

3 Societies doing Missionary Work on Nias and the Batu Islands

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Christianity entered the life of the Ono Niha in the second half of the nineteenth century through the agents of two Protestant missionary societies¹ related to but independent of the established churches. The larger of the two was the Rhenish Missionary Society (RM)², centred in Barmen (Wuppertal³), Germany. Its work among the Ono Niha in Padang and Nias began in the 1860s.

Some thirty years later, the much smaller Dutch Lutheran Missionary Society (DLM)⁴, centred in Amsterdam, The Netherlands, sent its missionaries to the Ono Niha on the Batu Islands. Until the 1930s, the DLM and the RM cooperated closely in this area.

Both on Nias and on the Batu Islands, the indigenous churches gradually grew, transforming Ono Niha society into a predominantly Christian one. During World War II, the work of the missionary societies was stopped and the young churches assumed full responsibility for the church work. In the 1950s, relations between the BNKP and the RM were restored in a different way. It was not until 1988/1989 that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the Kingdom of the Netherlands, which since 1943 had had a missionary council assuming most of the missionary responsibilities of the DLM, and the BNKP church-circuit of the Batu Islands began a renewed partnership.

3.2 RHENISH MISSIONARY SOCIETY (RM)

The RM was the first missionary institution to work continuously among the Ono Niha: first in Padang and then also on Nias.

¹ Societies were free associations of persons of similar interests with the purpose of achieving common goals, cf. W.W. Mijndhardt, *Het Nederlandse Genootschap in de achttiende en vroege negentiende eeuw*, 1983, pp. 76-101; J. Boneschansker, *Het Nederlandsch Zending Genootschap in zijn eerste periode*, 1987, pp. 24f.

² 'Rheinische Missionsgesellschaft' (German abbreviation: RMG). In English, RM is used.

³ 'Wuppertal' (valley of the Wupper) is a region situated along the river Wupper in the Rhineland, bordering on Westphalia. In 1929, the city Wuppertal was founded, which included the towns of Elberfeld and Barmen, and other smaller ones. The first mission station of the RM in South Africa was named 'Wuppertal', using the spelling then current, nearly one hundred years earlier, in 1830.

⁴ 'Nederlandsch-Luthersch Genootschap voor In- en Uitwendige Zending'. English abbreviation: DLM.

3.2.1 Spiritual Context

The spiritual context of the RM is the Pietism⁵ and the Revivalism⁶ of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in the Union⁷ churches of the Rhineland and Westphalia. Spiritually and financially, the work was supported by mission-minded individuals, groups and congregations. Among the supporting congregations there were many of a Reformed character, especially in the Siegerland⁸, often with close links to the Netherlands and adhering to the Heidelberg Catechism.⁹ Others, especially in the Ravensberger Land¹⁰, were Lutheran, using the Catechism of Dr. Martin Luther.¹¹ Their common devotional character, however, which gradually spread to influence large areas of church life, smoothed out sharp differences between Calvinism and Lutheranism. Even when confessional tensions flamed up highly in the 1850s, especially in Lutheran circles which were suspicious of the Union, twice an inter-confessional 'Day of Church-unity' (*Kirchentag*)¹² was held in Elberfeld (1851) and in Barmen (1860), near the headquarters of the RM. Though the

⁵ E. Kriele, *Die Rheinische Mission in der Heimat*, 1928, pp. 9-17. 'Die Rheinische Mission ist ein echtes Kind des niederrheinischen Pietismus' (The Rhenish Mission is a genuine child of the Lower Rhine Pietism), quotation on p. 9.

⁶ The revivals in Germany in the nineteenth century took place parallel to the 'Evangelical Awakening' in the Anglo-Saxon world, cf. F.W. Graf et al., 'Erweckung/Erweckungsbewegungen', in: *RGG*⁴ II (1999), pp. 1490-1499; U. Gäbler, 'Enkele kenmerken van het Europese en Amerikaanse Réveil', in: *Documentatieblad voor de Nederlandse Kerkgeschiedenis na 1800*, 13/33 (1990), pp. 2-16; Gäbler has shown that the aims of this movement were very similar in Europe and in North America. The expectation of the nearness of the second coming of Jesus Christ caused a sense of crisis. The true believers had to be gathered and build the Kingdom of God. Personal faith, mission and charity were the true answers against atheism and secularism.

⁷ Unification of previously Lutheran and Reformed churches. 'Unierte' (from Latin *unire*) means 'united'. In response to an urgent request of the Prussian King, Friedrich Wilhem III in 1817, the Lutheran and Reformed territorial churches in Prussia began to form an administrative Union, practicing intercommunion and intercelebration. Within this *Union* (in the west, including the provincial churches in the Rhineland and Westphalia), the individual congregations could opt to be Lutheran or Reformed or United, whereby the United congregations could opt to use either Luther's catechism or the Heidelberg Catechism.

⁸ Siegerland is the area around the town of Siegen in the (former) Prussian province of Westphalia. According to Missionary Edmund Sartor, the later awakening on Nias was very similar to the one he had experienced in Siegerland in his youth; cf. E. Sartor, 'Jahresbericht 1919 über die Station Sa'ua' (RMG 2.769).

⁹ Zacharias Ursinus and Caspar Olevianus, *Heidelberger Katechismus*, Pfalz, 1563.

¹⁰ The awakening in Ravensberger Land in the (former) Prussian province of Westphalia, between the Teutoburg Forest and the Wiehen Mountains, was influenced by the Moravian Brethren and the *Deutsche Christentumsgesellschaft* in Basel (1780-1839). It spread from Gütersloh (Revival sermons of Volkening in 1826) and Steinhagen (first mission festival in Ravensberger Land in 1835) to Herford, Bünde, Jöllenbeck, Bielefeld, Minden (on the northern edge of the Wiehen Mountains), and other places. Cf. Th. Sundermeier, *Erweckung in Ravensberg: Predigten und Auslegungen Ravensberger Erweckungsprediger*, 1962. Concerning the *Deutsche Christentumsgesellschaft*, cf. H. Weigelt, 'Deutsche Christentumsgesellschaft', in: *RGG*⁴ II (1999), p. 246.

¹¹ *Großer Katechismus* (1529) and *Kleiner Katechismus* (1529); in families, schools and catechism classes Luther's Short Catechism (*Kleiner Katechismus*) was used.

¹² Huge lay-events for demonstrating the basic unity of German Protestants. The *Kirchentage*, held from 1848 until 1872, were a reaction to the revolution of 1848, and thus different in character from the modern *Kirchentag*, held since 1949. Cf. H. Schroeter-Wittke, 'Kirchentag', in: *RGG*⁴ IV (2001), pp. 1303-1306.

confessional tensions caused some staunch Lutherans to leave the RM, a schism on confessional grounds could be avoided.¹³

The fathers of the Pietism in the Rhineland and Westphalia were Gerhard Tersteegen (1697-1769)¹⁴, Samuel Collenbusch (1724-1803)¹⁵ and Johann H. Volkening (1796-1877).¹⁶ Strong influences also came from Pietistic circles in Basel, London and the Netherlands. Characteristic of the movement were the strong role of the laity, cross-denominational openness (though there was some harsh anti-Catholicism¹⁷), and Biblical preaching.¹⁸ The Pietists vehemently rejected both Rationalism and historical-critical exegesis.¹⁹ While they had a critical attitude towards the church as an institution, politically they were anti-revolutionary and rather supportive of authoritarian structures.

An early supporter of the RM in the Siegerland was Tillmann Siebel (1804-1875).²⁰ He was a layman who founded small devotional circles²¹, urging its members to take a faith decision and to sanctify their lives. These 'Quiet in the Land'²² emphasized a personal relationship to God and yearned for the coming of his Kingdom.²³ They met regularly in private homes for prayer, Bible study and the reading of missionary reports.

Revivalism was rooted in the theology of Pietism, but had more appreciation for the Lutheran and Calvinist confessions and a greater concern for church and society. It was 'Pietism gone public', openly taking up the arms of faith against atheism and

¹³ August Hardeland, from 1848 until 1856 RM-missionary in Borneo, left the RM in 1856 and joined the Hermannsburg Mission. Heinrich Schöneberg, from 1850 until 1857 RM-missionary in Hereroland (Namibia) and the Cape-Province (South-Africa), was dismissed as a RM-missionary because he declared not to be willing to have church communion with Reformed or Union Christians (cf. E. Kriele, *Die Rheinische Mission in der Heimat*, 1928, pp. 202-204).

¹⁴ For the influence of his writings and hymns, cf. W. Nigg, *Gerhard Tersteegen: Eine Auswahl aus seinen Schriften*, 1967. By the same author, *Gerhard Tersteegen. Der Verstand des Herzens*, 1997. Cf. D. Meyer (ed.), *Gerhard Tersteegen: Ich bete an die Macht der Liebe*, 1998. G. Tersteegen was influenced by the Dutch Pietist Jean de Labadie (1610-1674) and by Roman Catholic mysticism.

¹⁵ Cf. D. Meyer, 'Collenbusch', in: *RGG*⁴ II (1999), pp. 421-422.

¹⁶ Cf. F.-M. Kuhlemann, 'Volkening', in: *RGG*⁴ VIII (2005), pp. 1153-1154.

¹⁷ Anti-Catholicism did not play a role in the missionary areas on Nias and the Batu Islands until after Roman Catholic missionary work expanded in the 1950s and 1960s. Cf. Ch. 5.6.3; also Th. van den End and J. Weitjens, *Ragi Carita II*, 2002, pp. 393.

¹⁸ Cf. G. Menzel, *Die Rheinische Mission*, 1978, pp. 16-17. Pastors gathered to prepare biblically based sermons at the 'Farbmühlen-Konferenz'.

¹⁹ Rationalist theology was inspired by Georg F.W. Hegel (1770-1831), for whom reason is the divine principle in the human being. Missionary circles rejected the historical-critical approach of the German Ferdinand C. Baur (1792-1860, 'Younger School of Tübingen') and the Dutch Abraham D. Loman (1823-1897, Lutheran) and Johan H. Scholten (1811-1886, Reformed). Rationalism was accused of turning the pulpit into a lecturing rostrum, cf. U. Köpf, 'Baur', in: *RGG*⁴ I (1998), pp. 1183-1185; H. Berkhof, *Geschiedenis der Kerk*, 1941, p. 270; C.Ch.G. Visser, *De Lutheranen in Nederland: Tussen katholicisme en calvinisme 1566 tot heden*, 1983, p. 132; A.J. Rasker, *De Nederlandse Hervormde Kerk, vanaf 1795*, 1986, pp. 115-118.

²⁰ Cf. W.A. Siebel, *Tillmann Siebel, der Vater des christlichen Lebens im Siegerland*, 1947.

²¹ The first 'Missionshilfsvereine' were founded in 1830. Until 1848, they were among the few religious gatherings legally permitted in addition to the official church services (cf. A. Bonn, *Ein Jahrhundert Rheinische Mission*, 1928, pp. 27-28).

²² 'Die Stillen im Lande'; influenced by the works of Philipp J. Spener (1635-1705) and Gerhard Tersteegen, these circles practiced a Protestant version of Quietism. Their highest objective was to reach peace of the soul in inner contemplation and prayer which, ultimately, needs neither religious activities nor words. Cf. Hans Schneider, 'Quietismus', in: *RGG*⁴ VI (2003), pp. 1865-1868.

²³ Cf. E. Kriele, *Die Rheinische Mission in der Heimat*, 1928, p. 21; J.C. Hoekendijk, *Kerk en volk in de Duitse zendingswetenschap*, 1948, pp. 19-21, 24-26. Kingdom of God was not understood as a political theocracy, but as the rule of God in personal lives and in the community of believers.

secularism. Revival preachers were the controversial star-entertainers of the nineteenth century, idolized by their fans and scorned by their foes. Some, like Friedrich W. Krummacher (1796-1868), who served for more than twenty years in Barmen and Elberfeld, drew great multitudes to the church services.²⁴ Others, such as Volkening in Ravensberger Land, developed the annual mission festivals²⁵ into a major driving force behind the missionary movement. The main theme of the revival-preachers was 'salvation through the blood of Christ'²⁶, and damnation without it. This uncompromising spiritual coercion often led to emotional outbreaks and occasionally to mass awakenings²⁷ or religious revivals.²⁸ In the early industrialized valley of the Wupper, leading middle-class families were practising the spirit of the revival by providing active social care among members of the working class.

Embedded in this spiritual atmosphere, there were at least five motives which inspired thousands to devote their lives to missionary service:²⁹

1. The sense of crisis caused by the expectation of the near Second Coming of Jesus Christ and the Kingdom of God. Jesus will come as the Judge of the World and the Saviour of true believers.
2. The sense of duty towards the Great Commission of the risen Lord (Mt 28:19).
3. The love for the immortal souls of the multitudes of lost heathen 'out there'.
4. The disgust for the sins 'of this world', such as fornication and idolatry.
5. The longing to honour King Jesus through brave witness.

Popular in most of these Pietistic and Revivalist circles were two devotional books, which later were translated into the Niasan vernacular and, even today, have a strong influence on the church life on Nias and the Batu Islands: *The Pilgrim's Progress* (1678/1684) by John Bunyan (1628-1688)³⁰, a masterpiece of eschato-

²⁴ Friedrich W. Krummacher was the minister of the Reformed church in Barmen-Gemarke as of 1825. In 1834 he transferred to the Reformed congregation in Elberfeld, where his uncle Gottfried D. Krummacher was the First Minister. In 1847, the Prussian king called him to the Dreifaltigkeitskirche in Berlin. The sermons of Friedrich W. Krummacher were greatly responsible for Friedrich Engel's negative views concerning Christianity. Engels originated from a Pietistic family in Barmen and had himself experienced Krummacher's church services. Cf. Harald Schroeter-Wittke, *Unterhaltung*, 1999, pp. 164-186; Hans P. Bleuel, *Friedrich Engels, Bürger und Revolutionär*, 1981.

²⁵ Cf. H. Rzepkowski, 'Missionsfest', in: *Lexikon Missionstheologischer Grundbegriffe*, 1987, pp. 283-289; Karl Rennstich, 'Mission - Geschichte der protestantischen Mission in Deutschland', in: U. Gäbler (ed.), *Der Pietismus im neunzehnten und zwanzigsten Jahrhundert*, 2000, pp. 315-316.

²⁶ This was also the motto of the Dutch Missionary Society (NZG), cf. J. Boneschanker, *Het Nederlandsch Zendeling Genootschap in zijn eerste Periode*, 1987, p. 191.

²⁷ In the Lower Rhine region, and other areas closely affiliated with the RM, there were awakenings in Wülfrath (1784) and Elberfeld (1800-1837).

²⁸ The revival in the Ravensberger Land began in 1835, during a mission festival in Steinhagen, cf. Th. Sundermeier, *Erweckung in Ravensberg*, 1962, p. 10. Earlier there had been revivals in other supporting areas of the RM: in 1784 in Wülfrath under the leadership of Johann Herminghaus and 1800-1837 in Elberfeld under Gottfried D. Krummacher, the uncle of Friedrich W. Krummacher.

²⁹ Cf. I.H. Enklaar, 'Motive und Zielsetzungen der neueren niederländischen Mission in ihrer Anfangsperiode', in: *Pietismus und Reveil*, 1978, pp. 282-285; I.H. Enklaar, *Kom over en help ons!*, 1981, pp. 16-22; U. Gäbler, 'Enkele kenmerken van het Europese en Amerikaanse Réveil', in: *Documentatieblad voor de Nederlandse Kerkgeschiedenis na 1800*, 13/33 (1990), pp. 2-16; G. Menzel, *Die Rheinische Mission*, 1978, pp. 19-20.

³⁰ Heinrich Sundermann translated it into Li Nono Niha (*Jalan Musafir*, 1905).

logical (apocalyptic) devotional literature, which follows the motif of the 'way' (Mt 7: 13-14), and *The Little Book of the Heart* (1812³¹) by Johannes E. Gossner³², which pictures the different stages of the human disposition from the hellish-dark heart of the lost sinner to the blissfully light heart of the born-again, saved Christian.

The Pietism and Revivalism of the Rhineland and Westphalia – the hinterland of the RM – has remained the strong undercurrent of the Rhenish mission throughout its history. However, at times the eschatological hope of the Kingdom was overlaid with or distorted by a tendency to equate Christianity with Western civilization. In the second half of the nineteenth century and on up to and including World War I, a foggy German nationalism³³, sometimes mixed with colonialism (Fabri³⁴), was the more or less dominant overtone. The disillusionment resulting from the loss of both the war and the colonial empire led to giving more serious attention to the socio-logical context in the mission areas.

In 1933, National Socialism challenged the RM. At first, almost all of the seminarians, as well as some of the teachers and the staff, joined the Nazi-movement.³⁵ Fortunately, this lasted only for a few months. In October 1933, the German Missionary Conference, convening in Barmen, rejected the 'linking of the mission to the church structures and to the Germanic Christian movement'.³⁶ The leadership of the RM, with a few embarrassing exceptions, sided with the anti-Nazi

³¹ *Das Herz des Menschen* (usually called *Das Herzensbüchlein*). This booklet originates from a French version by an unknown French Catholic priest. A German translation had been published in Würzburg in 1732 under the title: 'Geistlicher Sittenspiegel, in welchem jeder heilsbegierige Christenmensch sich ersehen, den Stand seiner Seele erkennen, und seinen Lebenswandel nützlich darnach einrichten kann'. It was dedicated to the bishop of Würzburg. Gossner (see the next n.) adjusted it to the taste of his time, without changing the essential content. He published his 'Herzensbüchlein' in 1812. In approximately 1890, Heinrich Sundermann translated it into the Niasan vernacular under the title *Tödö Niha na tenga naha Lowalangi ba naha halöwö chö Gaföcha*. In order to commemorate the second centennial of its first German publication 1932, the *Little Book of the Heart* was published by the DLM on the Batu Islands in ten editions of the Mission Magazine *Toeria Hoelo Batoe*; *ibid.* 4/1-10 (1932). Cf. Ch. 6.2.1.

³² Johannes Evangelista Gossner (14 December 1773 Hausen / Ulm – 30 March 1858 Berlin), former Roman Catholic priest. He converted to Protestantism in 1826. 1829-1846 he led the Moravian-Lutheran congregation in Berlin and sent out missionary-workmen, lay preachers who had to earn their own living and were not supported financially by a missionary society. Cf. M. Laube, 'Goßner', in: *RGG*⁴ III (2000), p. 1093.

³³ Cf. J.C. Hoekendijk, *Kerk en volk in de Duitse zendingswetenschap*, 1949, pp. 36-38. This arrogant 'Germanising' of the Gospel – sickening, in hindsight – comes out clearly in the sermons of Friedrich W. Krummacher, cf. H. Schroeter-Wittke, *Unterhaltung*, 1999, pp. 167-168.

³⁴ Friedrich Fabri had a theology of the Kingdom of God, but he differentiated – at least as far as his choice of language was concerned – between his 'biblical', his 'historical' and his 'practical' perspectives of the world. This 'split' view of reality was widely held around the turn of the century, cf. H. Beyer, 'Friedrich Fabri über Nationalstaat und kirchliche Eigenständigkeit, Mission und Imperialismus', in: *Zeitschrift für Bayrische Kirchengeschichte* 30 (1961), pp. 82, 87, 94-96.

³⁵ Cf. E. Delius, 'Bemerkungen zur Geschichte der Rheinischen Mission in den Jahren 1929 bis 1939', 1940 (RMG 1.287): 'Seminar, Kontor und die Missionarschaft wurden erfaßt von der Welle der neuen Begeisterung' (*ibid.* 17); 'Nach den Sommerferien traten die Brüder fast alle in die S.A. ein' (*ibid.* p. 18). Eberhard A. Delius (2 July 1903 Lippspringe – 1 Mai 1945 Frankfurt/Oder), himself a supporter of the 'Confessing Church' (*Bekennende Kirche*), taught at the Barmen Seminary from 1930 until 1943/44.

³⁶ *Ibid.* p. 21 ('... daß die Opposition auf dem Missionstag sich aufs schärfste gegen jegliche Verkoppelung der Mission mit dem Kirchenregiment und der deutschchristlichen Bewegung wehrte' (RMG 1.287).

'Confessing Church' (*Bekennende Kirche*). Before the end of 1933, most seminarians had also turned their backs on Adolf Hitler.

The dialectical theology of Georg Eichholz, a former student of Karl Barth and since 1935 a teacher at the Barmen seminary³⁷, restored to some extent the old vigour of the theology of the Kingdom of God, which was critical of all secular ideologies. However, when missionary work was resumed in the early 1950s, the missionaries' general suspicion of any ideology, based on their recent experiences, sometimes resulted in a general scepticism towards the nationalism inspiring the young churches in post-colonial areas, which, for instance in Indonesia, often brought with it a new appreciation of traditional culture.

3.2.2 Establishment and Organisation

The RM was a union of a number of smaller missionary societies, which followed the model of institutions such as the London Missionary Society (founded 1795), the Rotterdam-based Dutch Missionary Society³⁸ (1797) and the Basel Missionary Society³⁹ (1815).

The first of the original cells of the RM was the Elberfeld Missionary Society⁴⁰, founded on Whit Monday, 3 June 1799, in the home of the leather-merchant Johann Ball.⁴¹ They took over the English tradition⁴² of meeting on every first Monday in the month to pray for the growth of the Kingdom and to read and discuss about what was happening on the British and Dutch 'mission fields'.⁴³ A chairman, treasurer and secretary were chosen, but the correspondence was divided among other members according to their language skills. At each meeting, a voluntary collection was taken up, to which each one present contributed some money.

Every member of the missionary society was obligated to collect donations in his own neighbourhood. The money was sent to the London Missionary Society for the mission in South Africa, to the School for Missionaries of Johannes Jänicke⁴⁴ in

³⁷ G. Menzel, *Die Rheinische Mission*, 1978, pp. 326-328. Cf. Ch. 3.5.1.

³⁸ 'Het Nederlandsch Zending Genootschap' (NZG).

³⁹ 'Evangelische Missionsgesellschaft zu Basel', cf. Paul Jenkins, 'Basler Mission', in: *RGG*⁴ I (1998), pp. 1159-1161; Karl Rennstich, 'Mission – Geschichte der protestantischen Mission in Deutschland', in: U. Gäbler (ed.), *Der Pietismus im neunzehnten und zwanzigsten Jahrhundert*, 2000, pp. 308-311.

⁴⁰ 'Die Elberfelder Missionsgesellschaft'.

⁴¹ A. Bonn, *Ein Jahrhundert Rheinische Mission*, 1928, p. 3. Bonn reckons that all nine participants in that meeting were followers of the teachings of Tersteegen. According to G. Menzel, *Die Rheinische Mission*, 1978, p. 18, there were ten men attending this first meeting.

⁴² This tradition, established in the London Missionary Society, had also been taken over by the Dutch Missionary Society and other European Missionary Societies, cf. R. Lovett, *The History of the London Missionary Society*, 1899, p. 12, J. Boneschansker, *Het Nederlandsch Zending Genootschap in zijn eerste Periode*, 1987, pp. 84-88.

⁴³ The term 'mission field' had been frequently used in missionary literature, but was abandoned by many missiologists after World War II. Cf. J.A.B. Jongeneel, *Philosophy, Science and Theology of Mission in the 19th and 20th Centuries I*, 2002, p. 268.

⁴⁴ Jenjk Jänicke, born 6 July 1748 of Bohemian immigrant parents, was the pastor of the Bohemian-Lutheran congregation in Berlin as of 1779. He started a School for Missionaries with seven poorly educated, but pious young craftsmen on 1 February 1800. In the more than 25 years of the existence of this school, it prepared eighty missionaries for British and Dutch missionary societies. In 1823 this school was taken over by the Berlin Mission Society. Jänicke was influenced by the Pietism of the Moravians of Herrnhut and consciously used Lutheran terminology. His ideal was to equip young preachers and missionaries with the 'pure teachings' of the Bible. His sermons were Christ-centred, and of an apologetic and eschatological nature, cf. P. Strümpfel, 'Johannes Jänicke: Eine

Berlin, and the like. Besides fundraising, the Elberfeld Missionary Society spent a lot of time and energy collecting and translating mission news and publishing a newsletter.⁴⁵ It also distributed Bibles and parts of the Bible, hymnbooks, etc. among the poor.⁴⁶ Its first missionary, Friedrich W. Becker, who was sent to the above-mentioned school of Jänicke in Berlin for his studies, did not enter the mission among the heathen (as had been the intention), but became a missionary among the Jews⁴⁷, instead. In 1828, the Elberfeld Missionary Society was asked by the neighbouring Barmen Missionary Society to unite with it.

The Barmen Missionary Society had been founded on 8 September 1818. The main initiator was the young Lutheran assistant pastor Wilhelm Leipoldt, who had been inspired by the director of the Basel Missionary Society, Christian G. Blumhardt (1779-1838).⁴⁸ Though Leipoldt was a minister, clergy in no way dominated this society. Leipoldt did not become its chairman, but its secretary. Each member of the board of directors of this society was responsible for one district in Barmen, where he also had to collect money for the support of mainly the Basel Mission. Its relationship to the School of Mission in Basel was very similar to the relationship of the Elberfeld Society to Jänicke's School of Mission in Berlin.⁴⁹ Characteristic of the Barmen Mission Society was its discipline⁵⁰ and its focus on mission among the 'heathen'. For this purpose, a Mission Seminary was founded on 11 July 1825⁵¹, which soon started to publish its own mission magazine.⁵²

The third cell that joined the union in 1828 was the Cologne Missionary Society.⁵³ The small Protestant congregation in Cologne, a recent unification of Reformed and Lutherans, had survived oppression since the sixteenth century and received freedom of existence after the Peace of Lunéville (9 February 1801). The missionary ideal was very much alive within it. In 1814, a Bible Society was founded, followed in 1822 by a Missionary Society, which, like Barmen, was also inspired by Blumhardt. Its first president was a layman, the merchant Wilhelm Jurjans.⁵⁴ The structure of its organisation was similar to that of the Elberfeld and

Säkularerinnerung an die Begründung der ersten Missionsschule', in: *AMZ* 27 (1900), pp. 305-315. Jänicke died on 21 July 1827.

⁴⁵ 'Nachrichten von der Ausbreitung des Reiches Jesu'. Also tracts and sermons (i.e., 'Dorfgespräche').

⁴⁶ 'Wuppertaler Traktatgesellschaft' and 'Bergische Bibelgesellschaft'. Later taken over by Bible-and-Tract societies in 1814. Cf. W. Mundt, *Sinners directed to the Saviour*, 1995.

⁴⁷ So did Johann C. Reichardt and Karl W. Nösgen, who later worked for missionary societies in England and Scotland; from 1820 to 1828, the mission among the Jews had been the main objective of the Elberfeld Missionary Society, cf. E. Kriele, *Die Rheinische Mission in der Heimat*, 1928, pp. 26-27; A. Bonn, *Ein Jahrhundert Rheinische Mission*, 1928, pp. 5-6.

⁴⁸ Christian G. Blumhardt must not be confused with Johann C. Blumhardt (1805-1880), author of *Handbüchlein der Missionsgeschichte und Missionsgeographie* (1844), and with Christoph F. Blumhardt (1842-1919).

⁴⁹ Cf. E. Kriele, *Die Rheinische Mission in der Heimat*, 1928, p. 32.

⁵⁰ I.e., for coming late to a meeting, a fine of '12 Stübern' was imposed. 'Barmen' did not involve itself in secondary activities (i.e., distribution of Bibles; serving Germans in the diaspora), nor in mission to the Jews.

⁵¹ At the unification in 1828, a Commission for the Seminary was formed, consisting of eight members, six from Barmen and two from Eberfeld, plus the Inspector. This Commission was abolished in October of the following year, when the 'deputation' (see below) took over the full responsibility for the mission seminary.

⁵² 'Das Barmer Missionsblatt' (first ed. January 1826), the first such mission magazine in Germany.

⁵³ 'Die Kölner Missionsgesellschaft'.

⁵⁴ Cf. Letters of the board of the Missionary Society of Cologne, 17 July 1822 and 15 October 1823 (RMG 133). According to E. Kriele, *Die Rheinische Mission in der Heimat*, 1928, p. 44, his name

the Barmen Societies. It had a very close relationship with the Basel Mission, which it supported financially. In the Lower-Rhine region, the Cologne Missionary Society was successful in soliciting funds for the mission, as well as in distributing revival tracts (colportage).

The Wesel Missionary Society was founded on 29 March 1822, about the same time as the Cologne Mission. Although it had close contacts with the friends in Cologne, it was intended as an auxiliary society for Barmen. Many of its members were either clergymen or merchants.

None of these small missionary societies was able to send out missionaries. For this reason, talks about unification began at the beginning of 1828. On 23 September 1828 in Mettmann, the Elberfeld, Barmen and Cologne societies united and the Rhenish Missionary Society (RM) was founded. 'Wesel' joined in June, 1829. On 24 June 1829, the RM was officially recognized by the government. At first, each member society continued its own programs while contributing to the common goal, which was defined as follows: 'To act directly to promote the Kingdom of God among non-Christian nations through sending out and supporting missionaries, by joining already existing missions or by founding new mission stations'.⁵⁵

In order to realize these objectives, a board, called the deputation, was formed. Elberfeld and Barmen each delegated three deputies; Cologne and Wesel could each delegate one or two representatives. Since the three executives of the board (*Praeses*, Secretary and Treasurer) all came from Barmen, it can be said that the old Barmen Society formed the core of the new RM. Although the deputation understood itself as the agent of the missionary circles, congregations and auxiliary societies in Germany, it had quite a patriarchal attitude towards both its missionaries and the young churches.⁵⁶

3.3 DUTCH LUTHERAN MISSIONARY SOCIETY (DLM)

The second Protestant missionary society which played an important role in the history of Christianity among the Ono Niha, especially on the Batu Islands, was the Dutch Lutheran Missionary Society (DLM), centred in Amsterdam.⁵⁷

3.3.1 Spiritual Context

Lutheranism is a small yet early stream of Protestantism in the Netherlands.⁵⁸ The first official Dutch Lutheran church was founded on 2 September 1566 in Ant-

was W. Jürgens, probably a later adaptation. Wilhelm Jurjans had been the director of a cotton mill, cf. Barbara Becker-Jäkli, *Die Protestanten in Köln*, 1983, p. 249.

⁵⁵ G. Menzel, *Die Rheinische Mission*, 1978, p. 25.

⁵⁶ Cf. E. Kriele, *Die Rheinische Mission in der Heimat*, 1928, pp. 82-85. The deputation was the 'spiritual office' (*geistliche Behörde*), responsible only to the general assembly, which could veto its decisions.

⁵⁷ For the activities of the DLM, cf. *Een vaste burg is onze God! (EVB)*, 1889-1942; *De Wartburg, Luthersch Weekblad*, 1899-1942, 1945-1948.

⁵⁸ In 1812, Lutherans made up 3.65% of the Dutch population. Due to increased mobility in the age of industrialisation and secularism, the number decreased to 1.65% in 1859 and 1.27% in 1920, R.P. Zijp, 'Luther in de Lage Landen', 1983, p. 27.

werp.⁵⁹ Later, the centre of the church moved to Amsterdam. There were no missionary activities until the nineteenth century.⁶⁰

In the eighteenth century, Pietistic influences from Herrnhut (Moravian Brethren), and from Halle (August H. Francke) were being felt in the Lutheran Church in the Netherlands, which, in orthodox Lutheran tradition, was under the strict direction of the church council of Amsterdam. Some Pietistic ministers caused trouble by not acknowledging this authority. They rejected formal liturgies, pre-formulated prayers, and even the church order, claiming direct authorisation from God and freedom in the Holy Spirit. Despite pressure from Amsterdam, however, they usually remained faithful to the Lutheran church.

In the second half of the eighteenth century, Rationalism and Enlightenment became increasingly popular in prominent and intellectual circles of the Lutheran church, especially in Amsterdam. This culminated in a schism on 3 July 1791 with the foundation of the Restored Evangelical-Lutheran Church.⁶¹ Most of its members adhered staunchly to the Lutheran confessions, but some were pietistic, which led to tensions.

A few individual Dutch Lutherans were also involved in the interdenominational Dutch Missionary Society.⁶² Soon, a Mission Society Auxiliary⁶³ for supporting the Dutch Missionary Society was founded among the members of the Restored Evangelical-Lutheran congregation in Amsterdam.

Towards the end of the first half of the nineteenth century, the liberal theological tendencies of the 'Groningen Theology'⁶⁴ became strong in the circles of the Dutch Missionary Society. Around 1848, this caused harsh criticism by influential leaders of the Dutch Awakening or *Réveil*, such as Guillaume Groen van Prinsterer, and by messianic Jews, such as Isaïc da Costa and Abraham Capadose.⁶⁵

⁵⁹ Hendrik Vos and Johannes van den Esschen, Augustinian monks from Antwerp, were burnt at the stake in Brussels on 1 June 1523, for their 'Lutheran heresies'. They were honoured by Luther as the first martyrs of the Reformation in the Netherlands, cf. C.Ch.G. Visser, *De Lutheranen in Nederland*, 1983, pp. 9-19.

⁶⁰ Lutheran congregations in Dutch colonies like Nieuw-Amsterdam/New York (1649), Batavia / Jakarta (1743), Paramaribo (1742), Curaçao (1763), Rio-Beribe (1753), and Cape Town (1779) were the result of migration, not of mission.

⁶¹ 'Hersteld Evangelisch-Lutherse Kerk', acknowledged by the state on 7 August 1835 (by Royal Decree). The DLM recruited its members, supporters, and later its missionaries, from both churches. In 1952, the Dutch Lutherans were reunited as the Evangelical-Lutheran Church in the Kingdom of the Netherlands. Cf. C.Ch.G. Visser, *De Lutheranen in Nederland*, 1983, pp. 107-112, 120, 151-153.

⁶² *Ibid.* p. 133.

⁶³ 'Het Hulp-Zendinggenootschap onder de Leden der Herstelde Evangelisch Luthersche Gemeente te Amsterdam'. Cf. 'Archiefstukken betreffende de zendingsarbeid van het Nederlandsch Luthersch Genootschap, Bij het Hulpgenootschap ingekomen stukken 1824-1885, Inv. No. 1018, 1 omslag (De archieven der Hersteld Evangelisch-Luthersche Gemeente, Amsterdam); Handelingen NZG (1829), p. 74; (1831), p. 27; (1832), p. 14; (1834), p. 24; (1835), p. 44; (1836), p. 22; (1837), p. 15; (1838), p. 17; etc. (Archief NZG, Oud Archief Raad voor de Zending, Het Utrechts Archief).

⁶⁴ Representatives of the 'Groningen Theology', such as Petrus Hofstede de Groot (1802-1886) and Louis Gerlach Pareau (1800-1866), wanted to address the intellectuals of their time. According to them, Jesus Christ had come primarily to educate humanity, and not to redeem lost sinners through his blood. The 'Groningen Theology' had strong nationalist tendencies. Educating and civilising the 'heathen' in the Dutch colonies was both a Christian and a nationalist duty, cf. Arie L. Molendijk, 'Groninger Schule', *RGG*⁴ III (2000), p. 1299.

⁶⁵ Cf. I.H. Enklaar, *Kom over en help ons!*, 1981, pp. 67-88.

Eventually, many conservative supporters left the Dutch Missionary Society and formed new, confessional societies of a Calvinist character.⁶⁶

3.3.2 Establishment and Organisation

Parallel to the reactions against liberal theology in Reformed circles, and inspired by the Lutheran missionary movement in Dresden and Leipzig⁶⁷, some pietistic confessional Lutherans in Holland founded their own, independent missionary society on 5 April 1852 in Amsterdam.⁶⁸ It was called 'Dutch Society for the Evangelical Lutheran Mission'. The leading figure was the German-born Lutheran pastor of Amsterdam, Ludwig C. Lentz⁶⁹ (1807-1895). The society was firmly based on the Lutheran confessions, especially on the Catechism of Martin Luther and on the Augsburg Confession of 1530, and had a threefold goal:⁷⁰

1. To support the mission among the heathen being carried out by the Lutheran Missionary Society located in Leipzig, Germany.
2. To further the knowledge of the pure Word and Sacrament, especially through spreading literature and founding of Lutheran schools.
3. To further the unity among Lutherans worldwide.

Though distinctly confessional in character, it had 'friendly' relationships with other missionary societies, with whom it shared the objective of building the Kingdom of God.⁷¹ The attitude towards the official institutions of the Lutheran churches in the Netherlands was positive, although not particularly close. The missionary society willingly offered them its services, but the churches ignored it for a long time.⁷² The 'Dutch Society for the Evangelical Lutheran Mission' did not attempt to send out any missionaries itself. This led to dissatisfaction among its supporters⁷³, who felt a need for a Dutch Lutheran contribution to the mission among the heathen in the colonies.

A new development in Dutch Lutheran mission circles began in 1872, when the 'Dutch Society for the Evangelical Lutheran Mission' was reorganized and re-oriented. It lost some of its staunch confessional character and became the meeting point for all conservative, mission-minded Lutheran pastors from Dutch Lutheran

⁶⁶ I.e., Java-Comité (1855), Nederlandsche Zendingsvereniging (1858), Utrechtsche Zendingsvereniging (1859) and the Nederlandsche Gereformeerde Zendingsvereniging (1859), cf. E.F. Kruijff, *Geschiedenis van het Nederlandsche Zendelinggenootschap en zijne zendingsposten*, 1894, pp. 477-479, 490; Th. van den End, *Tweehonderd jaar Nederlandse zending: een overzicht*, 1997, pp. 6-9.

⁶⁷ Cf. J.C. Hoekendijk, *Kerk en volk in de Duitse zendingswetenschap*, 1948, pp. 27-31.

⁶⁸ Cf. 'Stichtingsacte Nederlandsch Genootschap voor de Evangelisch-Lutherse Zending', 1852 (GAA 552/17). The notary public was Johan H. Bok Jr. The founding ceremony took place on Monday evening at the residence of the Consul-General of Sweden and Norway, George F. Egidius (who became Treasurer). Others present: Ludwig C. Lentz (Chairman), Reinhard Lauer (Secretary) and F.C.H. Büchli Fest (Librarian).

⁶⁹ Lentz was not a member of the Restored Evangelical-Lutheran Church. He condemned the schism in the church.

⁷⁰ Cf. 'Stichtingsacte' § 1-2. The members came from both Dutch Lutheran churches (GAA 552/17).

⁷¹ 'Stichtingsacte' § 8; cf. J. Boneschanker, *Het Nederlandsch Zendeling Genootschap in zijn eerste periode*, 1987, p. 55.

⁷² J. Hallewas, *Lutherse Wereldzending NU*, 1955, p. 4.

⁷³ Cf. C.Ch.G. Visser, *De Lutheranen in Nederland*, 1983, pp. 133-135.

churches.⁷⁴ The name was changed to 'Dutch Lutheran Society for Interior and Exterior Missions' (DLM).⁷⁵ Its new primary objective was to start its own Dutch-Lutheran mission abroad. Remaining Lutherans in the above-mentioned mission society auxiliary, who had become increasingly dissatisfied with the Dutch Missionary Society's handling of the case of an Indonesian student of Theology in Amsterdam, Lambertus Mangindaan⁷⁶, also transferred their membership to the DLM.

A discussion about the necessity for a specifically Dutch Lutheran mission among the 'heathen' emerged in the 1880s, parallel with the first commissioning of missionaries to Indonesia. A programmatic paper by G.A. Alers⁷⁷ presented during the autumn assembly of the DLM in 1885, emphasized that it was not 'Lutheranism' which was important, but rather the 'theology of the cross'. The goal was: 'to lead the heathen to the cross of Christ, so that they may be taken up into the multitude of those who are saved by the cross.'⁷⁸ Though the speaker leaves no doubt that this teaching is preserved most purely in the Lutheran church, he sees the necessity of working together with others who are of the same spirit. He outlines the mission strategy of the DLM as follows:⁷⁹

1. To acknowledge, on the basis of the Bible (Rom 8: 22 and Acts 16: 9) and on the history of missions, that the heathen are yearning for salvation.
2. To honour the yearning and fear of the heathen.
3. To arouse in the heathen the consciousness of their need of salvation.
4. To satisfy the spiritual needs of the heathen. Only God can do this. The missionary is merely the instrument to this end. God desires the ultimate happiness of the heathen. The ultimate satisfaction for the heathen is not civilization, but rather the Gospel of God's grace in Jesus Christ, his son.

⁷⁴ J. Hallewas, *Lutherse Wereldzending NU*, 1955, p. 4. 'Conservative' in this case is intended to mean cultivating a distinct Lutheran identity and rejecting the positions of liberal theology.

⁷⁵ 'Nederlandsch Genootschap voor In- en Uitwendige Zending', often referred to as 'Luthersch Genootschap', cf. C.Ch.G. Visser, *De Lutheranen in Nederland*, 1983, pp. 135-136, 154 (Visser uses the new Dutch spelling: 'Luthers Genootschap').

⁷⁶ Mangindaan, an 'Alfoer' (native) from Minahasa, had come to Holland in 1853 for further theological studies under the auspices of the Dutch Missionary Society. The Lutheran 'Auxiliary Society' assumed responsibility for Mangindaan and in 1854 requested that he be sent back to the Minahasa as a missionary. This was at first rejected, the reason given being that the missionary society in Basel had come to the conclusion that such Indonesian missionaries, educated in Europe, usually could not adjust themselves again among their own people. Nevertheless, in 1858 Mangindaan was accepted as an assistant-missionary, after he had passed the examinations for 'third grade teacher' and for catechist, all with the support of the Lutheran Mission Society Auxiliary. He then returned to the Minahasa, working under the supervision of Dutch missionaries. When, again in 1863/1864, the Lutheran 'Auxiliary Society' asked for Mangindaan to be ordained as a missionary, this was rejected. The dubious reasons given were that indigenous co-workers lacked originality and that the (white) missionaries could not tolerate a native as a colleague, cf. E.F. Kruijff, *Geschiedenis van het Nederlandsche Zendelinggenootschap en zijne zendingsposten*, 1894, pp. 390-391; *Handelingen NZG* (1858), pp. 17, 27 and 64; *Mededeelingen NZG* 7- 8 (1963/64), pp. 200-225.

⁷⁷ G.A. Alers, 'Het verlangen der heidenen' (the yearning of the heathen), in: *EVB*, 5/2 (1887), pp. 25-37.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.* p. 36.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.* pp. 27-35.

In an article by Dirk C. Meijer Jr. (treasurer of the DLM), two controversial arguments are put forward to justify a specifically Lutheran mission:⁸⁰

1. Lutherans have a much more appreciative attitude towards the traditions of the Catholic Church than do the Reformed, who do away with everything which is not strictly necessary. This is the reason the Lutheran way is more attractive to both underdeveloped people, being more emotionally than rationally inclined, and developed people with a sense of art;
2. The Reformed mission strategy is considered to be very individualistic, whereas the Lutheran approach is directed towards the nation as a whole. Lutheran missions are therefore more inclined to develop the political and social institutions, respecting all the cultural institutions and values of the people which are not contradictory to Christianity. Lutheran missions in India and Greenland can be taken as examples.

An argument of the opponents of Lutheran missions was that Martin Luther himself did not consider mission necessary. This was countered in a paper read by H.R. Snijder⁸¹, based on Mt 24:14a ('And this good news of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the world, as a testimony to all the nations'). He argued that even if Luther had not been in favour of missions, this was not binding for his followers. In matters of faith, Lutherans should not bow to human authorities, but be responsible to Jesus Christ alone. Being a good Lutheran means being a good Christian⁸², who as such cannot ignore the voices of the many heathen calling: 'come over and help us'.⁸³

The DLM claimed participation in building the Kingdom of God by making a distinctly Lutheran contribution. This vision was explicitly mentioned by Johannes Kersten, the first DLM-missionary to the Ono Niha. In his speech upon departing for the mission field, he said that the goal of his mission was to help build God's church in a Lutheran spirit.⁸⁴

3.4 COOPERATION BETWEEN RM AND DLM

That the RM received financial aid from Dutch supporters of missions can be traced back to as early as 1869.⁸⁵ Johannes W. Dornsaft⁸⁶, RM-missionary in Padang, seems to have been supported by these Dutch 'friends' since 1881. A 'Mission Society

⁸⁰ 'Lutherse Heiden-Zending' (Lutheran mission among the heathen), cf. *EVB*, 16/5 (1898), pp. 175-179.

⁸¹ 'Our internal and external Lutheran mission', in: *EVB*, 17/6 (1899), pp. 189-196. This paper was presented during the autumn-assembly of the DLM on 25 October 1899 in Amsterdam.

⁸² 'Lutherse Heiden-Zending', 1898, p. 194.

⁸³ *Ibid.* p. 196. The first request for Christian missionaries, according to Acts 16:9 ('Come over to Macedonia and help us'); and a popular mission-slogan in the nineteenth century, cf. I.H. Enklaar, *Kom over en help ons!*, 1981, pp. 5-15.

⁸⁴ Speech held at the commissioning service held on Wednesday, 20 April 1887 in the Old Lutheran Church in Amsterdam, *EVB*, 5/3 (1887), p. 63 ('medehelpen Zijne Kerk in Lutherschen geest op te richten').

⁸⁵ This was arranged by Fabri during a visit to Amsterdam, mentioned in the 'Deputationsprotokoll' (minutes of the board) of 10 May 1869 (RMG 10).

⁸⁶ Johannes W. Dornsaft (23 November 1847 Duisburg – 6 November 1915 Padang), cf. Ch. 4.2. and Ch. 4.3.4.4.

Auxiliary'⁸⁷, also called the 'Amsterdam Aid Committee', regularly collected funds for and published information about the missionary activities of the RM.⁸⁸ In 1932, the 'Committee for the support of the Rhenish Mission on Sumatra, Nias and Mentawai'⁸⁹ was founded in Amsterdam in order to help the RM-missionaries during the depression.

From 1885 onwards, there was also close cooperation between the RM and the DLM.⁹⁰ In the minutes of the meeting of the DLM board on 8 February 1886 the 'very good relationship with Barmen' (i.e., with First Inspector Dr. August W. Schreiber⁹¹) is mentioned explicitly in connection with the serious illness (and subsequent death) of Missionary Asmus Festersen⁹² on Sumatra.⁹³ The RM provided some important emergency assistance to Festersen and his wife through its missionary in Padang, Dornsaft.

Their cooperation soon assumed a more permanent character. In March of 1886, a concept for an agreement between the DLM and the RM for the recruitment by the DLM of missionaries trained in Barmen was discussed.⁹⁴ It stipulated that in future the DLM would recruit all its missionaries from the RM. They would stay at least half a year in the Netherlands to learn the Dutch language before leaving for Indonesia and accept all the conditions laid down by the DLM.⁹⁵ The final draft of the agreement between RM and DLM (dated 11 August 1886), written in both Dutch and German, was signed by both the board of the DLM in Amsterdam and the 'deputation' of the RM in Barmen.⁹⁶ It underlines their good cooperation, while carefully maintaining the independence of the DLM in its relations with the larger RM.

Henceforth, before taking important decisions concerning the mission on Sumatra, the DLM consulted the RM. This was in accordance with § 6 of the above-mentioned agreement. When, in 1887/1888, the mission area of the DLM on Sumatra, in the Pasemah Ulu Manna, had to be surrendered to the Roman Catholics⁹⁷, RM

⁸⁷ 'Vereeniging tot bevordering der belangen van het Rijnsche Zendelinggenootschap ten Barmen', also called 'Steun-Comitee', 'Hilfskomitee in Amsterdam' or 'Holländisches Komitee' (RMG 214; RMG 215).

⁸⁸ *De Rijnsche Zending*, 1870-1916/1920. The publications of this mission magazine was edited by 'De Halfstuivers-Vereeniging der Rijnsche Zending' in Hoenderloo, The Netherlands.

⁸⁹ RMG 815 and 816.

⁹⁰ Cf. U. Hummel, 'Die Zusammenarbeit zwischen der Rheinischen Missionsgesellschaft und der Niederländisch-Lutherischen Missionsgesellschaft in Ausbildung und Verkündigung, Missionsarbeit auf Sumatra, Nias und den Batu Inseln', in: Beate Magen et al. (eds.), *Monatshefte für die Evangelische Kirchengeschichte des Rheinlandes* LIV, 2005.

⁹¹ Schreiber had previously been a RM-missionary on Sumatra and *Praeses* of the conference of missionaries. As of 1880, he was a member of the deputation, as of 1884 the second inspector and from 1889-1903 he became the first inspector; Cf. Ch. 3.5.1 and Ch. 4.4.1.

⁹² Asmus Festersen originated from Stenderup, nearby Schleswig (Northern Germany).

⁹³ 'Notulen Hoofdbestuur', Amsterdam, 8 February 1886 (GAA 552/2); cf. Ch. 3.5.4.

⁹⁴ 'Notulen Hoofdbestuur', Amsterdam, 1 March 1886 (GAA 552/2).

⁹⁵ 'Notulen Hoofdbestuur', Amsterdam, 6 April 1886 (GAA 552/2).

⁹⁶ 'Correspondentie Hoofdbestuur' (GAA 552/19); cf. U. Hummel, *Sirihpruim en kruis*, 2002, pp. 109-111.

⁹⁷ The Roman Catholic priest Jan (Joannes) P.N. van Meurs settled in Tanjung Sakti in the Pasemah Ulu Manna, the mountainous border area between Bencoolen and Palembang, with a research-visa in April, 1887. On 12 October 1887, the board of the DLM discussed this problem in an extraordinary meeting and decided not to enter into competition with the Catholics. Although Kersten received a work-permit for this area shortly after Van Meurs in June, 1888, the DLM followed the advice of Dr. Schreiber of the RM to begin a new mission on the Batu Islands. On 8 June 1888, the DLM decided to give up Tanjung Sakti as missionary area. Cf. 'Notulen

inspector Schreiber suggested the Batu Islands as a new mission area for the DLM.⁹⁸ On Pulau Tello, the centre of the Batu archipelago, there were both a Dutch administrator⁹⁹ and a friendly tribal chief. In addition, the prospect of RM-missionaries being able to assist the DLM with cultural (i.e., linguistic) knowledge concerning the Ono Niha were decisive for Schreiber's suggestion.¹⁰⁰

There were, of course, also slight tensions between the DLM and the RM, especially concerning correspondence with the missionaries and concerning the status of (former) RM-missionaries in the service of the DLM. In 1889, when Missionary Christian W. Frickenschmidt¹⁰¹ wrote a letter directly to inspector Schreiber about the journey of his bride Katharine to Sumatra, the DLM objected to this procedure as not being in accordance with the 'Agreement' (§ 6).¹⁰² The board in Amsterdam demanded the leading role in such matters. There was also a difference of opinion in the case of the missionary candidate August Landwehr. Inspector Schreiber did not agree that he should spend half a year in the Netherlands before leaving for Sumatra, which was in breach of § 4.¹⁰³

A rather dramatic misunderstanding between the two missionary societies arose regarding the Dutch Lutheran seminarian Martinus Koolen, who in 1895 spread rumours about the poor quality of the Barmen seminary to the board in Amsterdam.¹⁰⁴ Either suspicion about the moral integrity of Koolen, or indeed doubt about the standard of education, or both, led to an *in cognito* visit of a DLM delegation to Barmen in August 1896, causing an angry reaction of RM-Inspector Schreiber.¹⁰⁵ Eventually Koolen was rejected as a missionary candidate by the DLM¹⁰⁶ and became a missionary of the RM in German New Guinea.¹⁰⁷ Although the Koolen case had been settled, the DLM nevertheless remained somewhat wary of domination by its larger partner.¹⁰⁸

The relationships of the missionaries with both missionary societies was indeed somewhat complicated. According to § 2 of the agreement, missionaries recruited by the DLM from the RM remained 'Rhenish missionaries in the service of the Dutch Lutheran Missionary Society'.¹⁰⁹ Some missionaries used this unclear formulation to demand that the DLM will treat them according to the regulations of Barmen in matters concerning wages, furlough and pensions, whenever it suited them.

Buitengewone Vergadering van het Hoofdbestuur', Amsterdam, 12 October 1887 (GAA 552/2); 'Notulen Buitengewone Vergadering van het Hoofdbestuur', Amsterdam, 6 January 1888 (GAA 552/2). Cf. article by Carl F. Westermann, in: *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 27 December 1896 and 7 January 1897; cf. K. Steenbrink, *Catholics in Indonesia 1808-1942*, vol. I, 2003, pp. 65-66.

⁹⁸ Cf. 'Notulen Buitengewone Vergadering Hoofdbestuur', Amsterdam, 12 October 1887 and 7 December 1887 (GAA 552/2). It seems that at this stage the Batu Islands were confused with the islands of Mentawai further south. Cf. letter of the DLM to the Minister of Colonies, cf. 'Notulen Hoofdbestuur', Amsterdam, 8 November 1888 (GAA 552/2).

⁹⁹ 'Notulen Hoofdbestuur', Amsterdam, 7 December 1887 (GAA 552/2).

¹⁰⁰ 'Notulen Hoofdbestuur', Amsterdam, 10 January 1889 (GAA 552/2).

¹⁰¹ Christian Wilhelm Frickenschmidt (12 June 1856 Espelkamp / Rahden – 6 March 1935 Bünde).

¹⁰² The board in Amsterdam had the final determinative authority (*het leidend gezag*).

¹⁰³ 'Notulen Hoofdbestuur', Amsterdam, 11 January 1894 (GAA 552/2).

¹⁰⁴ 'Notulen Hoofdbestuur', Amsterdam, 19 September 1895 and 23 January 1896 (GAA 552/3).

¹⁰⁵ 'Notulen Hoofdbestuur', Amsterdam, 20 August 1896 (GAA 552/3).

¹⁰⁶ 'Notulen Hoofdbestuur', Amsterdam, 12 November 1896; 'Notulen Algemeene Vergadering', Amsterdam, 13 October 1897 (GAA 552/3).

¹⁰⁷ Cf. RMG 297. Later, he left the RM and became a Lutheran pastor in the United States of America.

¹⁰⁸ Cf. 'Notulen Hoofdbestuur', Amsterdam, 12 November 1896 (GAA 552/3) and 3 December 1908 (GAA 552/5), ('onder den plak van Barmen').

¹⁰⁹ 'Rheinische Missionare im Dienst der Niederländisch-Lutherischen Missionsgesellschaft'.

Nevertheless, the cooperation between the DLM and the RM, both in the mission areas and in Europe, continued for more than fifty years, with the exception of the training of Dutch aspirant-missionaries, which was discontinued after World War I.

After World War II, the Dutch Missionary Council (founded in 1929) considered for a while the option that the DLM take over the work of the RM on Nias.¹¹⁰ International Lutheran agencies were willing to help with the finances.¹¹¹ The DLM was ready to deploy three missionaries, a physician and two nurses.¹¹² However, after Missionary Steinhart was rejected by the nationalist-minded Ono Niha in February, 1948, the plan was soon abandoned.¹¹³

3.5 MISSIONARIES OF THE RM AND THE DLM

During our time-span, most candidates for missionary service came either from farmers' or working class communities and usually had a poor educational background.

3.5.1 Training of the Missionaries

The missionaries of the RM who worked among the Ono Niha received their vocational training at the mission seminary in Barmen.¹¹⁴ The DLM, too, which never had an institute of its own for training missionaries, either recruited German missionaries from Barmen or had Dutch men trained there. It was only after the Dutch School of Mission of the Cooperating Mission Agencies had moved from Rotterdam to Oegstgeest in 1917¹¹⁵ that the DLM sent its missionaries there. Willem F. Schröder¹¹⁶ was the last Dutch missionary trained in Barmen (he completed his training in July, 1918), whereas Willem L. Steinhart¹¹⁷ was the first to have completed his education in Oegstgeest (he finished in April, 1924).

The Barmen seminary, supported by mission-minded individuals and congregations, did not provide a full-fledged theological education. It began as a preparatory school for aspirants to mission service, who would then be sent to the seminary in Basel, or, to a lesser degree, to Berlin (Jänicke). The most fundamental criterion for receiving a young man into the mission seminary in Barmen was his

¹¹⁰ Cf. 'Notulen Hoofdbestuur', Amsterdam, 6 June 1945 (GAA 552/9), 'Voorstel tot Reconstructie van den Zendingarbeid op Sumatra en Nias'. This proposal was decided favourably in the meeting of the Dutch Missionary Council on 18-19 September 1946 (GAA 552/21).

¹¹¹ 'Notulen Hoofdbestuur', Amsterdam, 6 June 1945, 22 February 1946, 17 January 1947 (GAA 552/9). Letter Director Ralph Long to Professor Pieter Boendermaker (undated reaction to a letter of the DLM, dated 26 June 1947, GAA 552/21). Letter Professor Pieter Boendermaker to Archbishop Erling Eidem (Lutheran World Convention), Hilversum, 20 July 1946 (GAA 552/21).

¹¹² Letter of Professor Pieter Boendermaker to Archbishop Erling Eidem (Lutheran World Convention), Hilversum, 20 July 1946 (GAA 552/21).

¹¹³ Cf. Ch. 5.5.5.

¹¹⁴ Even the academic theologians, like Eduard Fries, who studied mainly under Martin Kähler (1835-1912) at the University of Halle, prepared themselves for missionary service at the seminary in Barmen.

¹¹⁵ Cf. S.C. Graaf van Randwijck, *Handelen en denken in dienst der zending*, 1981, vol. II, pp. 683-694.

¹¹⁶ Willem Frederik Schröder (25 November 1889 Amsterdam – 14 June 1969 Amsterdam).

¹¹⁷ Willem Leonard Steinhart (29 July 1898 Amsterdam – 9 June 1982 Utrecht).

'inner vocation'¹¹⁸, meaning a calling from God to go into missionary service, recognizable in the applicant's general attitude.

At the outset, the only lecturer at the Barmen seminary was Ignaz Lindl, a former Roman Catholic priest and member of a Revivalist circle in Bavaria¹¹⁹ and a friend of Gossner. Lindl was interested in mystics (Jakob Böhme) and theosophy. His theology was eschatological, with little regard for church structures. Due to conflicts with the Reformed, he was prohibited to preach from their pulpits. When Richter was appointed as Inspector of Studies on 28 May 1827¹²⁰, Lindl left and established his own free church.

Richter had graduated in Theology from the University of Halle/Saale, long the centre of Pietism in Germany. He was an energetic representative of revivalism, mentally akin to F.W. Krummacher and rather sceptical of academic theology.¹²¹ Before coming to the RM, Richter had been a lecturer at a teachers' seminary in Halberstadt. Following his employment as inspector, the Barmen seminary developed into a more proper educational institution for missionaries and there was no more need to continue the intensive cooperation with Basel. The duration of studies in Barmen was three years. Until his death in 1846, Richter and his family lived in the same building as the seminarians, among them Ernst Denninger, the pioneer of Nias.¹²² During the subsequent inspectorate of Johann C. Wallmann¹²³, a former student of the revival theologian Friedrich A. Tholuck and a Lutheran of strong convictions, no missionaries were trained to serve on Nias and the Batu Islands.

Among the teachers who strongly influenced the early missionaries to Nias and the Batu Islands was a former student of Friedrich D.E. Schleiermacher, Ludwig von Rohden¹²⁴, who joined the RM in May 1846. In his theology, von Rohden focused on Jesus Christ as the perfect human being. He taught that, since in every human being there was a divine spark, a similar state of holiness to that of Jesus could be attained through purifying one's heart and improving one's morals. He taught that it was the

¹¹⁸ E. Kriele, *Die Rheinische Mission in der Heimat*, 1928, p. 65.

¹¹⁹ Lindl, like Gossner (cf. Ch. 3.2.1.), had been a member of the Seeger Kreis, an inner Roman Catholic circle of Revivalists in Allgäu. He had a close relationship with Protestant Revivalists in Franconia and Basel. Later he converted to Protestantism. Cf. F.W. Graf, 'Erweckungsbewegungen in Europa', *RGG⁴* II (1999), pp. 1493-1495; Horst Weigelt, 'Die Allgäuer katholische Erweckungsbewegung', in: U. Gäbler (ed.), *Der Pietismus im neunzehnten und zwanzigsten Jahrhundert*, 2000, pp. 85-111.

¹²⁰ The title 'Inspector' was used until 1909, when it was replaced by 'Director'. The organisation had expanded and it was necessary for the leader to be clearly recognisable. Besides the Director, there were Inspectors for different departments (cf. E. Kriele, *Die Rheinische Mission in der Heimat*, 1928, p. 293.).

¹²¹ Concerning the theology of the teachers at the Barmen Seminary (Richter, Wallmann, Von Rohden, Fabri and Schreiber), cf. L. Schreiner, *Adat und Evangelium*, 1972, pp. 33-85.

¹²² Ernst Ludwig Denninger (4 December 1815 Berlin – 27 March 1876 Batavia). Previously a chimney-sweep, he was ordained as a missionary on 29 September 1847. Cf. Ch. 4.2 and Ch. 4.3.1.1.

¹²³ Cf. E. Kriele, *Die Rheinische Mission in der Heimat*, 1928, pp. 104-119, 137-141. Wallmann worked for the RM as inspector and teacher from 1848 until 1857. F.A. Tholuck (1799-1877), as of 1826 professor in Halle.

¹²⁴ L. von Rohden (1815-1889) had been a student of F.D.E. Schleiermacher (1768-1834; he died on 12 February 1834) and Karl I. Nitzsch (1787-1868). Nitzsch, whose ideas were similar to those of Schleiermacher, was in favour of a Union of Consent between Lutherans and Reformed. Von Rohden highly appreciated the religious intensity and ethical conviction of Nitzsch and Schleiermacher, but criticised the latter's theology as not being Christ-centred. Cf. E. Kriele, *Die Rheinische Mission in der Heimat*, 1928, p. 87; G. Menzel, *Die Rheinische Mission*, 1978, pp. 209-214; L. Schreiner, *Adat und Evangelium*, 1972, pp. 38-52.

mission's task to assist the heathen to achieve this objective. By the time of his death in 1889, von Rohden had taught all of the pioneer missionaries to Nias and the Batu Islands.

Due to the seminarians' poor educational background, the character of the studies was still rather practical, and certainly not academic. Nevertheless, the curriculum drawn up by Richter in 1829 was quite demanding, offering the following main subjects: Biblical Studies, Dogmatics¹²⁵, Ecclesiastical History and Pastoral Theology.¹²⁶ In addition, Geography, Natural Sciences, Pedagogy, Rhetoric, English, Dutch, drawing and singing were also taught. Attention was given to the study of Islam and 'animist' (primal) religions.¹²⁷ Although not part of the regular curriculum, a general knowledge of medical skills was considered useful for missionary work as well. Among the first RM-missionaries to the Cape Colony there was a physician, Dr. Theobald von Wurmb¹²⁸, but this was a rare exception during this early period. Usually, the seminarians received practical training in the Municipal Hospital in Barmen or attended occasional lectures offered by physicians in Barmen providing theoretical or practical instructions.¹²⁹

In 1858, Inspector Friedrich Fabri¹³⁰ introduced some important reforms into the seminary, extending the duration of studies from three to six years, including the preparatory school. Later, regular instruction in Latin and Greek was added. Hebrew was optional. The aspirant missionaries had to be capable of consulting the original texts when translating the Bible into the vernaculars. The 'confessional issue' in the RM was settled in as far as the RM followed a firmly 'United' (*unierte*) policy, while the fact was respected that its missionaries came from both Reformed and Lutheran backgrounds.¹³¹ The 'history of salvation' (*Heilsgeschichte*), however, was taught in accordance with the books of the Reformed Pietist theologian Carl Ernst, as of 1863 minister of the Reformed congregation in Barmen-Gemarke.¹³²

¹²⁵ Basic literature: P.J. Spener, *Anleitung der christlichen Lehre*; Jean Calvin, *Institutio Christianae religionis*.

¹²⁶ Basic literature: A.G. Spangenberg, *Unterricht für die Brüder und Schwestern, die unter den Heiden am Evangelium dienen and Von der Arbeit der Evangelischen Brüder unter den Heiden*. Spangenberg (1704-1792) had been the leader of the Moravian Brethren (Herrnhut) after the death of its founder, N.L. von Zinzendorf (1700-1760).

¹²⁷ The curriculum followed by Denninger and other early missionaries, included the 'Introduction to the total content of the Bible', 'History of the Kingdom of God', 'The Teachings of the Christian Faith and Life', 'Christian Church History', Pastoral Theology, Mission History, Geography, 'History of Natural Science', Pedagogy, Homiletics, English and Dutch (cf. G. Menzel, *Die Rheinische Mission*, 1978, p. 27).

¹²⁸ Cf. Ch. 3.5.4.

¹²⁹ Cf. A. Bonn, *Ein Jahrhundert Rheinische Mission*, 1928, pp. 197-211; G. Menzel, *Die Rheinische Mission*, 1978, pp. 155ff.

¹³⁰ Fabri, director of the RM for 28 years (1857-1884) and a leading figure in the colonialist movement in Germany, followed the principle of individual conversion and the subsequent gathering of a chosen people from among all the nations. For Fabri, the church is not the equivalent of the eschatological Kingdom of God, but somehow represents it vis-à-vis the state. He deviates from traditional Pietism by advocating collaboration between colonial expansion and mission. Cf. H. Beyer, *Friedrich Fabri über Nationalstaat und kirchliche Eigenständigkeit, Mission und Imperialismus*, 1961, pp. 72-73 (n. 5), 90-91.

¹³¹ Cf. G. Menzel, *Die Rheinische Mission*, 1978, pp. 80-83; *JBRM*, 1858 (1859) p. 11.

¹³² Carl Christian Ludwig Ernst (1834-1902) was a member of the RM deputation (1865-1871) and a friend of Fabri. Ernst's most influential works, used both in the seminary and on the mission fields, were: *Die christliche Heilslehre in Worten der heiligen Schrift*, 1871 (translated into the Niasan vernacular by Sundermann and, in 1892, published as such under the title *Famahaõ ba lala Wangorifi*), and *Der Heilsrat Gottes, schriftgemäße Betrachtungen nach der Ordnung des*

Under Fabri, the issues of culture and colonialism became increasingly dominant. Since a 'heathen' could be saved solely through individual conversion, Fabri demanded that he left behind all fetters of his non-Christian culture which, as such, was doomed to extinction.¹³³ Part of the task of the missionary is to bring a more advanced culture to the heathen; he had to root out whatever was incompatible with Christianity and adjust indigenous culture to the level of the colonial order. For Fabri, Christian mission is the pioneer of European Christian civilization.¹³⁴

Despite his pietistic conviction that the church was the communion of the regenerated, individually converted Christians and that church structures have a merely interim function, which becomes superfluous in view of the growing Kingdom of God, Fabri placed much emphasis on the development of ecclesiastical structures in the missionary areas (e.g., the church order of the Batak church of 1881¹³⁵). In 1884, Fabri resigned as inspector of the RM. His 'mission ideology', however, had a rather lasting impact on the missionaries.¹³⁶

Since the inspectorate of Schreiber (1889-1904), the mission theology of Gustav Warneck¹³⁷ (1834-1919) became dominant in Barmen. Warneck, who himself had taught at the RM seminary from 1871 until 1874, held a more appreciative attitude towards non-Western indigenous cultures.¹³⁸ Warneck's principle was the 'Christianisation of nations', based on Matthew 28:19-20. Johannes C. Hoekendijk has, however, argued that this view had no sound basis in biblical exegesis. The strong focus on ethnicity was a dangerous, deceiving 'bourgeois-myth', which in practice enhanced conservatism and consolidated the status quo of colonialism.¹³⁹

As of 1926, the period of studies at the Barmen seminary was extended to seven years. In 1935, the theological quality was considerably improved when in defiance of the Nazi dominance of the state educational faculties, the 'church college' of the 'Confessing Church' moved into the localities of the Barmen seminary. Henceforth, seminarians attended the same theology lectures as did the ministerial students.¹⁴⁰ Eichholz was the rector of the mission seminary and also lecturer in New Testament at the college. As of 1953, seminarians could attend lectures at a theological faculty for a few semesters and as of 1961 their education was considered adequate to enter the ministry in a German church. The seminary was officially closed in 1975.

¹³³ 'Katechismus für evangelische Gemeinden in Worten der heiligen Schrift', 1872.

¹³³ Cf. G. Menzel, *Die Rheinische Mission*, 1978, pp. 70-79. Fabri uses the story of Noah and his sons, Shem, Ham and Japheth (Gen 9:18-27) for justifying his racist paradigm. The sons of Noah are seen as the prototypes of racial superiority and inferiority, cf. F. Fabri, *Die Entstehung des Heidenthums und die Aufgabe der Heidenmission*, 1859, pp. 3-54. Cf. by the same author, *Bedarf Deutschland der Colonien? Eine politisch-ökonomische Betrachtung*, 1879.

¹³⁴ Cf. W.R. Schmidt, *Mission, Kirche und Reich Gottes bei Friedrich Fabri*, 1965, pp. 43-45, 78-81.

¹³⁵ 'Gemeinde-, Kirchen- und Synodal-Ordnung für die evangelische Missionskirche im Battalande auf Sumatra', 1881, in: 'Kirchenordnungen v.a. der Batak-Kirche' (RMG 2.963).

¹³⁶ Cf. C. Veltmann, '„Es geht „vooruit“ auf Nias"', in: M. Humburg et al. (eds.), *Im „Land der Menschen“*, 2003, p. 76. Fabri's 'mission ideology' included racism and cultural imperialism.

¹³⁷ G. Warneck, 'Volkschristianisierung als Missionsaufgabe', cf. *AMZ* 10 (1883), pp. 318-320; G. Warneck, *Evangelische Missionslehre: Ein missionstheoretischer Versuch I-III*, 1902, pp. 243-286.

¹³⁸ G. Warneck, *Evangelische Missionslehre*, vols. I-III, 1892-1903, cf. vol III, pp. 57-85, 243-286, 301-315.

¹³⁹ J.C. Hoekendijk, *Kerk en volk in de Duitse Zendingwetenschap*, 1948, pp. 84-87, 90-95, 104-107 (quotation on p. 104).

¹⁴⁰ For the history of the Church College (*Kirchliche Hochschule*) and its cooperation with the Mission Seminary, as well as the role of Eichholz, cf. H. Aschermann and W. Schneider, *Studium im Auftrag der Kirche*, 1985, pp. 259-265, 272.

The second school which trained missionaries for the work among the Ono Niha was the Dutch School of Mission in Oegstgeest.¹⁴¹ After Willem F. Schröder had passed his final examinations in Barmen in mid 1918¹⁴², he had to take additional training in Oegstgeest for another year.¹⁴³ From the Dutch point of view, the Barmen seminary no longer met the demands of modern missionary service. Henceforth, no more Dutch candidates were sent to Barmen.

Two Dutch Lutherans, Willem L. Steinhart and Willem F. Jense¹⁴⁴, were trained in Oegstgeest to serve on the Batu Islands. In the end, only Steinhart actually served there. He had entered 'Oegstgeest' in 1917 under the headmastership of Anneus M. Brouwer.¹⁴⁵ The latter had given the curriculum a new, less Holland-centric orientation, with much emphasis on the history and ethnology of Indonesia.¹⁴⁶ Some professors from Leiden University also taught at Oegstgeest. Two missionary-lecturers who had a strong, lasting influence on Steinhart concerning the indigenisation of the Gospel, were Nico Adriani (who lectured in Oegstgeest during his furlough 1917-1919) and Hendrik Kraemer (who lectured there 1919-1921). Beginning in 1920, many German and Swiss students, among them also former RM-seminarians, entered the mission school in Oegstgeest for further studies.¹⁴⁷

'Oegstgeest' basically followed the 'Ethical Theology' (which must not be confused with the 'Ethical Politics' of the Dutch colonial politics¹⁴⁸), which to some extent was a continuation of and gradually replaced the 'Groningen Theology', but which had a less disapproving attitude towards the confessional teachings of the church and accepted the personal faith which was so important to the *Reveil*.¹⁴⁹ The Dutch school of Mission had the policy that the young churches in the Dutch colonies should not be estranged from their indigenous culture.¹⁵⁰ Steinhart, a graduate of 'Oegstgeest', openly disagreed with the 'Pietistic' and 'Methodist' approach, which had little interest in cultural elements and symbolism. He was of the opinion that just as in Europe the Christmas tree and the Easter fire had successfully been Christianised, so could pre-Christian elements in other cultures, too.¹⁵¹

¹⁴¹ Dutch: 'De Nederlandsche Zendingsschool'.

¹⁴² His studies lasted a year longer because of World War I. On 28 July 1918, W.F. Schröder was ordained in Barmen, cf. W.F. Schröder, *De Zending op de Batoe-eilanden*, 1927, 100ff.

¹⁴³ He attended a training course for schoolteachers in Amsterdam and additional courses in Malay (under N. Adriani), as well as courses for Ethnology and Tropical Diseases in Oegstgeest, cf. 'Notulen Hoofdbestuur', Amsterdam, 6 September 1918 (GAA 552/7).

¹⁴⁴ Willem F. (Wim) Jense (23 March 1921 Hoenderloo – 18 June 2005 's-Gravenhage).

¹⁴⁵ Anneus Marinus Brouwer (1875 Longowan – 1948 Zeist), was the Director of the School of Mission, first in Rotterdam and then in Oegstgeest, from 1910 to 1921.

¹⁴⁶ Cf. S.C. Graaf van Randwijck, *Handelen en denken in dienst der zending*, vol. II, 1981, pp. 680-683; cf. A.M.B. Petri-Abelmann, 'Dominee Willem Leonard Steinhart', in: *Documentatieblad Lutherse Kerkgeschiedenis VII* (1990), p. 29.

¹⁴⁷ Cf. S.C. Graaf van Randwijck, *Handelen en denken in dienst der zending*, vol. II, 1981, p. 686.

¹⁴⁸ Cf. Ch. 4.4 and Ch. 6.3.2.

¹⁴⁹ Van den End points out that the *Ethische Theologie* appealed to the whole personality, the will, the feeling and the reason of the believer. Its 'synthetic' approach to some extent formed a compromise between rationalism, pietism and orthodoxy (Th. van den End, *Tweehonderd jaar Nederlandse zending*, 1997, p. 12).

¹⁵⁰ Cf. S.C. Graaf van Randwijck, *Handelen en denken in dienst der zending*, vol. II, 1981, pp. 429-441.

¹⁵¹ W.L. Steinhart, 'De verkondiging van het hemelrijk tot aan het einde der aarde', paper presented at the general assembly of the DLM, cf. 'Notulen Algemeene Vergadering', Amsterdam, 23 April 1941 (GAA 552/9).

3.5.2 Ordination of the Missionaries

Before being dispatched, the fledgling missionaries from the Barmen seminary of the RM were ordained, either by the superintendent of the Rhenish church-circuit of Elberfeld, or, as of 1898, by the superintendent of Barmen.¹⁵² Since this ordination was valid solely for the 'ministry among the heathen', it did not entitle the missionary to hold a service of Word and Sacrament inside the Kingdom of Prussia (Germany).¹⁵³

In Holland, as in the case of Steinhart, missionaries were not ordained directly by the church. Instead, there was an institution responsible for the churches in the colonies, the so-called Hague Commission¹⁵⁴, which had the task of examining and ordaining Dutch Reformed and Lutheran missionaries. As in Germany, the ordination entitled missionaries to administer the sacraments in missionary congregations in the colonies ('Christians from among the heathen'), but not in their home churches.¹⁵⁵

3.5.3 Instructions of the Missionaries

In order to understand what was expected of these missionaries, as well as the rules and regulations of their service, we must take a look at their instructions. For the RM, Johann Heinrich Richter (1799-1846) drew up the prototype instruction in 1829, the first of its kind in Germany.¹⁵⁶ It subsequently became the standard for all future instructions for RM-missionaries.

Richter emphasized the community, but had a paternalistic, top-down paradigm, stricter than was usual in the egalitarian Rhineland. Menzel¹⁵⁷ remarks that the missionaries were treated like members of a religious order. Though Protestants, they had to adhere to the classic monastic ideals of poverty, chastity and obedience. They were at all times to be aware that the funds for missions were derived from free gifts. They therefore had to restrict themselves to the basic necessities and not to expect the same comforts as missionaries of other societies. A comfortable life was considered to be detrimental to mission work. Marriage had to be permitted by the

¹⁵² The ordination examination was taken in the presence of the Consistory of the Rhine-Province, after which the ordination was requested from the superintendent of the church-circuit of Elberfeld, or, after the new church-circuit of Barmen had been founded in 1898, from the superintendent of Barmen. Most ordination ceremonies took place in the main church of Lower Barmen, but some were also held in the Reformed church of Elberfeld, cf. 'Deputationsprotokolle' (RMG 14).

¹⁵³ *JBRM*, 1958 (1959), p. 10.

¹⁵⁴ Full name: 'Commissie tot de zaken der Protestantsche Kerken in Nederlandsch Oost en West Indiën'. As of 1946 it was called 'Commissie tot behartiging in Nederland van de belangen der Protestantsche Kerk in Indonesië'. The members of the Hague Commission consisted of ministers and laymen of the Netherlands Reformed Church and one representative of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the Netherlands. For detailed research on the ordination of Dutch missionaries, cf. U. Hummel, 'De status van de zendeling binnen het Nederlandsch Zendelinggenootschap gedurende de eerste decennia van zijn bestaan', in: Th. van den End et al. (eds.), *Twee eeuwen Nederlandse zending*, 1997, pp. 61-69.

¹⁵⁵ Even baptising Europeans in Indonesia was considered a problem by the Dutch churches. Missionary Steinhart reported such a baptism to the board of the DLM in Amsterdam, hoping that this might not be considered a 'problem of church law' (letter Steinhart to DLM, Pulau Tello, 30 July 1938, GAA 552/39).

¹⁵⁶ Cf. G. Menzel, *Die Rheinische Mission*, 1978, pp. 44-46. This instruction is different in character from the 'Instruction to all Heralds to the Heathen' (1738) by Nikolaus L. Graf von Zinzendorf.

¹⁵⁷ G. Menzel, *Die Rheinische Mission*, 1978, pp. 97-100.

deputation, usually five years of service were the condition to get permission. Celibate life for a missionary was regarded favourably in the earlier days¹⁵⁸, but was later abandoned for practical reasons.

The deputation to whom regular reports were to be sent, had to be obeyed as the highest authority. Missionaries were not allowed to make debts on behalf of the RM. If a missionary was discharged by the conference of missionaries to which he belonged, or directly by the deputation, he had to return his instruction and certificate of ordination to the RM. If he had not yet served for five years, he also had to reimburse the RM for the costs of sending him out.

Last, but not least, the instruction of the RM defined the basic character of the new congregations which were to be gathered by the missionaries on the mission field: they were to be 'Evangelical Christian congregations' and part of the universal Evangelical (Protestant) Christian church. Denominationalism or differences between denominations were not to be emphasized. The sole objective was to win souls for Christ.¹⁵⁹ However, as a guideline, every missionary was given three confessional documents: the Augsburg Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism and Luther's Catechism.

The recruitment policy of the DLM, as laid down in the instructions, was pronouncedly Lutheran. The first missionary, Festersen, came from the 'Breklum Mission'¹⁶⁰, a centre of Lutheran pietism in northern Germany. For the following candidates, who were taken from the mission seminary of the RM in Barmen, there was an official agreement that they should all have distinctly Lutheran convictions.¹⁶¹ Consistently, they all came from Lutheran backgrounds and were willing to build 'Lutheran National churches' in the missionary areas.¹⁶²

3.5.4 Early Missionary Activities

The destination of the first four missionaries of the RM was South Africa.¹⁶³ A few days after their ordination on 30 June 1829 in the United Protestant Congregation of

¹⁵⁸ Engagement while in seminary resulted in expulsion. This caused debate among the students, who saw it as a restriction of 'evangelical freedom', cf. E. Kriele, *Die Rheinische Mission in der Heimat*, 1928, pp. 72-74.

¹⁵⁹ Certain aspects of this instruction are similar to the objectives of the LMS, e.g., its goal, being 'the salvation of souls', its non-denominational character and the fact that the missionaries were 'subject to the will of the Directors', cf. R. Lovett, *The History of the London Missionary Society 1795-1895*, 1899, pp. 26, 37, 44.

¹⁶⁰ Schleswig-Holstein Evangelical Lutheran Mission Society at Breklum, cf. Ernst Henschen, *100 Jahre Mission unter der Losung Jesus allein*. Eine Breklumer Chronik, Breklumer Verlag, 1976; Doreen Gliedmann (ed.), *125 Jahre Breklumer Mission – 30 Jahre NMZ*, Nordelbisches Zentrum für Weltmission und Kirchlichen Weltdienst, Breklum/Hamburg, 2001.

¹⁶¹ These missionaries had to adhere to the Lutheran confession of faith ('Deze zendelingen moeten de Luth. geloofsbelijdenis zijn toegedaan'), cf. 'Notulen Hoofdbestuur', Amsterdam, 1 March 1886 and 6 April 1886 (GAA 552/2). For the text of the agreement (*Overeenkomst*), cf. U. Hummel, *Sirihpruim en kruis*, 2002, pp. 109-111.

¹⁶² Cf. 'Instructies voor de Zendingen', 1882-1924 (GAA 552/48). This term is first used in the instruction of Asmus Festersen. In the instruction of A. Landwehr (24 April 1894) a qualification is added: '... to establish a national Lutheran church among the Niasans' ('...eene Luthersche volkskerk onder de Niassers te vestigen'). Later, for example in the instruction of W.L. Steinhart, this has been reduced to rendering service in accordance with the Lutheran confession ('naar onze Luthersche belijdenis').

¹⁶³ The missionaries were: Gottlieb Leipoldt, Gustav A. Zahn, Daniel Lückhoff and Baron Dr. Theobald von Wurmb. Von Wurmb was accompanied by his wife, who was a sister of Zahn (cf. G.

Lower-Barmen, they departed for Cape Town. Because of the density of missionary activities in South Africa, as well as growing moral and financial support in Germany for missions¹⁶⁴, the RM soon envisioned other missionary areas in Asia (Borneo and China).

Starting a mission among the Dayak in Borneo was the result of an article in the Mission Magazine of the Basel Mission in 1830, written by Walter H. Medhurst¹⁶⁵, missionary of the LMS in Batavia (now Jakarta). Crown Prince Friedrich Wilhelm of Prussia also supported the idea. So the first two RM-missionaries to Indonesia, Philip-Jacob Heyer and Johann-Heinrich Barnstein, were sent out on 4 July 1834. Probably because of their collaboration with the colonial government¹⁶⁶ and their practice of buying slaves¹⁶⁷ in order to release them, they found it difficult to communicate the Gospel convincingly to the indigenous people. When the sixteen 'first fruits' (i.e., first converts to Christianity) were baptized on 31 October 1842, this caused resentment among the population.

In May, 1859, there was an unexpected uprising among the Dayak, caused by the interference of the Dutch in the succession of the Sultan of Banjarmasin. The revolt turned against all Europeans, regardless of whether they were government officials or missionaries. Nine members of the Rhenish mission were murdered. The others, among them Ernst Denninger and his family, managed to escape and became the pioneers among the Ono Niha.

For the DLM, Festersen and his wife Christine¹⁶⁸ opened a mission post in Tanjung Sakti in the Pasemah Ulu Manna in Bencoolen (Sumatra)¹⁶⁹ in 1884 and started a school for fourteen pupils in 1885. Festersen had to leave his post in December, 1885, because of serious illness. He died on 31 January 1886 in the Bay of Bencoolen on his way to Padang. Although at first the DLM wanted to continue the work in Tanjung Sakti, this plan was subsequently dropped and a new missionary area was opened among the Ono Niha on the Batu Islands.

3.6 FINAL OBSERVATIONS

The spiritual context of both the RM and the DLM in the nineteenth century was Pietism and Revivalism. Characteristics were an emphasis on personal faith and sanctification, an uncritical way of reading the Bible, a sense of crisis awaiting the Second Coming of Christ, a sharp dualism between 'this world' (sin, darkness,

Menzel, *Die Rheinische Mission*, 1978, pp. 94-97).

¹⁶⁴ Cf. A. Bonn, *Ein Jahrhundert Rheinische Mission*, 1928, p. 42. There was a growing number of aspirant missionaries.

¹⁶⁵ Walter Henry Medhurst (1796-1857) was the founder of the still existing Anglican congregation in Prapatan, Jakarta. Along with Dirk Lenting (1789-1877), he published a New Testament in the Malay language in 1835.

¹⁶⁶ A. Bonn, *Ein Jahrhundert Rheinische Mission*, 1928, pp. 43-45.

¹⁶⁷ The slaves, called *pandelingen*, were debtors who had to sell themselves in order to pay their debts.

¹⁶⁸ Christine Festersen née Schöttler gave her pension from DLM for the mission work in Pasemah Ulu Manna (cf. letter Christine Festersen née Schöttler to DLM, Hamburg, 5 February 1888, 'Ambtelijke Correspondentie', GAA 552/32). She later married Missionary Johannes W. Dornsaft and was involved in the work among the Ono Niha in Padang.

¹⁶⁹ Cf. 'Notulen Hoofdbestuur', Amsterdam, 8 February 1886 to 6 April 1886, and 'Ambtelijke Correspondentie' (GAA 552/32); W.F. Schröder, *De Zending op de Batoe-Eilanden*, 1927, p. 5; Newspaper Articles by Carel F. Westermann, in: *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 27 December 1896 and 7 January 1897; cf. U. Hummel, *Sirihpruim en Kruis*, 2002, pp. 24-28.

politics) and 'the world to come' (the Kingdom of God), as well as the submission to charismatic (not ecclesiastical) authorities.

The two poles of this spiritual context were, on the one hand, the 'Quiet in the Land', pious Christians who gathered regularly in devotional circles. They prayed feverishly for the coming of the Kingdom of God. On the other hand, there were the public mass events involving charismatic preachers. Most supporters of the missionary movements were both members of pietistic circles and attracted to revivalist mass events. The spiritual coercion typical of this context, namely the demand to take a faith decision and to dedicate one's entire life to the service of the Lord Jesus Christ (which usually implied a strict denial of so-called worldly pleasures), occasionally expressed itself in awakenings or religious revivals.

The missionary movement, which grew in this context, was essentially laity-based. The organisational model was that of the society, willing to cooperate with the churches if possible and necessary, but carefully maintaining its independence. In both RM and DLM this went hand in hand with a strictly top-down structure of regency, which was neither clericalism nor attachment to high-church traditions, but rather a tendency towards an authoritarian rather than a democratic mode. In a paternalistic manner, the board in Amsterdam and the deputation in Barmen ruled over the missionaries and subsequently over the young churches on the mission fields (until 1940/1942). Total obedience was expected of the missionaries, and they in turn demanded it of their indigenous protégés on Nias and the Batu Islands.

The concern for personal salvation and the responsibility for the world bridged the gap between the Protestant confessions. In the RM, a variety of different confessional inclinations of missionaries were tolerated. However, beginning with the inspectorate of Fabri, there was a relatively strong Reformed tendency in the Barmen seminary. The DLM, however, wanted to establish a distinctly Lutheran church in its missionary areas. But this did not prevent her from having close contacts and cooperation with other Protestant missionary societies, especially with the RM. In fact, the different confessional bases of the RM and the DLM proved to be less problematic than the difference in size and the different national settings, especially after World War I. In the missionary area of the DLM (Batu Islands), only certain outward characteristics of Lutheranism (i.e., in liturgy, catechism, and church architecture) were implemented, while the theology and the missionary practice very much resembled that of the RM.

Characteristic of the mission theology was its grappling with the relationship between Gospel (i.e., Western Christianity) and 'heathen' culture. The early teachers at the Barmen seminary taught that 'heathen' cultures were not fundamentally evil, but, in a moral and spiritual sense, had, in the remote past, fallen deeply from a much higher original level. Fabri, however, applied the principle of a total break with the past to the colonial context in a radical sense, declaring Western Christian culture to be an absolute standard for all nations. Christian mission had, willy-nilly, to serve the interests of colonialism, and vice versa.

Though Fabri influenced a whole generation of missionaries who worked on Sumatra, including Nias and the Batu Islands, the more moderate concept of Gustav Warneck, the 'Christianization of the nations' (*Volkschristianisierung*), eventually prevailed in the RM. This concept had a more appreciative attitude towards indigenous, non-Western cultures. However, it was also supportive of Western colonialism and authoritarian paternalism. In a hazy way, the RM cherished German chauvinism, if not nationalism. All elements of the indigenous culture, which did not

fit into the Western-Christian paradigm (e.g., primal or 'animist' religion and Indonesian nationalism) had to be rooted out.

Since the end of the nineteenth century, the Ethical Theology, which combined a scientific approach (e.g., historical-critical exegesis) with the confessional teachings of the church and personal faith-experience, had gradually established itself in the Dutch missionary circles and, later, in their network, the Cooperating Mission Agencies (Oegstgeest). It had a rather positive approach to non-Western and non-Christian indigenous cultures, and even – to a certain extent – to primal religion. Unfortunately, only one missionary to the Ono Niha, Steinhart, had enjoyed an education of this nature in Oegstgeest.

Faced with National Socialism in the 1930s, some influential leaders of the RM in Barmen returned to the biblical, dynamic roots of the theology of the Kingdom. In its seminary, a dialectical version of the theology of the Kingdom aroused sympathy for the anti-Nazi 'Confessing Church'. The result was a general suspicion towards any ideology. This did not, however, further the appreciation in the 1950s and 1960s of non-Western world-views in the missionary areas.