed himself in order to provide the food crops humankind needs for survival. The ethnic groups in the South, in the Merauke and in the Mimika regencies, were traditionally hunters and food gatherers, though also cassava is cultivated. Among these, the Asmat and Marind-anim are famous for their woodcarvings. Their art is of a religious nature and closely connected with their headhunting raids. The *magnum opus* of Van Baal, *Dema*, demonstrates the complexity and range and depth of the traditional religion of the Marind-anim.

Papua is rich in minerals like copper, gold, oil and nickel. The exploitation of fragrant wood (*kayu gaharu*) and logging in the vast forests also brings considerable wealth to some individuals. In 1967 an American company, Freeport McRohan, built the world's largest copper and gold mine in the Amungme area, near Timika, on the South coast. In the 1990s huge deposits of LNG were found near Bintuni, in the Bird's Head. From the early 1970s onwards the Indonesian government introduced the policy of transmigration, in part financed by the World Bank, which brought poor and landless, mainly Javanese, families to Papua. They were given five acres of land (20,000 sq. m.), a two bedroom wooden house with a well and a pit latrine and just enough rice to survive until the next harvest. After five years the land became their individual property. The vast majority of these migrants are Muslims. Only very few of the plots were made available for Papuans on the same conditions as the outsiders. Of the other migrants, those who come on their own, an estimated one third, comes from Java, one quarter from the Moluccas, while others come from North and Middle Sulawesi (Manadonese, Sangirese and Toraja), South Sulawesi (Buginese, Butonese, Macassarrese), Sumatra (Batak and Minangkabau) or Flores and Timor. There is also a small number of Hindu Balinese and Buddhist Chinese.

Generally speaking Papuans were left out of the development (*pembangunan*) of the New Order government of Soeharto. The land given to the transmigrants free of cost has been taken from the Papuans, often without proper compensation. In the modern sector of the economy where private companies have created employment and pay in cash, preference is given to migrants. Migrants from South Sulawesi (Buginese, Butonese and Macassarrese) have virtually monopolised the local open-air markets (*pasar*). Papuans are heavily underrepresented in the government service, in the police and in the army. Only since 1998 has the provincial government had an affirmative employment policy to favour Papuans (known as *putra* and *putri daerah*). This Papuanisation is a slow process. Of all the modern institutions it is only the church and church related institutions that are controlled and dominated by Papuans.

*Before 1855: Early encounters?*

There is no concrete evidence of Christian mission to Papua before the nineteenth century. However, Christianity in East Indonesia may still indirectly have influenced religion in Papua. Portuguese and Spanish missionaries, Franciscans and others, were, from 1520 onwards, active in the Moluccas and established mission posts in Tidore, Ternate, Seram, Ambon, and Banda. All these places already had trading relations with the Raja Ampat islands and the Bird's Head of Papua. Spanish Jesuits were, in the same period, active in the Philippines and tried, from there, to get a foothold in the Moluccas and West New Guinea. Augustinians were also involved in mission work in the area. In 1538 Antonio Galvão, the Portuguese governor of the Moluccas, ordered a journey of exploration to the Papuan Islands (Raja Ampat), to visit the rajas or rulers of Viaigue (Waigeo), Quibibi (Gebee) and Mincimbo. Nothing is known of the result of this enterprise. A later Jesuit report mentions that a delegation from the Papuan Islands asked for priests. There is a report from 1550 stating that there are Christians on the Papuan Islands. Freerk Kamma, a Dutch Reformed missionary who worked in the Raja Ampat and the Bird's Head from 1931 until 1962, found a *Summa Theologica* of Thomas Aquinas, used by a Papuan shaman as a tool for divination. This find could be seen as an indication of some form of early cultural contacts between Papuans and Portuguese and/or Spanish missionaries.

At the beginning of the seventeenth century Portuguese and Spanish influence was replaced by that of the Dutch with the entry of the Dutch East India Company (VOC or *Kompeni*) into East Indonesia. The Dutch did not give Christian mission a priority as the Spanish and the Portuguese had done. However, it is possible that casual visits and information about Christianity since the early sixteenth century, through trading contacts, led to the emergence or transformation of local myths. Biak, Raja Ampat and large areas of the Cenderawasih Bay have myths about a self sacrificing Saviour, who left or died, but promised to return, when he would establish a kind of a millennium. The Biak people call this millennium *Koreri*. This is announced by a forerunner of the messiah, a prophet, the *konor*. The messianic figure itself is called in Biak and Numfor the Manseren Mangundi. The Me of Paniai, South-East of Nabire, have a similar myth of the return of Koyeidaba, who gave his life to create new life to help humankind in a concrete way, with new food crops. According to the Me anthropologist and church leader Dr Benny Giay, the Me of Paniai themselves perceived the close similarities of their religious myths with the Gospel. They even thought that the missionaries had come from America not to bring the Gospel, but 'to steal' the Me myths by giving cues about traditional Me religion. Several tribes have similar stories about a millennium, which will be brought about by the advent of a messiah figure. The existence of these myths helped

the Papuans to accept the Gospel. There is for them some continuity when converting to Christianity.

From 1828 till 1836 there was an effort to establish a Dutch settlement, Merkusoord, with Fort du Bus, on the Triton bay on the South Coast of New Guinea. This failed, as many settlers died of diseases. The local population continued to attack the settlers, encouraged by Muslim traders from Ternate who feared the loss of their trading monopoly. This was a Christian presence, although there is no evidence of any influence on the conversion of the Papuans of the area. There was an expansion of Catholic mission work in the Pacific directed toward New Guinea, coming from the East (Hawaii, 1825). Early Catholic jurisdiction over the whole of the island of New Guinea, including Papua, was from the Prefecture of the Sandwich Islands. The Marists entered the eastern half of the island in 1848. The Jesuits opened a station in Tual, in the Kai Islands, in 1888, and in 1889 founded a station at Langgur, which became the main staging post for Catholic missions in the Moluccas and the south coast of Papua. The Catholics began their first mission reconnaissance tours in Papua only in the 1890s.

*Injil Masuk (the gospel enters): 1855–1898*

The first systematic mission effort in West Papua was an initiative of the German minister Johannes Evangelist Gossner (1773–1858). He was supported by the Dutch minister Otto G. Heldring. Heldring was the founder of institutes for destitute women and girls (*Heldring-gestichten in Zetten*) in 1848, but also of a Dutch branch of the Gossner tent-making missionaries. Heldring was also involved in the revival movement in the Dutch churches, called the *Réveil*, the ‘Awakening’. Spokesmen for the *Réveil*, like Da Costa, Bilderdijk, De Clercq and Groen van Prinsterer, linked a messianism with the idea that Holland was a nation chosen by the Lord, the nation “on which Christ had laid His hand.” The *Réveil* saw a link between the loss of faith and the decline of the nation. These ideas have a close similarity with Christian beliefs now common among Papuans.

Gossner and Heldring shared ideas about mission. For an effective Christian mission one needs no more than a great faith, showing itself in action. A missionary only needs a Bible, a hymnbook and “a heart filled with a living faith.” Simple craftsmen were the right missionaries as they would be able to make a living at their mission post by working. In their free time they could go out and preach the Gospel. This concept of mission is not unlike that of David Livingstone for Central Africa in the same period. Livingstone advocated mission work by Christian settlers, to combine Christianity with ‘commerce.’ Evangelisation had to be combined with economic development, with the

introduction of new crops and modern technology. There was, possibly, a chiliastic aspect in the choice of Papua for Christian mission, an area that was not even brought under colonial rule. Jesus had promised after his Resurrection that He would return as soon as the Gospel had reached to “the ends of the earth.” There were not many areas in the world as remote as Papua; so the area was selected, bypassing other areas, which were not yet evangelised.

It was Protestant missionaries who were the first to establish permanent mission posts in West New Guinea. This was quite decisive in the view of present-day Papuans. According to them the Gospel entered Papua land on Sunday 5 February 1855, when Carl Ottow and Johann Geissler set foot ashore at Mansinam, a small island near Manokwari. They knelt on the beach and prayed, claiming the whole island for Christ. The whole of Papua was, as it were, baptised. This story is now used to claim Papua for (Christian) Papuans against the (Muslim) Indonesians of other islands. In 2001 this date of 5 February became a public holiday in the province.

The Papuans in the area where Carl Ottow and Johann Geissler began their mission work were not easily converted. They were not prepared to change their customs, a precondition of conversion. Ottow and Geissler started with language study and soon produced a word list and a grammar of the Numfor language. In recognition for this work the Government supplied the missionaries each with a monthly allowance of 50 Dutch guilders (€22.70). They proposed a grand scheme to the Government to involve the Papuans in a tobacco plantation on the Kebar plateau, with the help of Christian farmers from Java. The scheme also included the supply of 20 guns with ammunition “to strike awe into robbers,” and the presence of some retired European or Ambonese soldiers. The government rejected the plan, but still gave the missionaries half the 10,000 guilders (€4,500) budgeted for the scheme and two Javanese farmers with an expertise in tobacco cultivation. With these grants the government recognised the pioneering effort of the missionaries in opening up a new and unknown territory, only nominally part of the Dutch East Indies. The government expected pacification ‘on the cheap’. This is evidenced by a remark made by a government official, a former Resident of Ternate, who said that the Mission had to be considered to have failed, as the Papuans did not show much enthusiasm about his arrival in Doreh! The financial support of the government enabled the missionaries to devote most of their time to mission work. However, they remained involved in trading. They bought food cheaply when it was in abundance and sold it at a profit when it was scarce, which Papuans considered unfair. Geissler also bought tortoise shells, *teripang* or sea cucumber, birds of paradise, copra and mother of pearl shells and exchanged these for cotton, iron, knives, beads, sarongs, mugs, plates and so on. Alfred Russel Wallace, who visited the Ottows in

1858, mentioned the difficulties arising when the missionary is a pastor and at the same time a trader who is seeking a profit from his flock. This was, in his opinion, in contradiction with the Christian message.

In 1863 the Utrecht Mission Society (*Utrechtse Zendings Vereniging*, UZV) joined the Heldring initiative and began work in New Guinea with the sending of full time and well-trained theologians and artisans as missionaries. J.L. van Hasselt, his wife S. Hulstaert, Th.F. Klaassen, his wife C. Aarsen and W. Otterspoor were the first of the new type of missionary.<sup>2</sup> The UZV forbade their missionaries to participate in trading. To prevent Muslim traders filling the gap, and to help the Papuans to get inexpensive and useful commodities, the UZV established a special trading committee. This functioned until 1900 when it was made independent of the mission. There was no trading done on the first day of the week, to help Papuans to respect the Day of the Lord. From the beginning the mission did not sell alcoholic drinks or guns to the Papuans. To bring Papuans into their fold, missionaries began to encourage young children to go to school. The curriculum stressed instruction in the Christian religion, as well as reading and writing. Only by giving presents to the parents could children be kept at the mission school. In order to secure attendance at church services, the missionaries, initially, had to supply the congregation with tobacco, *gambir* (*Uncaria* plant) and *sirih* (betel). This was stopped by Van Hasselt. There were two services on Sundays, a one hour service at 8.00 a.m. and another one at 5.00 p.m. There were also daily services at 6.00 a.m. A common method to get converts, though this was not uncontroversial, was to buy slave children to be raised in the household of the missionaries as their step children (*anak piara*). The wisdom of the method was debated, as the buying of slaves could create a new market. In 1880 Mrs Van Hasselt bought a girl for Nfl (Dutch guilder) 60. On the other hand, the freed slave often saved his or her life by becoming incorporated in the household of the missionary. Here they did household chores, participated in the house services of the missionaries and were given the opportunity to go to school. Even as late as 1900 Jens defended the method as the only one possible. Another problem of former slaves becoming early converts and then church leaders was that the fact that they had been sold put them in a class of their own, even if they returned to their home village. The church could not grow until it had non-slaves leading it. The first non-slave to be baptised was Timoteus Wirie in 1874.

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<sup>2</sup> J.L. van Hasselt (1839–1930) and his wife established themselves with Jaesrich in Doreh. In 1871 they went to Mansinam, where they remained till 1907 when J.L. van Hasselt retired. Th.F. Klaassen and his wife left in 1864 for Halmahera. W. Otterspoor returned to Holland in the same year.

The message of the missionaries in this period was that the life of the Papuans was dominated by fear for the spirits of the deceased and all kinds of secret powers. The Gospel of Jesus Christ liberates from all these powers and fears, “because He is more powerful and can protect those who belong to Him.” The missionaries, generally speaking, had a low view of the Papuans and their traditional religion. The Papuans were considered degenerated (*ontaard*). They were considered as having only nebulous ideas, while their energy was seen as limited. The missionaries were not aware of the existence of a class of priests, which would keep the old traditions. Also intellectually they saw the Papuans as being at a low level. Their main occupation was “feasting and once more feasting.” By 1880, 25 years after the arrival of the pioneers, only 20 people had been baptised, including those Papuan children adopted by the missionaries. Ten years later, in 1890 Mansinam had 42 full members, 44 baptised children, an average church attendance of 175, school attendance was 60 and there were 32 catechesis students. In 1892 the mission sent two Papuan students, Petrus Kafiar and Timotheus Awendu, to the Depok Seminary for native missionaries, near Batavia (Jakarta). They later became teacher-evangelists (*guru*).

*Mass conversions and education: 1898–1940*

In 1898 the Dutch colonial government established the first two permanent posts in New Guinea, in Manokwari and Fakfak, and in 1902 also one in Merauke. The mission welcomed the establishment of government control. In the words of one missionary, “The cruel game is over. Dutch government authority now determines what is lawful. And with it one of the major pillars of paganism has been destroyed.” The Dutch initiative was forced by the threat that Britain, Germany, the United States and even Spain claimed West New Guinea. Spain claimed the Mapia Islands, North of Biak, as part of the Caroline Islands. On Mapia an American copra company had established itself and it had raised the Stars and Stripes. The Dutch intervened by sending a ship to haul the flag down. The government posts mainly had the function of ‘showing the flag.’ The establishment of these posts, two small settlements only in an area slightly smaller than France, could not hide the fact that Papua remained largely neglected. There was only slight interference with local customs and traditions, which the government wanted to replace, like tribal and clan wars, headhunting, witch hunting and capital punishment. It was only the Christian missions that provided rudimentary services in health care and education.

*The UZV and the Indische Kerk, 1898–1942*

After almost half a century working with very little result, the UZV on the North Coast, finally, began to see some success. Many Papuans at the beginning of this period began to ask the missionaries for resident teachers and missionaries. Often people converted by way of group conversions, especially around the Cenderawasih Bay (Geelvink Baai). The first wave of conversions began on 1 January 1907 at Roon. Here Yan Ayamiseba, a former slave, died after an accident when cutting a tree. A few days before his death he told that he had a dream where he was allowed entry into heaven, where people with long hair, dressed in white, were seen when passing a door of gold. A dream is an acceptable and authoritative means of communication between the spirit world and the concrete world we live in. Gold replaces iron, which is associated with slavery. Long hair is also a symbol of the free Papuans. The abode of the dead, according to the dream, is not, as in traditional cosmology, under the ground, but high up. This dream proved to be an effective form of contextualisation of the Christian message as brought by the Dutch and German missionaries.

Pamai, a Papuan from Ormu, west of Jayapura, brought the gospel to the people in the Sentani area at the end of the 1920s. He was himself illiterate, but taught the people to destroy their Kariwari-masks, after these had been shown to women, which was a taboo. He then taught the people the Lord's Prayer and the 12 Articles of Faith. Pamai had been sick, was convinced that he had died and then had appeared before the Lord, who told him that he could not yet enter heaven before he had brought the Gospel to other people.

The 1920s had seen the opening up of Papua economically. Copra, the dried meat of the coconut, fetched then very high prices, of up to twelve guilders a *pikul* (62 kilograms). Moreover the demand for birds of paradise was so high that many young Papuans left their villages to hunt for them. In the 1930s the world economic crisis led to a decline in demand. The price of copra fell to only two guilders a *pikul*. The crisis also led to financial difficulties for the mission which then changed its policy of working with salaried local staff. It decided to work with local Papuans, working as evangelists (*penginjil*), who were given only a minimum of training. They were given extensive responsibilities for the evangelisation work. They received a small allowance, but not a regular salary. The village where they settled had to provide for their livelihood. The evangelists would also have their own gardens and take part in hunting. The advantage was that the Gospel was preached in the local Papuan language instead of Malay. The evangelists were taken up in the tribe and lived among the people. By the early 1930s the UZV had extended the area where it worked to the Humboldt Bay. By 1934 the mission counted more than 50,000 Christians, most of them in North New Guinea.

Table 1. *The UZV and the Indische Kerk in 1934*

	Mission	Missionaries	Native Pastors	Teachers	Christians	Schools	Pupils	Hospitals and beds
South Papua	Indische Kerk	1						
North Papua	UZV	12	42	153	45,384	131	7,397	1–30
West Papua	UZV	3	2	16	5,869	26	1,253	–
Total 1934		16	58	169	51,253	157	8,650	1–30

When F.J.F. van Hasselt (1870–1939, son of pioneering missionary J. van Hasselt) retired in 1932, after serving 38 years in Papua/New Guinea, he complained that increasingly he had to fight on a front that he did not like, “I mean the Roman infiltration and penetration.” Rivalry and conflicts between the Protestant mission and the Roman Catholic mission, that did not recognise a separation of mission areas, was till the 1950s a common pattern in Papua. The UZV expanded its educational system in this period. The guru’s often had the dual role of teaching the school children during weekdays and leading the church service on Sundays. There were, from the 1930s, about 30 *classes* (presbyteries) and twelve *resorts*. Between 1924 and 1942 the number of village schools with a three years’ program increased from 71 to 300. The number of congregations was the same. Areas were opened by sending an evangelist or guru, who opened a village school and at the same time a candidate congregation or a congregation. In 1937 the schools had about 10,000 pupils. There was one upper primary school (grades 4 and 5) with 50 pupils and one vocational school with nine students. For more advanced education the most promising pupils were sent to Java. The Moluccan Protestant Church (*Gereja Protestan Maluku*, GPM), created two presbyteries in the South, the South Papua presbytery covering most of the Merauke area and the West Papua presbytery covering the areas of Mimika and West Merauke. By 1937 there were 76 congregations in north and west Papua, but only three in south Papua where the Catholics dominated.

Medical work was limited. The missionaries provided elementary medical care from their mission posts. Serui had a mission hospital with a trained nurse in 1910, but it was closed in 1914. Only in 1932 was a doctor sent to the hospital in Serui. Korido in Western Biak had a smaller hospital. Since 1936 there was also a hospital looking after leprosy patients.

*The Roman Catholic Mission, 1902–1942*

Roman Catholics had been discriminated against in the Dutch East Indies. In the VOC period Catholic missions were seen as linked with Portuguese claims to East Indonesia and Catholic mission was forbidden outside the island of Flores. The situation changed about 1854, when the Dutch government allowed the Roman Catholic Church in the Netherlands to re-establish its Episcopal hierarchy. In 1860 the colonial government urged a Catholic priest to establish a parish in Larantuka, related to a new treaty with Portugal. In 1888 a post in Kai was opened by the Jesuits. Roman Catholic mission work expanded again in 1894 when the Jesuit Cornelis le Cocq d'Armandville came from Seram to Fakfak, where he baptised 73 people after staying there for only ten days. In 1895 he established a mission station in Kapaur, Ajer Besar, east of Fakfak, with a school that hired the Protestant Chr. Pelletimu as a teacher. The station was closed after the sudden death of Le Cocq the next year. All mission work needed the permission of the government and Papua/New Guinea became divided into spheres of demarcation. The governor general did not allow the Catholics to establish themselves in Fakfak, Inanwatan and in Berau, as this was a 'Protestant area.' This decision was based on article 123 of the Governmental Regulations (*Regeeringsreglement*, since 1925 Article 177 of the Indies' Government Regulations or *Indische Staatsregeling*), which stipulated that the establishment of mission posts needed the permission by the governor general. In 1912 a separation line had been established between the Roman Catholic and Protestant missions. The Catholics were not allowed North of the 4.30 southern meridian. The Catholics considered the rule unfair and continued to claim Fakfak and parts of the Bird's Head, based on the visits by Le Cocq between 1894 and 1896. They referred to an agreement between the Netherlands and the Holy See of 1847 that gave the Catholics the right to move freely in Ambon and other places of the Moluccas.

In 1902 the Catholics established the Vicariate of Netherlands New Guinea, separated from the Apostolic Vicariate of Batavia, with Dr. Matthias Neijens as Prefect Apostolic, based in Langgur in the Kai Islands. It included, apart from South and West New Guinea, Biak and Numfor, the Kai and Tanimbar Islands, Banda, Saparua, Seram, Halmahera and other islands of the Moluccas. The Jesuits had worked for 14 years with success on the Kai Islands and the Kai remained an important source for teacher-catechists (guru). The missionaries of the Sacred Heart of Jesus (MSC) based in Tilburg, the Netherlands, provided the pioneer missionaries for the Southern part of Dutch New Guinea. In 1905 the MSC lay brothers Melchior Oomen and Dion. van Roessel and the priests H. Nollen and Phil. Braun came to Merauke. Br. Oomen died the next year, while van Roessel and Braun left Merauke for Kai in 1906. Fr. Nollen also left for the more promising Kai in 1909. Fr. Vertenten served the longest period

in the area. From 1910 to 1915 he served in Okaba, which is situated 60 km west of Merauke, and from 1915 to 1925 in Merauke.

At the constant pressure of the mission, the government began action against headhunting. In 1907 the south-eastern Marind-anim (Merauke region) had been punished by the Government for headhunting, but this was not effective as they again made headhunting raids on a large scale in 1911. In 1913 the government took stern action against head hunting, acts of revenge, burying people alive and infanticide. In the same year Fr. Jos van de Kolk developed the idea of a model *kampung* (village) in Okaba. In 1914 Merauke also got its model *kampung*. The aim of this idea was to enforce a radical change in the life of the Marind-anim, in order to save them from extinction by the venereal disease granuloma. Fertility rituals like the *otiv bombari* which implied the sexual promiscuity of all the men of a tribe with only a few women, were forbidden by the government as well as by the mission, because they spread the disease. This venereal disease had only recently been introduced, most likely by Australian workers who helped build the Merauke government station and who had casual sexual relations with Marind-anim women. It was tradition that many male members of the husband's clan had the duty to have intercourse with the bride on the first night after the marriage. The venereal disease, distributed through this ritual, led to infertility due to a rupture of the uterus. Life in the model kampong, which could be easily controlled by the mission, would make these practices more difficult. In 1914 World War I broke out. This made the funding of the mission more difficult and as a consequence all mission stations were closed except Merauke, where Petr. Vertenten MSC and Brothers J. Joosten and H. van Santvoort worked.

The Spanish influenza pandemic of 1918–1919 proved another disaster for the people of the south coast of Papua. Almost one in five people died because of it. Soon after this disaster Father Vertenten began a publicity campaign to press for an active and intensive interference of the government in the life of the Marind-anim in order to prevent the total extinction of the tribe. The government gave in and began to support the establishing of 'model villages' by the mission and the building of mission schools. The young Marind-anim were completely taken out of their natural environment and raised under strict mission control in boarding schools. Here they were also, initially, forced to wear Western clothes. The German anthropologist Paul Wirz strongly criticised the policy of the mission as it could only be implemented by using considerable violence. In 1922 and 1923 the mission posts of Okaba and Wendu were re-established, while a new post at Wambi was established. In 1926 the mission opened the Mimika area from Lunggu. In the same year the Government established a post in Kokonao. The Catholics established a mission post there the next year.

In 1925 the Catholic mission asked for a permit to settle again in Fakfak, a move that led to a serious conflict with the Protestant mission. According to the Catholics, a village near Fakfak, Sakertemin, had asked to become Catholic, on the basis of the visit of Le Cocq almost three decades earlier. Action by Roman Catholic politicians in the Netherlands, informed by the mission about the issue, led in 1927 in principle to the abolition of the separation line to prevent rivalry between the missions. At a conference in Ambon between UZV and the RC Mission, the governor of the Moluccas conceded the mission post in Fakfak but still objected to the Catholics moving to the Bird's Head, Waropen and the area around Hollandia (Jayapura) for security reasons. The Protestant mission delegate, based in Batavia, was also present at the meeting. He argued that if the Catholics moved into Protestant areas the Protestants would have the right to move into the Catholic areas of South Papua/New Guinea. Not much later, in 1928, a teacher from the Protestant Church of the Moluccas (GPM) arrived in Kokonao, where the Catholics had just opened a station. This led to a strong competition in the building of schools. Finally, in 1928 Fr. E. Cappers got permission to move to Papua, with the exception of the Bird's Head. By that time the UZV already had seven schools in the Fakfak area. In that year the MSC got help from the Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart. Two years later the UZV handed its mission work around Fakfak, Kaimana and the Arguni Bay over to the GPM. In 1931 there was a conflict in the Bintuni Bay, where a Roman Catholic teacher was removed by police after working there for five months. In 1932, at the educational conference at Tual, the Protestants proposed that the GPM would leave Merauke if the Roman Catholics would be prepared to leave the Bird's Head. This was unacceptable to Bishop J. Aerts. In 1936 the Roman Catholic Mission obtained the right from the governor general to establish missions anywhere, and the next year they established their first school in the Bird's Head, in Manehui. In that same year the Dutch Franciscans began to work in New Guinea. Five Franciscans priests and one brother settled in Fakfak, Babo, Ternate and Manokwari. Fakfak had then 700 baptised Catholics and fifteen schools. Babo is the place where the New Guinea Oil Company (*NG Petroleum Maatschappij*) found oil. It built houses, offices, a hospital and a laboratory. The company employed one hundred people from Kai, who had their own resident priest. From Babo he served eight villages. In 1937 the GPM had to withdraw from Mimika because of a shortage of funds.

The race between Protestants and Catholics has continued since then in the highlands that were still unknown territory until the late 1930s. In 1938 the commander of the field police, J.P.K. van Eechoud, one of the few Roman Catholic civil servants, organised a government expedition to the high lake-district of Paniai, which Fr. Tillemans also joined. On the basis of this visit

the Catholics claimed the Me area and the area of the Moni. In 1940 the Franciscans established a mission school in Arso, east of Jayapura, with Otto Suarabun as a teacher. 50 children went to school there. The area had been opened by the government in May 1939. In 1942 the first school children were baptised there.

By 1940 the Catholic mission in South Papua was established in Merauke and five other stations, with 16 sub-stations, and it had built eight churches, 30 elementary schools and a Papuan community of about 2,800. In West New Guinea and Mimika there were then two hospitals, two dispensaries, 173 schools and 10 other institutions serving about 1,600 Catholics.

*World War II and post war development: 1942–1962*

In May 1940 the German armies occupied the Netherlands. This led to the disruption of communication with the mission headquarters. In April 1942 the Japanese landed in Papua and soon conquered most of it, except Merauke and Upper-Digul. In May 1943 the Japanese occupied the area of Paniai, where Dr. J.V. de Bruyn still had continued his work as *controleur* (district officer). All European missionaries and other Europeans, except those with German nationality, were interned and forcibly moved to POW camps in East Indonesia. On 30 July 1942 the Japanese executed 15 missionaries of the MSC in Langgur, Kai, including the Vicar Apostolic Johannes Aerts. Earlier a Franciscan priest, A. Guikers, was executed in Ransiki near Manokwari. The missionaries in Merauke Regency, which was never occupied, continued to do their work.

The Christians had now to stand on their own feet and increasingly became self-sufficient. The Japanese occupation led to hardships for the Papuans as they were forced to work to build air-fields and roads without compensation. The Japanese dealt harshly with any real or supposed opposition. Angganita Menufandu, born in 1905 and baptised in 1932, led a salvation movement on the North Coast. She must have been an uncommonly gifted woman and had a reputation as a poet. Later, in the great movement, the texts of her songs were used in dancing and singing. She had appointed herself as Queen of Papua and also had an army. She was arrested and decapitated by the Japanese in 1942. Her movement, like the consecutive Simson movement, led by Somlena from Tablanusa in the Depapre area west of present day Jayapura, had some Christian elements, but it also practised communication with the spirits of the deceased in graveyards. This last movement was equally harshly repressed. Its leader was arrested and probably executed by the Japanese in Jayapura. Gurus were sometimes forced to join the Japanese police. The Japanese language replaced Dutch in the schools. In April 1944 the Americans landed at Jayapura (Hollandia). From

September 1944 to March 1945 General Douglas MacArthur had his headquarters for Papua/New Guinea and the Philippines in Hollandia, at Ifar Gunung. By July 1944 the Japanese were defeated after several fierce battles. Under the aegis of the Allied command the Dutch government returned as NICA (Netherlands Indies Civil Administration) with its headquarters in Kampung Harapan (Kota Nica) halfway between Sentani and Abepura. The rest of Indonesia remained occupied by the Japanese till 15 August 1945. The Dutch government was not able to return there until the beginning of 1946.

The Dutch colonial Government had until the 1940s not been very active in developing Papua and the Papuans. In 1947 Dutch New Guinea became a residency, separated from Ternate (the North) and from Ambon (the South). After the transfer of authority over Indonesia to the Federal Republic of Indonesia (RIS) in December 1949 Papua was kept outside the Indonesian Republic. The Dutch government now began in earnest to develop the area and to assist with the advancement of the Papuans, considering itself a mandatory of the United Nations. The Papuans were being prepared for self-determination. The Christian missions received large subsidies in order to enlarge the educational system and to initiate medical work, and hundreds of teachers and medical staff were recruited in the Netherlands. From 1938 onwards Papua had known a so called 'civilization school' (*beschavingsschool*), a simple three years primary school. The aim was 'to civilise' the Papuans with subjects like order and hygiene, sports, flute playing, singing, the preparation of parties, dancing, school gardens, basket weaving and also reading, writing and simple arithmetic. From 1945 onwards 'people's schools' (*Volksscholen*) were founded with a more elaborate curriculum of Malay, reading, drawing, writing, singing, flute playing and handicraft. After seven years *Volksschool* the best pupils could continue to a *Vervolgschool* (VVS), which provided in a three-year course of basic secondary education. The Protestants were at an advantage as they had more and better schools. Therefore more of their pupils could continue to further education. At the VVS a Papuan elite was being formed. Here Papuans were selected for further studies to become teachers, police officers or government officials, and also those Papuans were trained, who represented the territory at international conferences like those of the South Pacific. In the 1950s there was a strong effort by the Catholics to catch up with the Protestants in the area of education.

Between 1956 and 1962 the relations between the Netherlands and Indonesia heated up on the issue of New Guinea, which Indonesia claimed as Indonesian territory. The Dutch Mission Board of the Netherlands Reformed Church (ZNHK or 'Oegstgeest'), the post-war successor of the UZV, was ambivalent on the issue. By and large it supported the Indonesian claim to New Guinea as the mission still had many interests in Indonesia. Moreover, some leading Dutch theologians with an Indonesian work experience, like Johannes Verkuyl

(Salatiga), Hendrik Kraemer and Henk Visch (Bali), strongly identified with the nationalist case of the Indonesian Republic, which claimed Papua in order “to bring the revolution to an end.” Their views were strongly opposed by most Papuans and by the Dutch missionaries and teachers working in Papua, who supported the Dutch government in its effort to grant, in the long run, independence to the Papuans, separate from the Indonesian Republic. The Indonesian economy worsened in the mid 1950s and democracy declined when in 1957 Soekarno proclaimed Indonesia a ‘guided’ democracy, and had himself appointed as president for life. The Indonesian army began to play a more prominent political role and it became even less attractive for the Papuans to join the Indonesian Republic.

*From mission to the independent Protestant Gereja Kristen Injili,  
1945–1962*

In the Protestant mission there was a minority that was pro-Indonesian. They came from Serui where Dr. G.S. Sam J. Ratulangie, an Indonesian nationalist politician from the Minahasa, had spent his period of exile from 1946 to 1948. Here he could easily influence many future leaders of the Papuans, as Serui was an educational centre. The GKI as it was established in 1956 under Rev. Rumainum, the first chairman of Synod, began to support the ‘integration’ of West New Guinea into the unitary Indonesian Republic. On the other hand, a leading missionary like Freerk Kamma gave up his position as a missionary in April 1961 to join full-time the New Guinea Council, the forerunner of a Papuan parliament. Kamma represented the inhabitants of the eastern Highlands. Rev. Izaak Samuel Kijne, the educationalist, had written a number of school books, in which the Papuan identity was stressed, like *Itu Dia*. His reading book *Kota Mas* (the Golden City) became very popular, as it linked a Christian story with elements of basic Papuan myths. Kijne also composed *Hai Tanahku Papua* (Oh My Land Papua) that became the Papuan national anthem in 1961, published in the booklet *Seruling Mas* (the Golden Flute).

In the post-war period the Dutch Reformed Mission came back with more and more responsibilities being handed over to the Papuans. In 1954 a theological school was established in Serui by Rev. Isaac Kijne to train Papuans as ministers. In 1956 the Evangelical Christian Church (*Gereja Kristen Injili di Nederlandsch Nieuw-Guinea*, GKI) was inaugurated, independent of mission control. It was symptomatic that at the inauguration of the new church only the Moluccan Church (GPM) recognised the new GKI. The Roman Catholic Church recognised it later, but the other Reformed and the Evangelical missions did not recognise the GKI. This means that they also would not object to doing mission work among GKI adherents. The conservative Reformed mis-

sions considered the GKI “not faithful to the Bible.” The Evangelical missions considered the GKI in fact pagan or at most syncretistic. Both missions were also very anti-Catholic. This attitude did not change until Papuans secured positions of authority in those churches in the late 1990s. The Catholics became more ecumenical under the influence of the Second Vatican Council. In 1969 the Roman Catholic Church and the GKI made an agreement on the mutual recognition of the sacrament of baptism, signed by Bishop R. Staverman and the Protestant ministers Mamoribo and Pelamonia. From 1995 onwards almost all churches have cooperated in the area of human rights advocacy and in the propagation of non-violent ways of political and social change in West Papua.

Table 2. *The GKI when founded in 1956*

Ressort	Presbyteries	Congregations	Candidate Congregations	Members	Ministers	Guru Jemaat	Evangelists
Hollandia	4	100	25	24,000	8	100	23
Sarmi	3	37	18	5,663	4	35	18
Yapen-Waropen	5	70	20	26,000	6	110	20
Biak-Numfor	6	122	–	34,000	8	130	–
Manokwari	6	56	29	5,436	3	60	30
Miei-Nabire	5	60	–	10,000	2	56	–
Sorong-Bintuni	14	60	70	17,000	4	100	70
Teminabuan	2	55	20	2,655	3	50	20
Inanwatan	2	12	5	3,655	2	17	5
Dutch speaking	1	8	–	3,000	8	–	–
Total	48	580	187	131,409	48	658	186

### *The Catholic Mission 1942–1962*

Most of the colonial civil servants were Protestant. Roman Catholics felt at times that they were treated unfairly. When the Catholic Jan van Eechoud became Resident (Governor) in 1947 the Protestants accused him of favouring the Catholics by allowing them to move into the newly discovered highland territory, the Baliem valley. There were again Protestant protests when in 1951 the Catholics established a higher secondary school (*Hogere Burgerschool*, HBS) in Jayapura, the first of that kind in the territory. Many considered this form of education too advanced for the Papuans. In 1957 this school became a joint Roman Catholic and Protestant venture.

In Sorong, where the discovery of oil had brought many migrants, among whom were Catholics, the mission opened a primary boarding school and a lower secondary school. In 1948 the Mission Sisters of the Precious Blood, also called the Sisters of Tienray, in the Netherlands, went to Sorong and Fakfak to help in opening boarding schools for girls there. The next year the mission went to Sausopor, though several villages already had a Protestant church. In 1949 the Franciscan mission was separated from the Vicariate of New Guinea to form the Apostolic Prefecture of Hollandia, with Fr. A. Cremers as Prefect Apostolic. Ternate and Halmahera became part of the new Vicariate Apostolic of Amboina. In 1950 the Vicariate of Merauke was separated from the Vicariate of Amboina. The Vicariate of Merauke, with Fr. H. Tillemans as Vicar Apostolic, served South Papua/New Guinea, while the Vicariate of Hollandia served North and West Papua/New Guinea, which included the Bird's Head. By 1952 there were priests in Enarotali, Waghete, the Kamu plains, Mappi and Epouto on the Tage Lake, where the Sisters of the Franciscan Third Order, a lay institute, from Brummen in the Netherlands, established a boarding school for girls. Catechists from Mimika and Paniai assisted in this mission work. In 1953 the Vicariate of Jayapura had 39 Franciscan friars. There were 102 Catholic village schools, with 130 teachers and 3,500 pupils. Three quarters of the schools received government subsidies. There was a General Primary School that used Dutch as the medium of instruction. Sorong and Fakfak also had such a Dutch-language *Algemene Lagere School* with 400 pupils. In that year five Sisters from Heerlen came to work in Enarotali, Biak and Jayapura. The same year the Augustinian priests began work in an area South of Jayapura. In 1958 the Catholics opened a lower secondary school (*Primaire Middelbare School*, PMS) in Hollandia, which already had a Protestant PMS.

The Brothers of Our Lady of the Seven Dolours or 'Broeders van Voorhout' (CSD), established themselves in Kepi and in the Mappi area in 1956. They introduced a regional project with an agricultural centre in Mappi. This Welfare Plan of Mappi and the Regional Plan, which encouraged the cultivation of cocoa and rubber, were joint ventures of the mission and the government. Efforts were made at contextualisation of the Gospel. There was a collective planting day, which was a religious festival with a Eucharist in the gardens, the blessing of oil palm nuts and coconuts, the receiving of guests and singing and dancing. The tribe of Yah'ray (or Yaqay), however, refused to take part in the project as in their opinion it only benefited the mission and the government. In 1957 the Brothers established a *Vervolgschool* in Muyu. In 1958 the Dutch MSC handed over the area of Asmat to the Crosier Fathers and Brothers (the Canons Regular of the Order of the Holy Cross) from America. In 1969 the Asmat Mission became the Diocese of Agats with Alphonsus Sowada OSC as its first bishop. The Crosier Fathers concentrated on the preservation of the Asmat culture and the contextualisation of the Gospel. Without headhunting,

which was forbidden by the government, the traditional culture was doomed to extinction. The Mission encouraged woodcarving independent of headhunting. A museum of Asmat art was built in Agats and the marketing of the art was promoted. This provided a livelihood and pride in the work to the artists and to the Asmat in general.

To the south of Waris the Franciscans opened two stations, one in Amgotro and another one in Ubrub in 1952–1954. Between 1957 and 1959 the Franciscan Mission in Paniai expanded its work into the Moni area in Kemandora and Dugiundora, among the Amungme in Tsingga, Nuemba, towards Ilaga, the Dani area of the Baliem Valley and towards Sibil in the Star Mountains. In this period the Catholic mission began to build its first airstrips. The Association Mission Aviation, AMA, was founded, which bought its first aircraft in 1958. In 1959 Manokwari became an Apostolic Prefecture with Dutch Augustinians in charge. Fr. Petrus van Diepen OSA (1966–1988, died 2005), was its first Prefect Apostolic. Ten fathers worked in five stations in Manokwari, Sorong, Ayawasi-Fuog, Tintum-Ases and Bintuni or Steenkool, which had replaced Babo as the main population centre in the Bintuni Gulf. The area then had 4,000 Catholics, half of them Papuans.

### *The Evangelical and conservative Protestant missions*

The Christian and Missionary Alliance (CAMA) had begun work in Paniai highland already in 1939, when it established a post in Enarotali. In August 1942 it experienced its first conversion of 16 Me people. In May 1943 Walter Post, Einar Mickelson and Zakheus Pakage, one of the early converts, were airlifted out of the Paniai region to Australia, just before the Japanese entered the area. The Japanese destroyed mission property and church buildings. In 1947 the first Me were baptised. In 1952 the first Me left the Bible school to be ordained as ministers (pendeta). In 1954 CAMA began work in the Baliem Valley among the Dani. In 1956 CAMA moved to the Ilaga Valley and to the Beoga valley to work among the Moni and Damai people. In 1962 130 Danis were baptised in Pyramid Mission.

In this period we also see the emergence of several messianic or salvation movements. The concept 'cargo cults' explains in an unsatisfactory way the interaction between traditional religious attitudes and Christianity. In a way these new religious movements form a specific Papuan response to the message of the Gospel. These movements may promise immediate and concrete rewards of conversion. However, the churches are doing something similar, enticing Papuans with small gifts, like tobacco and betel nuts. The Papuans get education and health services only through the mission. They can get paid jobs and new responsibilities and positions of authority. Through the church

they also get the chance to travel and meet other people and they can also meet marriage partners outside their own clan and language group. These are all concrete benefits of conversion. During the period under review numerous religious movements emerged inside and outside the established churches. Some of these movements were an expression of protest, while others tried to re-establish a group or tribal identity. This was the case of the *Wege Bage* movement, established by Zakheus Pakage, in the Paniai area. Zakheus Pakage had studied in Macassar from 1946 to 1950 to become a minister, sponsored by the CAMA, which was active in the Paniai area. On his return to Paniai, the people of Tigi, in the southern part of the Paniai regency, asked CAMA to send Zakheus to teach them, although this area was given exclusively to the Catholics in 1939. Zakheus attracted great crowds of people. It led to a great revival and to fetish burnings. In 1951 he began, however, to experience opposition from those people who had accepted Catholicism, especially from the chiefs who felt their position threatened. In that year also tribal wars took place. According to some people it was the Catholics who started spreading false rumours about Zakheus, as he was working with success in “their” area. He was several times arrested, accused of stirring up people against the government. In October 1951 Zakheus was arrested, accused of instructing his brother Jordan Pakage to burn houses and to kill pigs. Much of the local opposition came from Weakebo, a leader of the Mote clan, a rival of the Pakage clan of Zakheus. In 1951 Zakheus began to ask his followers to make a complete break with their non-Christian past by moving to separate villages, the so-called *Wege Bage* communities. *Wege Bage* is a nickname given to the Zakheus communities as it means “the disruptors of peace and order,” “those who bring chaos.” In 1952, after a conflict with CAMA missionaries, Zakheus was declared mentally ill. He was taken to the mental hospital in Abepura. Only in 1958 could he return to Paniai, but he was sent back to Sentani in 1963. He died there in 1970. Though Zakheus has passed away the movement still exists and it is still growing. It considers itself to be the national church of the Me people of Paniai. The *Wege Bage* followers try to reconcile their traditional Me religion with the Gospel. In their understanding knowledge of God already existed before Christianity came to Paniai. The teachings of Zakheus are seen as the lost Bible of the Me. Zakheus is Koyeidaba, the Me Messiah, who has returned. There is, basically, in their view, no difference between Me traditional religion and Christianity.

Conversion to Christianity in the Highlands often took place in the form of mass conversions, going together with an apparently complete break with traditional religion, as amulets, holy stones, masks and other sacred objects were destroyed. Missionaries had an ambivalent attitude towards this phenomenon. Was this really inspired by the Holy Spirit? What could have been the motivation for conversion even before the most elementary principles of

Christian doctrine had been taught? The type of conversion shows similarities with that of the *koreri* and independent church movements mentioned above. Conversion can be related to elements in the social structure of traditional society. In Paniai, conversion was the result of a strategy by local elite to settle their conflicts with leaders of rival clans. For instance, the conversion of Weakebo, a chief of the Mote clan, was in the context of a rivalry with the Package clan about land use in the Tigi district. In the same way particular clans choose to join the Roman Catholic Church, the independent Wege Bage movement, or the Evangelical Tabernacle Church (*Gereja Kemah Injil di Indonesia*, GKII). In one such move one chief could have many of his sons trained as ministers or teachers, and his daughters married to ministers. In this way he could, through the mission and the church, enormously increase his power of patronage.

*Confrontation, appeasement and freedom, 1962 to 2004*

Under strong political pressure from the Kennedy administration the Dutch government concluded the New York Agreement in August 1962, when it was on the brink of war with Indonesia that had mobilised an army to attack what it considered to be a last Dutch colonial remnant. Papuans themselves did not participate in this agreement. The Dutch handed over the administration of the territory by 1 October of that year to the United Nations. The UN, in turn, handed its administration to Indonesia on 1 May 1963. Not later than 1969 the Papuans were to get an opportunity to express their opinion about the integration with Indonesia in a UN supervised "Act of Free Choice."

*Adaptation to Indonesian rule*

From the very beginning in October 1962 the Indonesian army behaved more like an army of occupation than like one that had liberated the Papuans from an oppressive colonial power. The army claimed the land and its people by right of conquest. It tried to wipe out completely any traces of the Dutch presence in government and education. All schools had to destroy their textbooks in Dutch. From one day to the other teaching and examinations had to change from Dutch to Malay (Indonesian or *Bahasa Indonesia*). All textbooks of the Dutch period were replaced by those used in the rest of Indonesia, though the stories were in no way appropriate to the culture and scenery of Papua. Papuan children had to learn about a Javanese boy named Ahmed, and about volcanoes, trains and railway stations. The educated Papuans in the church, the educational system, commerce and government were suspected of being pro-Dutch and, by implication, anti-Indonesian. In the security approach of

the Indonesian army this meant that these were people declared to be 'enemies.' In December 1962 there was a night raid on the dormitories of the Teacher Training College, the Civil Servants' school (*Bestuursschool*), the Agricultural College and the Christian schools in Kota Raja in Jayapura, led by Indonesian soldiers using pro-Indonesian groups. Students were beaten up and then transported to the military camp at Ifar Gunung, where they were imprisoned. A considerable group of respected Papuans ended up in prison or were killed. Among them were Eliezer Jan Bonay, the first governor, Rev. G.A. Lanta, the former vice-chairman of the Synod of the GKI, Rev. Silas Chaay, secretary of the GKI, Rev. Osok of the Moi tribe of the Bird's Head, Saul Hindom, who had studied at Utrecht University and was the director of the Shell Oil Company in Biak, Hank Yoka, the former secretary of the New Guinea Council, Alfeus Yoku, a leader from Sentani and David Hanasbey, inspector of police in Jayapura. Permenas Yoku, a teacher in Sentani, was killed at the end of 1963, because he refused to sign a pro-Indonesian declaration.<sup>3</sup> Johan Ariks, former chairman of the Papua delegation at the Round Table Conference in 1949, died, at the age of 70, in Manokwari prison, after a speech he gave on 1 July 1965, which was considered to be anti-Indonesian. It was a policy of the intelligence department to eliminate in a secret way anybody suspected of having links with people who wanted to overthrow the Indonesian Government.<sup>4</sup> According to conservative estimates about 100,000 Papuans have been killed by the Indonesian army and police since 1962.

Dutch missionaries and teachers were allowed to stay. However, almost all Dutch Protestant missionaries and teachers left before the end of 1962. This meant a considerable loss. In 1956 of the 31 ministers 13 were still Dutch missionaries. In 1961 there were still 137 Dutch teachers, while the theological college had four Dutch lecturers. Rev. Tjakraatmadja from West Java was sent and supported by the mission to teach in the college. The Dutch-speaking presbytery of the GKI was abolished at the emergency meeting of Synod in 1962. The Dutch Franciscans, the Augustinians, the Crosier Fathers and Brothers, the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart and the Dutch Sisters persisted. All Catholic bishops and the archbishop were then Dutch. Most Dutch Catholic

<sup>3</sup> Sawor 1969:40–45, quoting a Report by Silas Papare, member of the People's Congress, Jakarta, 13 March 1967. Zacharias Sawor studied tropical agriculture in Deventer, the Netherlands, till 1962. He was treasurer of Parkindo, West Irian Section, from 1963 till 1965. He was in prison from August 1965 till August 1966. In June 1967 he fled to Australian New Guinea. Since October 1968 he has lived in the Netherlands.

<sup>4</sup> Sawor 1969:49, quoting a Report of the Command of the Regional Police XXL, West Irian, First Quarter 1966, by Drs. Soejoko, Chief of Staff Secret Intelligence Service, Soekarnopoera, 26 June 1966. The quotation is: "... ditembak mati dengan tjara yang tidak kentara oleh anggota2 dari daerah Indonesia sendiri. Hingga hal ini tidak dapat dimengertikan oleh pihak penduduk daerah Irian Barat sendiri."

missionaries later opted for Indonesian citizenship when it was offered. Bishop John Philip Saklil from Kampung Umar, Mimika Regency was consecrated bishop of the new diocese of Timika, separated from the diocese of Jayapura, in April 2004. Though born in Papua, he is not an ethnic Papuan. Up to now no ethnic Papuan has been ordained a bishop.

The churches had to adapt to working under an Indonesian government that had clear Muslim sympathies in the way it spend government grants to religions. 80% of the government grants to religions went to the Muslims, though in Papua they were only a tiny minority. The transmigration program of the government led to an influx of Muslims who also occupied the senior posts in government and administration. There is also the iron-fisted approach of the army and police towards any, even innocent, opposition to Indonesian rules and regulations. Any feeling of a separate identity, like 'Papuaness', was discouraged or even punished. Arnold Ap, director of the Museum of Anthropology of the Cenderawasih University, introduced Papuan hymns in Christian worship. He was accused of introducing war songs in order to lead the GKI against the Indonesian army. He was killed by the Indonesian army on 26 April 1984 together with Eddie Mofu, his fellow musician of the group Mambesak.<sup>5</sup> Another Papuan intellectual and leader, Thomas Wanggai, died in 1996 in a Javanese prison, after being convicted and sentenced to life imprisonment for raising a home-made flag of the fictitious 'Republic of Western Melanesia.' They Eluay, chairperson of the Presidium of the Papua Council (PDP), who used Christian metaphors in his peaceful struggle for Papuan freedom, was killed in November 2001 by 'special security,' or *Kopassus* soldiers.

The police and army kept a close watch on the leadership of the Church. Not even the slightest criticism of the conduct of the Indonesian army was acceptable. When the synod complained in 1963 that the Indonesian army took away almost everything, even empty bottles, to Java, the synod council was strongly reprimanded and accused of anti-Indonesian activities. Critical voices from the Roman Catholic Church were also silenced. The Jesuit father Haripranoto, for instance, had to leave West-Papua in 1970.

### *The GKI*

The GKI, the largest church, was in fact more or less the established and dominating church in the Dutch period. Many of the Dutch government officers were members, while most of the Papuan civil servants and police

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<sup>5</sup> His father, Baldus Mofu, a teacher and former member of the *Nieuw Guinea Raad*, died in 1979 while in military custody.

were also members. Now the GKI had to develop a theology of adaptation and collaboration to survive. The fifth synod meeting of 1968 in Jayapura was crucial as Indonesia wanted to collect support for the Act of Free Choice in the following year, which at all costs had to go in favour of Indonesia. Rev. Tjakraatmadja, said at the opening that everybody is united in Christ, (Col. 3:11) because Jesus Christ has died for everybody. Christ has endured the free choice, which is the cross of Golgotha. In this cross he was already the implementer of the “act of free choice” for the salvation of all the faithful. That the Church obeys and accepts the government is based on Romans 13. Illuminated by the Word of God it rejects the idea that the voice of the people is the voice of God, because satanic qualities have overpowered humankind.<sup>6</sup> The implication seems to be that participation in the act of free choice will bring the cross, that is suffering, for the Papuan people. Rev. I. Mori was then the chairman of synod, succeeding Rev. F.J.S. Romainum who had served more than eleven years as chairman. At this synod meeting one of the chairpersons of the DGI, the Indonesian Council of Churches, Lieutenant-general (ret.) T.B. Simatupang, explained the advantages of the Pancasila ideology for the protection of religious minorities. With this chairman, who was still considered to be a member of the military, the conduct of the army in Irian Jaya since 1962 could not be discussed. Synod delegates who criticised the stand of Simatupang at the synod meeting were later visited at home by soldiers who threatened them as they had shown disrespect to a former army officer. The Military Commander of Irian Jaya-Maluku, also present at the synod meeting, told the synod that the Dutch were to blame because it was their heritage that made the Papuans afraid of the Indonesians, by making them believe that the Indonesians would make the Papuans poor, communist, and expose them to Islamisation!

Within this context it is clear that the GKI at synod or diocesan level hardly had the possibility to criticise the government or the army. This is probably also because in the official, compulsory, ideology of Pancasila the state, that is the government, was identified with society. Religion was viewed as a branch of government. All five recognised religions had to include respect for the Pancasila as their sole foundation (*azas tunggal*), notwithstanding the feeble protests of the Communion of Churches in Indonesia (*Persekutuan Gereja-Gereja Indonesia*, PGI, the formal successor to the Indonesian Council of Churches, DGI) that they already had Jesus Christ as their foundation (1984).

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<sup>6</sup> GKI 1968:37–42. Rev. Tjakraatmadja was a member of staff of the General Meeting of Synod of the GKI. (BPSU). He later became the Rector of the Theological College I.S. Kijne of the GKI. He was a Sundanese or West-Javanese. He is said to have protected GKI ministers when they were under suspicion by the army after many Papuans had expressed disappointment with the way the Act of Free Choice was organised.

The only realistic way to survive was to support the Indonesian effort at integration of the Papuans with the risk of the loss of one's identity. According to Hermann Saud, chairman of Synod of the GKI since 1996, Papuans as Christians, willingly, had to sacrifice their aspiration for independence, because their desire for independence legitimised a military presence in West Papua, which in turn led to the killing of Papuans. "As Christians we have to sacrifice in order to get life. The church cannot change the Indonesian reality that the government owns the people, and not, as in western countries, that the people is the owner of a government. The harsh reality is that Papuans are considered the property of Indonesia."<sup>7</sup> Church leaders who for pragmatic reasons supported the Indonesian government and army policy in Papua were rewarded with appointments in government. Rev. Romainum, synod chairman from 1956 until 1968, was a candidate for the governorship at the time of his sudden death in January 1968. Rev. Malayalam, synod chairman from 1971 until 1977, became Chairman of the provincial parliament for the party of the Indonesian Soeharto-government, Golkar. Rev. J. Mamoribo became chairman of the provincial council and deputy governor. Rev. D. Prawar became chairman of the council of the Sorong regency, while the ministers N. Apaserai, Z. Rumere, Lukas Sobarofek and F. Ondi became members of a district council (*kabupaten*). Rev. Wim Rumsarwir, synod chairman from 1988 to 1996, was a member of the national parliament for Golkar from 1997 to 1998. The ambivalence of these ministers turned politician is clear as Rev. Rumsarwir was also a member of the 'Team of 100' which demanded independence from Indonesia in February 1999. He was an active member in the committee that demanded a far-reaching form of autonomy from parliament in 2001, including control of the army and prosecution of human rights violations in Papua.

In activities in the context of the struggle for freedom, like the *Musyawaharah Besar* (Mubes, the 'Great Debate') in 1999 and the Papua Congress in 2000, Protestant ministers played an important role. In the early 2000s, ministers could only maintain their independence, more or less, as they were paid by their congregations, and not by the government. The church, especially the GKI, became more and more involved in politics. In October 1999 the GKI, encouraged by the new freedom of the 'reformation' period after the fall of Soeharto, made a political statement when it rejected the division of the province into three provinces. It spoke on behalf of 'the people of West Papua.' The statement was signed by Rev. Herman Awom as vice-chairman of synod. At the parliamentary elections of 2004 as many as 80 candidates in Papua were ministers. To maintain its distance from the state those elected

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<sup>7</sup> Rev. Hermann Saud in a meeting with Prof. Gerrie ter Haar and the author of this chapter at the synod office, October 2001.

were suspended from their office as a minister, although they did not lose the right to preach.

By 2002 the GKI claimed to have about 800,000 members in over one thousand congregations, served by 400 ministers. It had an annual budget of Rp 4 billion (Euro 400,000), which made it a fairly poor church in financial terms. The poor presbyteries in the interior receive generous support from the few rich congregations, where a majority of members were migrants, in the urban areas of Jayapura, Abepura, Sentani, Timika, Biak and Sorong.

### *The Catholics*

The 're-integration' of West Papua into Indonesia in 1962, confirmed by the formal decisions of 1969, caused hardships also for the Catholic Mission. There was a conflict about the Indonesian demand to hand over its schools to become government schools. The Catholic mission successfully resisted an effort to take-over the Teacher Training College in Merauke. However, when on 25 January 1965 Fr. J. Smit in Agats refused to hand over his schools, he was executed on the spot, by Fimbay, the Indonesian district officer. In 1964, all missionaries had to go to Java, for what they called an 'indoctrination course.' They were taught there the official state ideology of Pancasila.

In 1963 Fakfak joined the Apostolic Prefecture of Manokwari. The Sisters from Tienray established policlinics and a hospital in Senopi and Ayawassi. In 1969 a Catholic Academy for Theology (ATK) was established in Abepura with a four year course for pastoral workers and a seven year program for priests. It was not the classical major seminary, but a theological course that gave much attention to anthropology. In 1972 it had 38 students. In 1972 six Indonesian Franciscan friars joined the Dutch. They began work in Wamena together with two Papuan Franciscans. In that year also two brothers of the Society of the Divine Word (SVD), from East Flores, joined the mission to work in Merauke and in Manokwari. Javanese priests worked as Director of the Roman Catholic Centre and as army chaplains. When Herman (Yanuaris) Munninghoff OFM became bishop of Jayapura (1972–1997) the diocese had 31,560 Roman Catholics of which 23,000 were in Paniai, Mimika and Akimuga. The diocese of Manokwari had then 10,753 and the diocese of Merauke about 90,000 Catholics.

### *Other mission activity and the search for 'unreached' tribes and peoples*

In this period there was an increased activity by American, Australian and conservative Protestant Dutch missions. These, generally speaking, have a vertical view of salvation. They try to abstain from political involvement.

Table 3. *The Roman Catholic Church in West Papua (2004 figures)*

(Arch)diocese	(Arch)bishop-birthplace	Catholics	Population	%
Merauke	Nicolaus Adi Septura MSC (Purwokerto, Java)	135,000	220,000	58
Jayapura	Leo Laba Ladjar OFM (Bauraja, Flores, NTT)	45,000	840,000	5
Manokwari/Sorong	Datus Lega (Kupang, West Timor, NTT)	55,000	560,000	10
Agats	Aloysius Murwito OFM (Sleman-Yogya, Java)	50,000	71,000	70
Timika	John Philip Saklil (Kokonao, Papua)	72,000	520,000	14
West Papua		357,000	2,568,000	14

(source: <http://www.catholic-hierarchy.org/diocese/djaya.html>)

They moved into areas not yet served by the Reformed and the Catholic missions. They originated from America: CAMA, the Regions Beyond Missionary Union (RBMU), The Missions Fellowship (TMF) and The Evangelical Alliance Mission (TEAM), and from Australia the Unevangelised Fields Mission (UFM), the Australian Baptist Mission Society (ABMS) and the Asia Pacific Christian Mission (APCM). Many of these missions were strongly anti-Catholic, which led to several religious conflicts. TMF was established in 1963 as a practical co-operation between CAMA, UFM, RBMU, ABMS and MAF, while ZGKN, ZNHNK and APCM became associate members. The Mission Aviation Fellowship (MAF) provided, since 1954, air services for these missions to reach the remote places where they had started work. Without MAF the expansion of so many missions into very remote areas would not have been possible, as often the air connection is virtually the only way to reach these places. MAF also established a radio network, connecting the various mission posts with each other and with the coast. By the 1980s it served 230 airstrips of which 175 were visited regularly. It employed 14 pilots and technicians. The Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL) entered Papua in 1972 with the purpose of studying Papuan languages, helping with literacy work, agricultural development and the translation of the Bible. SIL worked together with the state Cenderawasih University (Uncen) in Jayapura. It is active in 26 languages. In 1994 it employed 84 expatriate missionaries from America, South Korea, Germany and Holland, half of whom worked as translators.

In 1963 a group of Christians became independent of the CAMA mission as the Tabernacle Gospel Christian Church, *Kemah Injil Gereja Masehi di Indonesia* (KINGMI), later renamed *Gereja Kemah Injil di Indonesia* (GKII) when it joined

the sister churches in other parts of Indonesia. This new church sent its own evangelists to the Wolani and Moni tribes. In 1964 the New Testament appeared in the Me language. In the 1970s, however, came the real breakthrough with mass conversions. In 1977 and 1978 there was a rising of the Dani in the Baliem valley. 50,000 Dani warriors armed with spears and bows and arrows marched on Wamena. They were met by Indonesian soldiers armed with machine guns, who pursued the Danis into the Western Dani area. Those who fled to the mountains and forests were machine gunned from the air using Bronco aircraft. The Indonesian army also used traditional believers to attack Christian villages to suppress the rising. Thousands were killed in this rebellion. This was a traumatic experience with foreign intrusion into the ancient culture of the Baliem valley.

Table 4. *The GKII, 1961–1998*

	baptised members	Papuan ministers
1961	8,319	82
1971	23,261	523
1988	59,382	1,200
1998	150,000	1,616

In 2007 the GKII in Papua withdrew again from the Indonesian GKII to establish its own Tabernacle Church in Papua (*Gereja Kemah Injil* or Kingmi). It consisted in 2007 of 47 presbyteries and 8 Synod coordinators. This move was heavily contested by the headquarters in Jakarta and by the expatriate missionaries.

The Australian UFM entered Papua in 1950, and worked in Sengge and the Habifluri valley near Lake Archbold, where it established the Bokondini mission post in 1956. In 1962 it had its first baptism in Kelila. The American UFM established a mission post in Wolo in 1957. In 1966 it began work among the Ilukwa population and in 1968 among the Nggem. It established a hospital in Mulia, with a school for nurses. Here, also, many mission posts were destroyed by people opposing Indonesian occupation. The RBMU started work in 1957 in Karubaga in the Swart Valley. In 1961 it worked in the eastern highlands in Ninia and Karopun and in the southern coastal area among the Yali of Seng (Yalimo area). In 1972 there were 21,000 converts, 100 congregations, over 30 missionaries and 176 Papuan church leaders. The UFM, the RBMU and the APCM worked closely together. They formed the Evangelical Church in Irian Jaya (the *Gereja Injili di Irian Jaya*, GIDI), in 1973. In 1998 the GIDI had 178,000 members, 364 churches and 1,144 ministers or evangelists.

The ABMS began mission work in 1956 in Tiom. From there it extended work to Magi in cooperation with local Papuans. Mission work included, besides the bible school, literacy work, medical training and carpentry training. In 1976 the Baptist Church of Irian Jaya (*Gereja Baptis Irian Jaya*, GBIJ) became independent of the mission. In 1998 it had about 75,000 members, 110 posts and 86 Papuan teachers or ministers.

The Mission of the Reformed Congregations in the Netherlands and North America (*Zending der Gereformeerde Gemeenten in Nederland en Noord-Amerika*, ZGG, also called the Netherlands Reformed Congregation, NRC) began work in Pass valley or Abenaho in the Yali area with Rev. Gerrit Kuyt, a nurse and a teaching couple in 1962. In 1971 it extended work to Nipsan. In 1973 the APCM transferred the Tri valley to the NRC. Here Jan Louwse opened the post at Langda in the Una speaking area. The Una people in the Eastern Highlands experienced a sudden conversion in the period 1973 to 1980, similar to that of the Danis in the Baliem valley in the same period. The Una people associated the European missionaries coming into the area with the spirit world because of their pale skin. The newcomers who brought the Gospel used supernatural means of transport (a helicopter) and tools like steel axes, machetes and knives that were perceived as superior. Finally, some authoritative Una people had dreamt that pale skinned people would come to them and do well. These factors played a role while there was at the same time a spiritual crisis. The first village to be converted was Langda. The people in this village were considered the underdogs in the war with the village of Loryi in the Northern Ei valley. The frequent earthquakes in that period may also have had an impact.<sup>8</sup> Out of this mission work, the Protestant Congregational Church in Indonesia (*Gereja Jemaat Protestan di Indonesia*, GJPI) emerged. From 1986 the GJPI worked in the Momina area. In several of these areas conversion took place in the form of mass burnings of fetishes.

In 1958 Rev. Meeuwes Drost opened, on behalf of the Mission of the Reformed Churches (*Zending van de Gereformeerde Kerken*, ZGK), a mission post in Kouh in the Bomakia area of the Upper Digul River, in the Merauke Regency. In 1968, 20 adults and 7 children were baptised. In 1971 they started work among the Citak people on the river Ndeiran and among the Kombai on the Wanggemalo river. The ZGK also worked in South Digul where the Roman Catholic Mission has stations in Butiptiri, Kaisah, Getentri, Merauke and Semaligga. In 1972 a Central Bible School was established in Boma. In 1976 contacts were made with the Reformed Churches in East Sumba, and together they established the Reformed Churches in Indonesia (*Gereja-gereja*

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<sup>8</sup> I am indebted to Dr. Dick Kroneman (SIL), NRC missionary and SIL translator, for this analysis.

*Reformasi di Indonesia*, GGRI). Since 1980 all the medical and educational work has been done by the Foundation for the Building of Reformed Service, or *Yayasan Pembinaan Pelayanan Reformasi*, YAPPER). In 1982 the first Papuan minister, Rev Rumi, was ordained. By 1984 there were 2,086 baptised members, 56 places of worship with Papuan teachers and two Papuan ministers. In 1986 the first church elders were inaugurated in the congregation of Kouh.

In 1962 the GKI, encouraged by these mission activities and aided by the German Rheinische Missions Gesellschaft (RMG), began mission work in the Yali area of Kurima and Mugwi. Rev Siegfried Zöllner and medical doctor Wim Vriend acted as the pioneer missionaries here. The GKI also established a congregation in Wamena to serve their members working there as policemen, army personnel and civil servants. All these missionary initiatives made of Papua Christianity a really scattered, divided and unrelated network of opposing and often hostile Christian communities. And above are noted only the major denominations related to different and often competing foreign missions.

### *Independent churches and the development of a people's theology*

A number of independent church movements were active in this period. In Sorong lives Ambrosius Fatie who calls himself Tuan Jesus or Lord Jesus. He has 12 female disciples and about 50–100 followers. He is preaching West Papua as the place where the Garden of Eden used to be. The Papuans have a special place in God's creation order. In West Yapen there is a congregation that calls itself New GKI, and which also has associations with the messianic *Koreri* movement. By 2000 Micha Ronsumbre had started, in Biak, a church with the name *Koreri*, characterised by many prayers and much singing by church choirs. Micha is a woodcarver, who also carves *korwar* wood carvings to honour the ancestral spirits. These movements can be seen as a legitimate response by Papuans just as the African Initiated Churches are now seen in this perspective. The government has been very rash in accusing these movements of political rebellion, separatism or treason. In April 2004, for instance, Mathias Furima, who has established himself as a prophet ("Jesus") in the Bintuni area, was shot by the police, accused of being a member of the Papuan Freedom Army (*Tentara Papua Merdeka*, TPM). Two of his female disciples were also killed.

From the grassroots a true liberation theology developed. Political events were interpreted using metaphors from the Bible. The Papuan people were identified with the people of Israel, in the Old Testament. As Israel had been for 40 years in the desert, so the Papuans had to be 40 years in the desert of the Indonesian occupation (from 1962 on), before they would enter the

Promised Land, that is obtain *Merdeka* (freedom or independence). When a team of a hundred Papuan elite went in February 1999 to President Habibie to demand independence they were like Moses demanding freedom for Israel from pharaoh. Theys Eluay, the Chairman of the Presidium of the Papuan Council (PDP), who had worked for the Indonesians in the 1960s and 1970s to identify anti-Indonesian Papuans, and to realise a pro-Indonesian vote in the Act of Free Choice, was like Moses, who also at first had worked for pharaoh, the enemy of Israel, but who later turned against pharaoh and worked for the liberation of his people. The Papuans are compared with Jonah, who is swallowed by a big fish, which is Indonesia. In the end the fish will spit out Jonah. Jesus is seen as the King of the Papuans, who will deliver them from evil and bring them freedom. The Lord gives special blessings to the Papuans as they remain faithful Christians in a country with a Muslim majority. The Muslims are punished with a financial crisis, with disasters like earthquakes, forest fires and plane and boat accidents. During the protests at the funeral of Thomas Wanggay at the beginning of 1996, when the army did not allow students to carry his coffin from Abepura to Jayapura, the road was blocked by laying large stones in the form of crosses on the road. Students sang the hymn, *Onwards Christian Soldiers*. Many shops in the centre of Abepura and the market were burned. However, shopkeepers who could show a copy of the Bible, were safe.

With the fall of Soeharto on Ascension Day 1998 (*Yesus naik, Soeharto turun*, "Jesus rises, Soeharto goes down," according to the Papuans) and the establishment of more democratic institutions and a greater freedom of opinion in the whole of Indonesia, the churches also gained more freedom, together with the challenge to give spiritual guidance to the Papuans in their movement for freedom. The churches were challenged to define a new role of leadership in society, relatively independent of the government and the Golkar Party. The movement for freedom is called the movement for *aspirasi M*, the longing for freedom, *Merdeka*. Papuans claim their right to exist and their right to freedom and independence. Real people's theologies emerge. Papuans have a black skin, curly hair, they are Christians, and have a separate identity, separate from the 'Indonesians', who are called 'amber' or people with a 'white' skin, straight hair, who practice the Muslim religion.

Flag raising ceremonies with the forbidden Morning Star flag, introduced in 1961 for the new state of Papua, started in Biak in July 1999. This was severely suppressed with numerous casualties. In December 1999, initiated by Theys Eluay, there were flag raising ceremonies all over Papua, all peaceful, to celebrate the first raising of the Morning Star flag on 1 December 1961, and to remember the victims of Indonesian oppression. All of these ceremonies, including the later ones in the course of 2000 at Timika, Nabire, Sorong, Manokwari and Wamena, and other places, were at the same time religious

ceremonies, with prayers, hymn singing, and sermons. The ceremonies on 1 December 1999 were allowed, but from that time on the army and the mobile brigade of the police began to suppress very severely all these manifestations of the desire to be free. There were so many casualties each time the police or the army intervened that Papuans began to speak about 'Bloody Biak,' 'Bloody Nabire,' and 'Bloody Timika,' as each time there were human casualties when the army or the police tried to lower the Morning Star flag.

To establish peace and order, and to prevent the outbreak of religious conflicts as in neighbouring Ambon in 1999, Theys Eluay introduced the idea of the *Pos Komando Papua* (Posko Papua). These Command Posts were distributed all over the province and manned by Papuan youth dressed in a black T-shirt and black trousers, so called Satgas (*Satuan Tugas* or task force). These effectively took over the maintenance of law and order in the province, until December 2000 when they were forbidden by the police. Christian prayers and hymns were part of the rituals of the flag raising and of the activities of the Satgas Papua at the Posko.

When in 2001 Rev. Bennie Giay, lecturer at the Theological College Walter Post, and the Franciscan Brother Theo van den Broek tried to mediate in the kidnapping of two Belgian travellers in the Star Mountains they were received as representatives of the Tabernacle Church and the Roman Catholic Church. In an official ceremony the Papuans there gave them back officially the Gospel, symbolised by the Bible. In their opinion the Gospel had only brought them misery. With the Gospel also the Indonesian army and the Freeport mining company had entered and taken away their freedom. In their view these were one complex entity. They saw that the chairman of the Evangelical Tabernacle Church (GKII) received large sums of money as an advisor to the Freeport Company. Freeport gave visiting missionaries money to convert the Papuans to make them acquiesce with Indonesian rule and to give up their resistance. By rejecting the collaboration of the church the Papuans showed an exegesis of the Gospel consonant with that of liberation theology.

Already, before the relatively greater freedom experienced since 1998, the churches had protested in a quiet and careful way against the human rights violations taking place in Papua. In April 1992 the Evangelical Christian Church (GKI) published a report, based on observations by church members, elders and ministers, of serious human rights violations. This so-called Blue Book, because of its cover, was handed to the Community of Indonesian Churches (PGI) for inclusion in the assembly papers of the Assembly of the PGI to take place in Jayapura in 1995. However, the PGI refused to take action on the report and, when the government got wind of it, the board of synod was severely reprimanded. In December 1992 the military commander of Papua/

Irian Jaya and the Moluccas branded the Church as an organisation that wanted to break the unity of Indonesia and did not want to see progress.<sup>9</sup> In 1995 Bishop Herman Munninghoff of the Diocese of Jayapura, courageously made an official complaint about serious human rights violations in Timika, addressed to the newly established National Committee for Human Rights (Komnas HAM), established by Soeharto. This made it difficult to accuse the bishop of separatism or treason. Komnas HAM took up the issue and Munninghoff's report received international attention.

### *Interchurch cooperation*

Following the report of the Jayapura Diocese of the Evangelical Christian Church (GKI), the Roman Catholic Church and the Evangelical Tabernacle Church (GKII) established, in January 1996, Elsham (*Lembaga Studi dan Advokasi Hak Azasi Manusia*) which in a professional way investigates human rights violations and reports on them. It also has build up a network of people it trained to report human rights violations all over the province. The Evangelical Church established a separate department of Law and Human Rights (*Hukum dan HAM*), which also makes its own investigations into human rights violations. The Roman Catholic Church established the Justice and Peace Department, headed by Br. Theo van den Broek OFM, succeeded in 2003 by J. Budi Hernawan in 2003.

In July 1998 the three largest churches, the GKI, Roman Catholic and the GKII, set up Foreri, the Forum for Reconciliation in Papua/Irian Jaya.<sup>10</sup> This was charged by the Indonesian Secretary of State under President Habibie to organise a national dialogue. This in turn led to the meeting of the "Team of 100" asking *merdeka* or independence from President Habibie in February 1999. Elsham employees, as well as the board of the GKI synod, have been threatened when they made critical reports on activities of the army and the police. The army and the police threatened to bring them to court on the accusation of defamation (*fitnah*). When reporting on human rights violations of the army and police they were said to have blemished the good reputation of the security forces, a crime according to Indonesian law. The director of Elsham was interrogated for 24 hours after making a report on the police attack on the dormitories of students from Paniai and the Baliem in Abepura in December 2000, which led to a great number of casualties, three of them fatal. The chairman and the secretary of the synod of the GKI were interrogated by the army after a report on the Betaw case by the Legal and Human

<sup>9</sup> See the weekly *Tifa Irian*, December 1992, quoted in Giay 2005:215.

<sup>10</sup> There is a wink at the concept of *koreri*, which denotes the salvation offered in the traditional religion of the people of Biak, Numfor and other places around the Cenderawasih Bay.

Rights Department of the synod. In Betaw a teacher was kidnapped, who then 'disappeared'. The commander of the *Kopassus*, special command of the army, forced the GKI to change the word *Kopassus* as the likely perpetrators into 'an unidentified group'.

Some oil companies are aiming at 'co-operative security' or 'community security'. By investing in community facilities and involving local people in decision-making companies can get the people living and working around a facility onto their side, reducing the risk of raids on their pipelines, and providing early warnings of potential threats. Using this concept Beyond Petroleum (BP) invited church leaders, among others, to a conference and offered them appointments as paid advisers of the company. Rev. Hermann Saud, the synod chairman of the GKI from 1996 until 2005, accepted the offer. This strengthened his bargaining position as he could now play the company out against the Indonesian government and the army, which exerted strong pressure on him. He pleaded with BP for a privileged treatment of the Papuans, for special educational and training facilities for local people, and for a moratorium on migrant workers from other islands.<sup>11</sup>

Table 5. *Some data on religion in West Papua*<sup>12</sup>

<i>Religion</i>	1971 <sup>13</sup>	%	1980	%	1992	%	2002	%
Protestants	414,515 <sup>14</sup>	56	708,279	61	961,466	56	1,300,000	56
Catholics	140,639	19	256,279	22	408,574	24	531,700	23
Muslims	162,845	22	132,930	11	335,412	20	440,900	19
Other	22,206	3	67,711	6	5,561	0	n/a	2
<i>Total</i>	<i>740,205</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>1,165,199</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>1,711,013</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>2,300,000</i>	<i>100</i>

### *Conclusion*

The Christian Churches have been a major factor in the developing of a Papuan identity. They helped to open the territory and to mediate in the influences that shaped the future of the Papuans in the areas of education, health services and political development. The churches are, however, in an ambivalent position. After the forced integration with Indonesia the churches helped to ease

<sup>11</sup> Personal communication to the author, Abepura, March 2002.

<sup>12</sup> Source: *Irian Jaya Dalam Angka*, Kantor Statistik Irian Jaya, Jayapura. These figures are based on the national census and on samples. The figures differ from the statistics the churches themselves keep about membership, as they may define membership in a different way.

<sup>13</sup> Based on a census of 150,786 people in urban areas only.

<sup>14</sup> Of these 331,376 (76%) GKI.

the difficulties of the transition, seen by a majority of Papuans as the stealing of their legitimate right to self determination. In the new dispensation there was a great influx of migrants. It can be estimated that one quarter of the new migrants, that is over 200,000, are Christians. The churches have helped the integration of these newcomers into Papuan society.

However, after the fall of Soeharto in 1998 and the beginning of the era of *reformasi* and democratisation, the churches entered a precarious position as the military and the police did not want to give up their privileged position and hand over power to elected bodies. The churches are threatened by the army and the police when they plead for peace and reconciliation and when they call for an end to human rights violations. They are pressured to move to a very vertical, non-political, theology, ignoring the problem of an unbalanced form of development, and of the progressive disenfranchisement of the Papuans. If the church leaders follow such a 'security theology' they are rewarded with posts in parliament or government. However, threats, including anonymous death threats, continue. The murder of Theys Eluay on 10 November 2001, Heroes Day, was traumatic, as Theys was considered very close to the Kopassus 'elite' troops and the top brass of the army and police. If even Theys could not save himself by extensive collaboration who else could be saved? No promise of protection or reward from the side of the army and police could be trusted. Since that fateful day the government and paramilitary groups have stepped up their action to counter the political aspirations of the Papuans and to protect Indonesian economic and political interests in the region. In the middle of 2002 the Muslim militia of *Laskar Jihad*, notorious for its use of violence in furthering its aims for the Islamisation of Ambon, Halmahera and Poso (Central Sulawesi), opened an office in Timika. *Laskar Jihad* operated in agreement with members of the security forces.

The churches have responded by supporting fully the idea of the Papuan nationalists, of creating a Papuan peace zone and restricting themselves to non-violent action methods. The churches have also tried to find more unity in view of the threat of a provocation similar to the violence that took place in Ambon, in the Moluccas, in the beginning of 1999. In February 2003, on the occasion of the celebration of the coming of the Gospel, the churches decided to form a Papua Chapter of the Communion of Churches (PGI), with Rev. Hermann Saud as its chairperson. This includes Baptists, Evangelicals and Pentecostals, but not the Roman Catholics. With the Catholic Church there is cooperation in the area of human rights action.

At Ipenburg

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