#### CHAPTER FOUR

#### THE PIONEERING PERIOD: 1861-1882

## A. The Beginning of the Encounter

### 1. First Steps

On October 7, 1861, two RMG missionaries, Klammer and Betz, who had served in Kalimantan before, and two missionaries, Van Asselt and Heine, from the Dutch community of Ermelo, gathered in *Sipirok* to initiate the RMG work in the Batak area. (Henceforth this will be called the *Batakmission*.) Along with oral evangelization, one of the first steps decided upon was to undertake a ministry of schooling which involved an opening of new schools and a continuation of the ones begun by the Ermelo missionaries earlier. For the most part, the schools were located in an area under Dutch control, i.e. Sipirok and its surroundings, in contrast to "free areas" (onafhankelijk gebied), i.e. beyond Dutch control.<sup>1</sup>

Nommensen arrived in Sumatra in May, 1862 and began his work, including the opening of schools in the port city of Barus which had been brought under Dutch control before. However, most of its residents were Muslims, and many of the others were non-Bataks. He undertook this work even though it violated his earlier intention to work in the interior among the Bataks who still maintained their tribal religion. He was soon convinced that Barus was not an appropriate place to establish an evangelistic base. Therefore, he determined to begin work in the interior in the area of Rambe, but the Indies government refused to grant permission on the grounds of security and his own safety because this region was still 'free'. As a result, at the end of 1862, he left Barus in order to join Klammer in Sipirok.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The Dutch began to occupy the southern part of the Batak region during the 1830s, as a result of the Padri War (sparked by Islamic purists). Although the Dutch had formed the Tapanuli residency in 1842 (see Introduction, footnote 3), nevertheless only the southern region of the Bataks and a few places on Sumatra's west coast had been effectively under their control until the 1860s.

For the moment, Nommensen helped Klammer teach in the Baringin school. As was the case with colleagues who had preceded him, Nommensen, too, taught *Biblical stories and hymn singing, and reading and writing*. He planned to open a school in Parausorat near Sipirok, but was hindered by the Indies government since it was already operating a school there as well as in Bungabondar, and required Sipirok children to attend those schools. Because of this further hindrance and in support of Nommensen's hopes, the Batakmission decided to have him open an evangelistic base in the *Silindung* area. The government granted permission even though Silindung was 'independent'. Work was begun there towards the end of 1863.

With Nommensen's penetration of the Silindung area, the Batakmission expanded its work to the northern part of the Batak region. As will be proposed below, there were several factors which distinguished the northern from the southern region. In both areas, missionaries established relationships with the local community and the colonial government in order to advance its evangelistic and educational ministries. Let us look at these one by one.

# 2. Relationships with the Batak Society

# (a) The Southern Region

This area covering Sipirok, Angkola, Mandailing, Padangbolak and Natal was under Dutch control, and most of its inhabitants were Muslims.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, the target children for the mission schools were those of the Muslim community. There were varied responses by the Batak

Islam's penetration of the Batak region in the 1820s originated from the south (the Minangkabau area) through the efforts of the Padri movement. Although its troops had entered the heartland of the Batak land, i.e. Silindung and Toba, yet it only succeeded in winning the southern Bataks to Islam. Islam had penetrated the eastern and western coastal areas several centuries earlier when it entered other parts of the island of Sumatra. A comprehensive study about the encounter of Bataks with Islam is contained in J. Pardede's dissertation: Die Batakchristen auf Nordsumatra und ihr Verhältnis zu den Muslimen [The Batak Christians of North Sumatra and Their Relation with Moslems], 1975.

community to the educational efforts of the Batakmission. If prominent people or headmen were not fanatical Muslims, and if the missionaries developed a relationship of friendship with them, then the headmen and their family members would agree to the opening of a mission school and would send their children to it. This was experienced by Klammer in Sipirok, for example.<sup>3</sup> But a large number of the Muslim community members were not attracted to the mission school, even if they did not want to actually reject it out of hand. Their main reason was that most of the lessons were tainted by the Gospel; this was not strange because, of course, the Batakmission opened schools as a means to support the spreading of the Gospel. These communities would prefer to have their children attend government schools, if these were available at their villages. Their reasons were related to the fact that even though the government schools did not teach Islam (see Chapter One, A) in harmony with its principle of religious neutrality, nevertheless most teachers were Muslims and taught their faith as an extra-curricular subject.<sup>4</sup> If there were Muslim families who did send their children to mission schools, this was merely done so that they could obtain the general knowledge which would aid them in becoming government employees later. At the same

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Klammer's first baptisms came from within the circle of his pupils, but these did not include the chieftains' children; BRMG 1865, pp. 150ff.

These teachers confessing Islam were graduates of the government teachers' school in Bukit Tinggi (opened in 1856) and in Tano Bato (opened in 1862). The *Tano Bato Teachers' School* (located near Panyabungan in the Mandailing area) was the first of its kind among the Bataks. Its pioneer was Willem Iskander Nasution (1840-1876), a graduate of a teachers' school in the Netherlands. His biography, role, and service in the development of Batak education may be found among other sources in M.O. Parlindungan, Tuanku Rao, pp. 391-403 (this book must be read care; author); B.H. Harahap, Peranan Willem (Medan, Centre for Batak Culture Research and Documentation, Nommensen HKBP University, 1986); Daoed Yoesoef, "Si Bulus-bulus Rumbuk-rumbuk", in the daily newspaper, Sinar Jakarta, May 14-16, 1986. According to mission sources, Willem Iskander became a teacher and leader of that school thanks to the recommendation of Mission circles (see, among others, BRMG 1863, p. 260 and 1868, p. 52; MB, May 1867).

time, they rejected the Gospel taught.<sup>5</sup>

In short, the educational ministry of the Batakmission in the southern region met with little success if viewed quantitatively even though missionaries had used various approaches to interest residents, especially their headmen. This was the case as well in the western coastal areas, such as Barus. If their efforts obtained positive results, these were centred by and large among those of the lowest social level, i.e. the former *hatoban* (slaves). For these, mission education and acceptance of its new religion improved their social status.

At least part of the rejectionist attitude on the part of a large segment of the Islamic Batak community was a result of the missionaries negative evaluation of Islam itself, which they brought with them from their days in the Barmen seminary.<sup>7</sup> That attitude became confirmed after they

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Later, such families withdrew their children because of those school regulations which required all students to take part in Christian lessons and religious activities. For example, see the case of Simanosor and Simangumban in *BRMG* 1890, pp. 19ff, and 1891, p. 376.

Literally, Hatoban means slave. There were various reasons why a person might become a slave, such as a result of being defeated in battle, or losing in gambling. For details of the hatoban, see W.B. Sidja-bat, op.cit., pp. 83-98; H. Guillaume, "Regierung und Mission" [Government and Mission], 1908, pp. 28ff. Among the first pupils to be redeemed from slavery by Batakmission missionaries were Djaogot (who was sent to the Netherlands but died there in 1862); Samuel Siregar (who had an opportunity to study in Ermelo and Barmen, and later became a mission teacher and employee of the Dutch in Batakland); Johannes Hutapea (who became a teacher and evangelist); Johannes Pasaribu and Ernst Pasaribu (both became pastors). See also KMF 1890, pp. 163-170; Der Bote no. 9/1987, pp. 53-58; G. van Asselt, Achttien Jaren, pp. 28ff; Idem, Johannes Hutapea (1902); J.H. Meerwaldt, Johannes Pasaribu (1898); Idem, Pidari, pp. 1-197 and 165-236.

In Chapter Three we have indicated the Barmen seminary theology which stressed the superiority Christianity over all other religious. The seminary's curriculum through the end of the  $19^{\rm th}$  century included a course entitled, "Apologetics-Polemics", however in the curriculum of the early century, that course was substituted by one "Religious Knowledge". However, its content continued emphasize the superiority of the Christian religion. The same course title appeared in the curriculum for the teachers' and pastors' school at Pansur Napitu.

arrived in the Batakland because of the grim description received about the Paderi movement's efforts to islamize the Bataks.<sup>8</sup> In the writings from RMG circles, both from missionaries on the field and also from the Barmen seminary leaders, Islam was always portrayed negatively, i.e., as an enemy of the Gospel, as a false teaching, as holding to a Satanic doctrine, and hence to be opposed. They communicated a similarly negative attitude and evaluation to the Batak community (including those members who had become Muslims) through oral evangelism (sermons, conversations, etc.) and through tracts and books which they distributed, and through the schools. In fact, the educational effort, along with health ministries, was seen as an effective means to overcome Islam.<sup>9</sup>

The missionaries' negative evaluation and attitude toward Islam, its teachings and sometimes towards Muslims themselves, gave rise to a violent reaction on the part of the Batak Islamic community. Not only that, but it stimulated among them a determination and enthusiasm to counterbalance mission activities by carrying out their own dakwah (missionary obligation to non-Muslims) to the heart of the Batak area in Silindung and Toba, an initiative which had been undertaken by the Paderi movement before. From the period of the move-ment's fading and the coming of the missionaries about 1840-1860, the desire to fulfil the *dakwah* was not particularly evident since there was no competition with other religions. But as soon as mission personnel became aggressive, there arose a consciousness among Muslims to defend themselves and also to

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> The coming of the Padri (Bataks call them *Pidari* or *Bonjo*) to islamize the Batak was described both by mission circles and northern Bataks as an event filled with violence and cruelty causing retable trauma for the community. larger See, example, C.W. Heine, "Allerlei zur Geschichte und Religion der [Various Elements of the History and Religion of the Batak", 69-82; Schreiber's annual address Bataks] in *BRMG* 1865, pp. (August 10, 1882) in *BRMG* 1882, particularly, p. 281; Guru K. Hutagalung, "Barita ni Bonjol" in *Immanuel*, October 26, 1919 and November 1, 1920; Parlindungan, op. cit., pp. 172-268.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> See for example, Irle's paper at the synodal conference in Sipoholon May 17-19, 1892 (summarized in *BRMG*, 1892, pp. 360-367); compare with Pardede, op. cit., pp. 131ff.

deepen their faith. <sup>10</sup> This resurgence of commitment to the dakwah gave rise to anxiety on the part of the Batakmission. In fact, the latter accused the Indies government of supporting the Islamic side through state schools, through the appointment of Muslim employees and their placement in regional offices.

In addition to the religious factor why the southern Bataks rejected the presence of the missionaries, we may assume a sociological factor as well. In comparison with the North, the South was more solidified with its social stratification composed of nobility, ordinary people and slaves. At the same time, the Batakmission endeavoured to wipe out the practice of slavery by redeeming and educating the slaves, and through asking the government to promulgate regulations forbidding the practice of slavery, an effort which was bound to invite an unfavourable reaction from the nobility.

# (b) The Northern Region

During the first years of the Batakmission, the whole northern area<sup>11</sup> was classified as 'free' or 'independent' and its inhabitants still practised their tribal religion. After Nommensen opened his evangelistic post in a village of the Silindung valley, the Batakmission gradually but surely centred its work among these northern Bataks. The missionaries realized that the hope and opportunity to win them for the Gospel was more extensive and open there. Therefore, their approach to local communities, especially to village headmen, was more sympathetic, although they could utilize intimidation as well if the situation warranted such action.<sup>12</sup> Even though the missionaries stamped

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Pardede, op. cit., pp. 95-136.

The northern area intended here included Silindung, Humbang and a small part of Toba. Samosir, Simalungun, Karo and Pakpak were not included because at this period they had not as yet been reached by the Batakmission.

 $<sup>^{12}</sup>$  For example, when several chieftains and local residents tried to obstruct Nommensen's work in Silindung, he showed his letter of permission from the Dutch Indies' Governor General to work there,  $\it BRMG$  1865, p. 198.

the tribal religion as "darkness" (*Finsternis*) or "folly" (*Thorheit*) and their rites as accursed devilworship (*fluchwürdiger Teufelsdienst*), nevertheless they did not criticize its adherents in a hostile manner. More accurately, the missionaries viewed them as "unfortunate Bataks" who ought to be pitied and loved. <sup>13</sup>

The missionaries arrived in the northern area at the most advantageous moment. Just then, the Batak tribal religious community was in a state of disintegration and decline. This happened as a result of the Paderi incursions from the south several decades before and because of prolonged inter marga quarrels, even armed skirmishes. The re-entrance of Islam into the area during the decade of the 1860s rekindled feelings of the horror and anxiety which they had experienced during the incursions by the Paderi troops earlier. The Batak adat system, including its beliefs and culture, were viewed as unable to stem their community's decline. This caused its members to view the Christianity brought by the missionaries as a more attractive alternative to their old religious system, one which they increasingly found unable to defend.<sup>14</sup> Moreover, the Bataks quickly perceived that the ministries offered and carded out by the missionaries could be useful to them, such as mediating peaceful solutions to the inter-marga and inter-huta quarrels, providing healthcare services, building of various physical facilities for the village, and carrying on education which could open up opportunities for them in obtaining advancement and upgrading in various ventures of living. In addition, they saw rather quickly too that the missionaries appreciated many elements and values of their society and culture, such as patterns for the ordering of their village structures (the latter would be utilized for founding schools and congregations), language and script, and various elements of their adat.

 $<sup>^{13}</sup>$  See Van Asselt's evaluation in MB, September 1865, and Heine in  $\textit{BRMG}\ 1865$ , p. 370.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> Cf. A.B. Sinaga's conclusion in his *The Toba-Batak High God*, p. 30: "... The Batak people saw and see in Christianity a real answer to the religious, cultural, and human aspirations. Christianity liberated them from their old-fashioned isolationism and from the plague of demonic disaster."

Each time the missionaries planned to open a new evangelistic post or station, including a new school, their first step was to foster good relationships with the village headmen. This was related to the Indies government's condition for granting permission to enter and work in an independent region. But the effort to effect those good relationships with them was not based just upon a precondition set by the government, but rather upon the realization that their key position would determine whether the missionaries' effort, including education, would or would not bear fruit. Even though the Batak society, especially the Toba Batak, knew neither a feudalistic nor a monarchical social order, nevertheless the headmen (both *raja huta* and *raja bius*; see Chapter Two) were very influential figures. It was true too, that the slogan *cuius regio eius religio* (who heads the region determines its religion) was not entirely valid in Batak society. Whether the headmen were viewed collectively or individual-ly, nevertheless their attitude and response to the presence and activities of the missionaries significantly determined the attitude and response of the Batak community.

### J. Warneck portrayed the position of the headmen as follows:

They truly were the effective authority in the country. Without their permission, neither foreign missionaries nor indigenous evangelists would be allowed to dwell there. And even if on many occasions they gave no more than outward assistance, for example presenting a plot on which to erect a church or school building, or prompting their people to attend church, or requesting missionaries to be sent to their region, yet their cooperation was most essential. Through it, a door was opened for the Gospel. <sup>15</sup>

The most popular example of chieftains with a favourable attitude toward the Batak-mission was **Raja Pontas Lumbantobing**. According to the missionaries, he was the most intelligent Batak figure and the one with a vision to see far ahead. Not only those in mission and government

J. Warneck, "Eingeborene Helfer in der Batakmission" [Indigenous Helpers in the Batakmission], in *EM*, May 1897, p. 10. Cf. J.N. Bieger, "Hoe de Batakkers hunne Scholen en Kerken bouwen" [How the Bataks Build their Schools and Their Churches], in *RZ* 1917, pp. 28f, which portrays the role of the chieftains and *pangituai* (elders of the community) in founding schools and carrying out education.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> Information about chief Pontas' positive welcome and services to the Christian mission has been disseminated in

circles appreciated and praised him; Bataks themselves viewed him with pride, especially those of succeeding generations.

J. Silitonga noted the role of Raja Pontas in the coming of the Gospel to Sipahutar in 1885, as well as to other locations, with these words: "Raja Pontas suggested or encouraged the Sipahutar community to receive the missionaries, Gospel and Indies government." And according to Silitonga, Silindung was secure because Raja Pontas submitted to the Dutch at the urging of Nommensen. <sup>17</sup>

Meanwhile M.O. Parlindungan, even though his writings were controversial and were not supported by RMG data, greatly appreciated Raja Pontas' service to the Bataks' advancement, especially in the field of education. This was evident in his writing:

Following in the footsteps of Raja Pontas, people of Toba and Silindung became Christians. He encouraged those already Christian to become elders. ... Children of elders had priority in entering the many mission schools founded by German pastors.. As an indirect program for the abolition of illiteracy and for the advancement of region and people, Raja Pontas Lumbantobing never ceased pushing Silindung residents to become elders (sintua-sintua) so that their children could be sent to school ....

Raja Pontas Lumbantobing was of the opinion that northern Bataks must adjust them-selves to the modern world. This meant that: (a) they must attend school, (b) must embrace a monotheistic faith. His convictions were very influential .... Raja Pontas Lumbantobing was the premier benefactor of the northern Bataks. He was the one urging them to attend school and embrace monotheism. Each northern Christian Batak who is able to read and write owes thanks to Raja Pontas Lumbantobing for this opportunity. <sup>18</sup>

In addition to Raja Pontas, RMG circles noted several other headmen who gave a positive welcome to the missionaries and their endeavours in the field of education. For example, Ompu Hatobung of Pansur Napitu gave a good welcome to Johannsen to work in his area; others were Kali Bonar, the very influential chief in the Sigompulon Pahae area, and Ompu Batu Tahan in Balige who gave his letter of trust (*Surat Haposan*) to missionaries to work and open schools there.

various parts of the RMG printed media beginning in 1864 (BRMG 1864, p. 49; and in MB, August 1867, among others; in MB 1900 may be found J.H. Meerwaldt's "Raja Pontas Lumbantobing" which gives his biography and offers a word "in Memoriam" at his death on February 18, 1900.

 $<sup>^{17}</sup>$  J. Silitonga, Harararat ni Haradjaon ni Debata toe Loeat Sipahoetar (1931), pp. 5ff.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> Parlindungan, op. cit., pp. 483 and 637f. Apart from the meagreness of the historical data support-ing the information in this work or the inaccuracies found in it concerning Raja Pontas, nevertheless Parlindungan's evaluation of Raja Pontas may be used as one example of how he was evaluated by Bataks themselves at a later date.

In order to maintain good relations with this headman, the missionaries established later a forum for meetings between the headmen and themselves.

Of course at the first encounter, there were many headmen and citizens who rejected the presence of missionaries. There were varied reasons for this, such as the suspicion and anxiety that their presence and teaching would disturb and damage the social, cultural and religious traditions which had become the flesh and blood of the community. But the reason most frequently advanced for the rejection was that the missionaries were tools of the Dutch government and that their schools merely represented a strategy to lift out their children to become Dutch soldiers later. Apparently an anti-colonial feeling had already spread to the northern Batak region at that time. The people were worried that the Dutch presence would rob them of their freedom similar to what had happened to their brothers in the southern area since the end of the 1830s. <sup>20</sup>

After the missionaries succeeded in convincing the Batak people that they were not Dutch accomplices, in a relatively short time the attitude of rejection changed to a warm welcome. In fact, at times this welcome was extraordinarily enthusiastic. Especially in Silindung, leaders competed in requesting that missionaries be placed in their villages and that schools be opened quickly to teach their children.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> This type of reaction had been expressed in 1824 by a community leader (who just happened to be the grandfather of Raja Pontas) to Burton and Ward. Apparently his grandfather felt that the missionaries' expressions denigrated the Batak adat and religion. Therefore, his community would not accept their message. See J. Warneck, Sechzig Jahre Batakmission (1925), p. 12. A similar reaction often greeted the missionaries until the 1890s.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> Read the expression noted by Van Asselt of a resident of Pangaribuan in *BRMG*, 1871, p. 216. The reasons why the Dutch took control of the Batak area, and why the Batak society rejected them have been circulated in various versions which are not in agreement with each other. See Sidjabat, *op. cit.*, pp. 99-154, for a detailed analysis of this issue.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> In the background of such a request, not infrequently lays a goal of increasing the prestige of the village because the householder or the chief who hosted the missionary felt himself more prestigious than others. This feeling sometimes issued in

A positive welcome on the part of the community was prompted by the missionaries' sympathetic style of approach. Particularly at the beginning of the encounter, the missionaries approached the Bataks graciously and humbly. Sometimes, though, this approach was augmented by the bringing of gifts which gave rise to unhealthy motivations for attending school, i.e. to obtain food, clothing and a better material life (hangoluan). As a result, the people were disappointed if such desires were not fulfilled. If the missionaries saw that the desire to obtain material benefits was the main motivation, generally they did not fulfil those desires. This matter will be discussed in a later analysis.

# 3. Relationships with the Dutch Indies Government

## (a) Competition

To begin work in each location in the Batak area, whether in regions already under the Indies government authority or those still free from it, both the Batakmission missionaries and Batak workers had to obtain permission from the Indies government beforehand.<sup>22</sup> Generally such a letter

inter-village conflict. Behind the request for a missionary, found the thought also that the missionary there could be possessed sahala (spiritual power, see Chapter Two), and it was hoped that such spiritual power would radiate to those around him (see for example, Johannsen's thought in *Immanuel*, December 1893). Because the Batakmission was unable to fulfil all such requests, it sent a Batak teacher after such local personnel became available. But the placing of a local teacher did not satisfy the desires of the community, because presence did not raise the prestige of the village or meet its more subjective needs.

Such permission was given based upon Art. 123 of Regulation "Government (Regeeringsreglement, RR), i.e. regulation which was intended to bring greater order to the placing of missionaries whether Protestant or Catholic so there would not be a dubbele zending, an overlapping and competition between them in one particular place. Permission to work in a "free area" required the agreement of the local headmen. part, this policy was intended to avoid a recurrence of the situation in Borneo (Kalimantan) in 1859, which in the view of the RMG occurred because of a lack of protection of missionaries by the colonial government (cf. Fabri's evaluation

included permission to operate a school. But there were occasions when the latter had to be requested again from the local government official, particularly so if a government school was already in that place.

On the one hand, the granting of such a license gives the impression that there was cooperation between the government and the Batakmission since the beginning. But on the other hand, it also implied competition, especially in the field of education. During the earliest years of the Batakmission, particularly in Sipirok, the government only granted a license for a mission school if no government school was present as yet. If the government opened a school later on, the Batakmission was invited to close the one it operated. Furthermore, a local official established regulations for compulsory school attendance for the residents in the school's area. This meant that its children, including those attending the mission school, would be channelled to the government school. Especially if the local community were Islamic, its people preferred to send their children to the government school because the school was of a higher quality and its teachers were Muslims.

Occasionally, competition of this type became the reason for certain missionaries to move to a different place, as happened with Nommensen. But the general policy followed by the Batakmission was to maintain its schools even though they would have to be in competition with the local government's schools. The Batakmission worked tirelessly in making approaches to the government so that the it would not hinder its school ministry or cause difficulties for its development. But in reality, competition continued here and there up until the following period.

As a way of meeting the competition, and in addition to making overtures to the government, the Batakmission endeavoured to raise the quality of its schools, such as by sending its best students to be taught in the government's teacher training school in Tano Bato<sup>23</sup> and by operating

of this case, Chapter Three).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> See, note 4 of this chapter. Klammer, for example, sent several students to this school. But in reality several apostatized, returning to Islam which meant they would no longer

its own facilities for teacher education which begun in 1868, as we shall see later.

# (b) Support

In the field of education, as well as in other fields, the relationship between the Batak-mission and the government was not entirely coloured by competition; there was also mutual support to the advantage of both, especially in the northern Batak area where competition had not yet developed at this period. In reality, it was the Batakmission which had entered that area before the government. Even though the Dutch gradually exercised control over this area, the government never founded schools there until the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century; the matter of schooling was handed over completely to the Batakmission. In addition, the Batakmission agreed with the policy of annexation (or *pacification* as viewed by the Dutch) which was launched by the Indies government in the northern area beginning towards the end of the 1860s. The Batakmission viewed the government's action as support for developing their efforts, including the field of education. These were channelled to the attainment of one goal: the christianization of the Bataks who still embraced the tribal religion.

According to the Batakmission, annexation of the Batakland would reduce conflicts between *margas* and create an atmosphere of calm, a situation which would greatly help develop all fields of their efforts and activities. Given the presence of the authority of the Dutch Indies government there, the Batakmission hoped that their personnel could work shoulder to shoulder with the government people to build up the community in ail sectors of its life. We have met with this pattern of thought among RMG figures in their homeland (see Chapter Three); they saw the colonial government as a supporter of the Christian Mission through bearing the white man's burden together, or at least they wanted this to happen.

become teachers in the Batakmission. According to one missionary who did not mention his name (in MB, May 1867), this occurred because the learning context was dominated by Islam throughout the three or four year period of study. This was one of the reasons why the Batakmission decided to provide its own education for teacher candidates.

Cooperation between the Batakmission and the Indies government in the area of the northern Bataks began with Governor General Arriens' visit to Silindung (which was still independent) from December 1868 until January 1869. At that time the missionaries had revealed their support for pacification, "for the sake of creating an orderly administration upholding truth and justice (*Recht und Gerechtigkeit*), together with wiping out savage behaviour such as cannibalism, warfare, etc." In fact missionary Johannsen considered Arriens to be "truly a representative of God to bring happiness to Silindung". <sup>25</sup>

After that, the government installed a controller in Silindung and annexation or pacification increased in intensity. The hope of the Batakmission that its efforts would advance rapidly continued to bear fruit. In commenting upon the annexation which proceeded smoothly after 1878, Nommensen said: "It was hoped that in the next decade, all of Silindung would have been christianized". <sup>26</sup>

Like it or not, the policy of annexation prompted opposition on that part of the Batak community led by Si Singamangaraja XII to such an extent that armed conflict could not be avoided. In that situation, the missionaries attempted to maintain an intermediate position, such as operating as mediators and translators in discussions between the Dutch forces and Si Singamangaraja's party. But from his point of view, the impression remained that the missionaries tended to favour the Dutch side. His people saw that the missionaries were aiways protected by the Dutch, and that for their part, the missionaries provided certain facilities, such as school buildings to be used by the Dutch troops as their headquarters. The impression of the missionaries abetting the Dutch cause was strengthened due to Nommensen, in particular, and the Batakmission in general, having received expressions of appreciation from the Indies government because of the help given during the process of annexing the Batakland. In addition to expressions of appreciation,

 $<sup>^{24}</sup>$  Heine's report in BRMG 1869, p. 300, and 1871, pp. 142ff.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> Johannsen in *Immanuel*, February 1894.

 $<sup>^{26}</sup>$  BRMG 1878, p. 381; JB, 1886, p. 30 and 1887, pp. 31ff.

the Batakmission received compensation for all losses experienced, such as to its church and school buildings, and missionary dwell-ings which had been burned during the war between the Dutch and Si Singamangaraja XII. What was the basis, motivation and goal for the Batakmission in supporting annexation? We shall discuss this whole matter later, while calling to mind the RMG views about the relation-ship between the Batakmission and the colonial government as discussed in Chapter Three.

#### (c) Batakmission Attitude towards Government Subsidies

At this period, the Batakmission was not receiving financial support from the colonial government to help defray the cost of operating its mission schools. From time to time, to be sure, the colonial government had given support for constructing school buildings as well as for general educational needs, but this was mostly of an incidental character. This irregular situation prevailed because there had been no regulations or government policy concerning the giving of subsidies to private religious schools until 1890 (cf. Chapter One). Secondly, the RMG was not only unenthusiastic about receiving government assistance for carrying on its educational ministry, it was actually averse to the whole concept. At a meeting of the RMG General Council in Barmen in February 1862, the matter of the advisability of accept-ing help for its schools in the Batak area was discussed. Among other matters it was decided that "the government's offer of partial support for the schools must be weighed very carefully so that the government would not have the opportunity to interfere in school matters." 27

Such an attitude governed the RMG because it saw a basic difference of principle and objective between itself and the government. State education must be based on neutrality, meaning that there could be no religious instruction in the schools, but mission-sponsored education clearly

Protokollbuch der Deputation, February 1862, in the archives VEM A/a.6. Even so, it ought to be noted that in Kalimantan before, i.e. in 1849, RMG missionaries' wages were subsidized by the government because the funds sent from Barmen were insufficient. See P.M. Franken-van Driel, Regeering en Zending in Nederlandsch Indië (1923), pp. 119ff.

had a religious base. The objective of the government was to produce workers for itself or its enterprises, whereas first and foremost the objective of the Batakmission was for its pupils to know and receive the Gospel. As we have seen and shall see again, this difference of principle and goal of education between government and mission resulted in continuous competition and tension. The Batakmission was able to defend its policy of rejecting government subsidies for education up until the beginning of the 1880s because it did not want to rely upon government help and did not want any government interference in mission education. The Batakmission was able to maintain such an attitude because the number of missionaries and local teachers who needed to receive salaries was comparatively small. For their support, the Mission was able to rely upon European resources with supplemental funds raised by Batak congregations which were beginning to grow. But after 1880, the Batakmission began to experience difficulties. The mission field began to expand rapidly with the opening of evangelistic posts and stations in the Toba area, for example in Balige and surroundings, and with schools rapidly increasing in numbers also in tandem with the growth of congregations.

At the same time, the number of Batak teachers increased markedly with students being graduated from the seminary at Pansur Napitu and Depok (see section C below). In compari-son with the needs, the total number of teachers was still insufficient, but in terms of the financial ability of the RMG, the outlay was beyond its resources even with the receipt of funds from its friends in the Netherlands, and of contributions from Batak congregations.<sup>28</sup>

Faced with this critical situation, the Batakmission felt itself compelled to turn to the Indies government. In reviewing the development of the Christian mission in the Dutch Indies in 1882, the RMG inspector, A. Schreiber turned his attention to "the Government Report of 1881"

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> In 1880, there were just 28 teachers, 10 of whom were helping full-time in congregations. In 1883, the total of full-time teachers increased to 43; in addition there were a number of teachers' aides and volunteer evangelists, but there were just 13 congregations sufficiently able to give financial support to teachers. Cf. Section E, Statistics, and JB 1883, pp. 34 and 37.

("Regeeringsverslag 1881"). Among other matters, it contained the government policy which permitted Christian teachers to serve congregations during a time when neither pastor nor other church workers were available, and to teach the Christian religion in the government's elementary schools provided that there were Christian families in that particular location. Even though the policy as promulgated was intended for just a few places in Java, Schreiber hoped that it might be validated in Sumatra so that the RMG/Batakmission might obtain some help in the recruitment of teachers and the payment of their salaries afterwards. He realized the consequence of this policy, i.e., that the Indies government would open schools in places where the Batakmission had operated schools for years, such as at Silindung and Toba. Nevertheless, he hoped that were this policy applied to Sumatra, it would not give rise to competition between mission and government schools as had occurred in the area of Sipirok and environs. <sup>29</sup> However, up until the end of the pioneering period, the 1881 regulation had not been applied in the Batak area, so the Batakmission was unable to receive government help in terms of both personnel and funds. But the desire for financial assistance was already present and would be fulfilled in the next period.

# **B.** School Development

We shall observe in general the development of the Batakmission schools during this first period, i.e. the types of schools, equipment, financial matters related to schooling and carrying out of its functions.

# 1. Types of Schools

# (a) Elementary Schools

As we saw above, each time the Batakmission entered a new area, the mission founded an elementary school which doubled as a preaching post. This formed an application of the principle

 $<sup>^{29}</sup>$  BRMG, 1882, pp. 180f and 217.

of the unity of church and school. In general, the school building was very temporary in design and construction, and served as a place of worship as well. During the pioneering period, most of the pupils were children of non-Christian families. Because the school was a means for evangelism, it was hoped that if not all of them, at least some of them would become Christians. But the missionaries were very conscious that this was a very temporary situation, at least in the northern area where most inhabitants were still 'pagans'. For later times when there were many Christian families and a congregation, then the Batakmission would emphasize teaching children of Christians. This stipulation was outlined in the first *Gemeindeordnung* (Regulation for Congregations) of 1866:

The school is not founded for the children of 'pagans'; only baptized children may attend school. This is the case because most children of 'pagans' must help with family work, and others do not have the diligence to attend, so that in the end the results will not amount to anything. $^{30}$ 

In brief, this regulation was grounded in the difficulty in attracting non-Christian children and keeping them in school afterwards. But within it, there was implied the beginning of a new understanding by the missionaries about the significance and purpose of the schools. The schools were not just a means for evangelism, but for nurturing children in the congregation as well. We shall look further at this issue in a subsequent analysis. In general, elementary school pupils were children or teenagers, but sometimes they were adults, even with families. Just these latter had greater interest in learning. In many places, the school would not always be held in the forenoon or afternoon because the children would have to help their parents. Therefore, the school was conducted in the evening.

Consistent with the Batakmission policy of founding a congregation in a pattern parallel with the founding of a village, i.e., a congregation in each village, a school would be placed in each

This description was given by Nommensen in *BRMG* 1867, p. 173. The original text of "The 1866 Congregation Regulation" is no longer available; cf. J.R. Hutauruk, *Die Batakkirche van ihrer Unabhängigkeit (1889-1942)* [The Batak Church before Its Independence] (Dissertation 1980), p. 113.

village to the extent possible also, because school and village formed a unity. Not infrequently there were but a few people in each village. Therefore *Kirchenordnung* (The Church Order) of 1881 contained a more rational stipulation:

A school would be established in each village where there were at least 50 Christian families, or in a combination of several villages with a total of 50 Christian families.<sup>31</sup>

However, in practice, especially in the more isolated places, many schools were opened where there were fewer than 50 Christian families, and with fewer than 25 pupils. This situation caused difficulties when it came to fulfilling conditions for receiving state subsidies later (see Chapter Five and Six).

Up until the end of this first period, there were many elementary schools which were not divided into classes. Even the time for the beginning of each new school year and the admission of new students had not been set as yet; new students were admitted at any time. The critical standard for determining whether a person would be graduated was not the length of time he was in school, but rather his ability to master the lessons, both general basic knowledge of reading, writing and arithmetic, and several others<sup>32</sup>, but especially religious knowledge: Bible stories, catechism and hymns. In addition, the personal condition of the student played a role for his time of graduation as well, for example evidence of conversion, a confession of faith and a readiness to be baptized. This situation prevailed because each school had been founded as a means for evangelization and for planting of congregations. Therefore, it could be said that the school proceeded parallel with catechizing; graduation from the elementary school went hand in hand with baptism and

Synod, As quoted from the text οf "The Church Congregation Regulations for the Evangelical Mission-Church the Batak Area of Sumatra" (Chapter 9) which J.R. translated from the German text in Benih yang Berbuah [The Seed Which Bore Fruit] (1984), pp. 151-169, especially p. 158. With reference to the congregation's pattern of parallelism with that of the village and marga, see Schreiner, Adat und Evangelium, pp, 119ff.

 $<sup>^{32}</sup>$  Geography, History, Science which were integrated into the texts of the reading book; see Section B.2.b of this chapter.

confirmation.

The Batakmission was unable to establish hard and fast rules for the required length of time for a student to be in school before being graduated because at this pioneering period, most students did not attend on a regular basis, especially so in the northern area still considered independent or unoccupied by the Dutch. The missionaries saw that the social and political status of the independent communities stamped their inhabitants' character and behaviour as well. These lived more freely and were able to do whatever they wished. As a result, it was difficult for them to have their lives managed and regulated, including time for worship and school attendance.

To train the pupils to attend regularly and to plant a sense of school discipline, the missionaries relied initially upon oral persuasion. They visited the homes of the villagers faithfully, and tried to persuade parents to permit their children to attend school regularly, <sup>33</sup> to invite children for walks on Sunday <sup>34</sup> or to give presents to those who were faithful in attendance. <sup>35</sup> But after the school was established, the missionaries were ready to take more stringent means: collecting fines for truancy, admonishing parents who did not send their children to school and Sunday worship, Holy Communion, etc.

During the early years of the mission school, all the elementary school pupils were boys; not until 1873 were there girls in school. This early school was held in the evening and with a catechetical curriculum, although general knowledge was taught also. Education designed especially

This approach was used, too, in the preparation for baptism. Parents who were to be baptized, or who had children to be baptized, were asked to send their children to school (BRMG 1874, pp. 197f). This appeal continues to be heard in the baptismal liturgy of the present churches.

 $<sup>^{34}</sup>$  JB 1864, p. 36. This method undergirded the function of the school as the subject for evangelization; see Section B.4 of this chapter.

 $<sup>^{35}</sup>$  BRMG, 1874, p. 176. At times, the giving of awards to pupils and to their parents gave rise to unhealthy motivations (see above).

for girls began in 1874. However, their total numbers were small throughout this period. In order to increase the number of girl students, the Batakmission urged church mem-bers to send their daughters to school. But this initiative did not help significantly. According to Schreiber, the reason that there were so few women students was that women occupied a lower position than men in Batak society. They were relied upon as the main work force in the home, but were not given the same opportunity as men to advance through education.<sup>36</sup>

### (b) Education Especially for Girls/Women

Noting the limited opportunity given women to study in school, but also that Batak women had great need for knowledge and skills too, the Batakmission began to provide education especially for women in the 1870s by utilizing the wives of missionaries as teachers.<sup>37</sup> In addition to skills of home making such as sewing, matters pertaining to good health, cleanliness, neatness and ways of teaching children, the girls were taught general knowledge such as reading, writing, and arithmetic, and religious studies.

Education especially for women increased rapidly during the following period as a result of the coming of women missionaries (*Schwester*, see Chapter Five).

# (c) Trade Schools

The first permanent trade school was opened during the year 1900 in Narumonda (see Chapter Five). But there had been training for trades from time to time since 1874 based on special needs of the Batakmission. At that time, the missionary Simoneit trained several young men for a few months to become builders for the construction of church buildings.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>36</sup> A. Schreiber, "Die Arbeit an den heidnischen Frauen und Mädchen" [Work Among the Pagan Wives and Girls] in AMZ 1891, especially p. 281.

 $<sup>^{37}</sup>$  The first step was taken by Mrs. Leipoldt, a former teacher in Germany, when she opened an elementary school in Parausorat especially for girls (JB 1874, p. 13), and was followed by opening of sewing schools for women (JB 1878, p. 35).

As we shall see later, skills in building construction were taught as a special course to students at the teacher-training seminary because as teachers they would need to know how to construct school buildings where they would be working. Their teacher was Raja Benjamin who had been a student of Simoneit in Narumonda before.

### (d) School for Church Elders

For the most part, persons prominent in the village were chosen and appointed as elders by missionaries without being provided with special education beforehand. Each was prepared for this office with minimal training in his home congregation whenever a missionary arrived to carry on his regular service. The standards for being chosen were neither their knowledge nor their natural intelligence, but rather their demonstrated moral and spiritual strengths, and their status as community leaders.

But because they were expected to be able to preach, meaning they must be able to read the Bible, and to fulfil other tasks including guidance of the school system, the elders themselves felt the need for basic general knowledge. Therefore, in several congregations, elder candidates requested that they be 'schooled'. This happened, for example, in Pangari-buan in 1882 where a number of headmen who had been nominated to become elders asked missionary Staudte to give instruction to them in reading and writing both the Batak and Latin scripts, in Biblical knowledge and in hymn singing. Therefore, a school for elders was held there for several months. In subsequent years, the same type of school was conducted in other congregations. All of this was in keeping with the Batakmission's effort to advance the abilities of all Batak workers in the church. (See Chapter Five, D.)

### 2. Equipment for Learning

# (a) Buildings and Equipment

As touched on above, during the earliest years the school buildings doubled as places for

worship and were in a pitiable state. This was the case, too, with school furniture. The number of benches was so limited that pupils had to sit squeezed together. Sometimes there were no desks. In fact, in some schools there were no benches at all which meant students had to sit on the floor. Tools for learning, such as blackboards, chalk and visual aids, were in short supply as well. These drastically limited facilities prevailed in many places, even to the end of the first period of the Batakmission.

First of all, the limitations of physical facilities was mused by the inadequate financial resources of the RMG to meet the needs of its efforts in various countries<sup>38</sup>, even though it received financial support and sometimes actual equipment from its friends in the Netherlands. The second cause for the barrenness of school facilities was the low state of congregations ability to be self-supporting, meaning that most congregations were unable to bear the total responsibility for their material needs, even though the Batakmission had encouraged them to that end since the 1870s. This situation was felt more acutely when the evangelistic field grew rapidly and new schools were begun in areas which were very weak economically. The third cause was related to the lack of understanding of the value of schools on the part of the general community and even of church members, so that many were not motivated to try to cover the school needs and tuition. Later, an understanding about the usefulness of schools increased and became a factor in raising support for improving the physical quality of the schools.

The sad state of the physical condition of the schools was seen by Meerwaldt as one of the causes for the low quality of the mission school graduates when he evaluated the whole Batakmission ministry in education in 1883 while reflecting about ways to improve it, and especially when he undertook a comprehensive evaluation of it in 1892 (see Chapter Five). The low state of buildings and physical facilities of the mission schools became a factor too in 1893 when the government evaluated them prior to granting subsidies. Priority was given for school building

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>38</sup> Beginning in the 1860s, each annual report from the RMG always mentioned the condition of the RMG treasury, a report

construction and for providing learning tools.

With relationship to the problem of physical school equipment, it is interesting to note that before missionaries were able to bring in bells from Europe for the needs of school and church, Batak gongs were used. <sup>39</sup> But Nommensen stressed that the use of such traditional instruments were only temporary. <sup>40</sup> We may presume that Nommensen wrote in that way because he had seen the intimate relationship evident between the gong and Batak traditional religious rites which had been called 'pagan'. If so, then it would not be proper to use them in church and school. The attitude of the Batakmission towards the whole gamut of the Batak traditional cultural system will be discussed in the next chapter.

### (b) School Books, and General Literature

At the beginning of the Batakmission's involvement in schooling, there were no text books in the Batak script and language. Literature available using the Batak language and script or about the Batak language and script was very limited in quantity; in fact it existed only in the work of Van der Tuuk (see above in the Introduction and Chapter Two, E.1.). In order to provide lessons in school, the missionaries were forced to rely upon foreign language books which they had brought from their own countries. Each missionary then reworked them for use in his congregation or station.

The missionaries realized this deficiency. In their conference held at Sipirok on October 12, 1862, they decided (1) to request the RMG leadership in Barmen to look for Batak literature in the Netherlands to be reproduced and sent to them; (2) to seek permission from the Indies government to translate its Malay text books into Batak because the government had not as yet published books

which continued to show a deficit.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>39</sup> Actually what is meant is the *ogung* (gong, one percussion instrument forming a part of a set of traditional Batak musical instruments called a *gondang*).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>40</sup> BRMG 1867, p. 169.

in the Batak language. Based on that decision, beginning in 1863 the missionaries were busy translating textbooks into the Angkola Batak language, both those brought from Europe and those obtained from the Indies government. The latter was very supportive of this effort, since it had previously suggested that translations be made available in the Toba Batak language as well.

This suggestion was finally taken up seriously at the Missionary Conference held at Sipirok in January 1867 after the arrival of A. Schreiber. This conference discussed more than just the matter of which language and dialect should be used; it also investigated which books needed to be made available and in which script the books should be printed, in Latin or Batak, or in both. The literature issue was considered in the larger and more significant framework of adult Christian education (*Gemeindebildung*). The missionaries were more conscious of the fact that the school not only functioned evangelistically, i.e. drawing pupils who were not yet Christian into the Christian faith, but also educationally by nurturing children, parents and family members (from the same village and clan) who were already Christians. This action was congruent with developments and tendencies apparent especially in the northern region.

In any case, the missionaries continued to emphasize the function of the school as a means for nurturing the Christian life. Therefore, religious books must receive top priority. The conference decided that the books would be published in both the Angkola and Toba dialects and also in the both the Latin and Batak scripts. The missionaries considered that supplying literature in the Batak script was very important as a means to purify and preserve the Batak cultural heritage.<sup>41</sup>

Although religious literature (Bible, catechism, and hymns) received priority, this did not mean that general knowledge textbooks were unnecessary. The missionaries were eager to make these books available too, but they also realized that European books focused on Europe were not

Schreiber in *BRMG* 1867, pp. 162f, "In welchen Sprachen Which predigen unsere Missionare?" [In Language Do Preach?] (BRMG 169f Missionaries 1884, pp. in which emphasizes the importance of using the Batak script in church literature and schools of the Batakmission. Cf. too, J. Warneck, Sechzig Jahre, p. 102 and Idem, "75 Jahre Batakmission" in NAMZ 1936, p. 89; and also G. Warneck s view, Chapter Three.

always appropriate for meeting the school needs of the Bataks. Therefore in the 1870s, in addition to translating books, the missionaries started to write textbooks which they felt were more consistent with the needs of the Batak society. Knowledge possessed by the Bataks before the arrival of the Batakmission was included in them (comp. Chapter Two): for example (1) compass and calendaric systems, (2) elements of literature such as: proverbs (*umpama*), puzzles (*huling-hulingan*), folk tales (*torsa-torsa*), and (3) ways and tools for farming, hunting, and for being an artisan. 42

The Batakmission sought government help for producing and paying the cost of publishing the textbooks. Some of the published books' support approved by the government were used in its schools. <sup>43</sup> But the government did not always fulfil or agree to such requests, especially if the books were those written by the missionaries themselves, and not translations of books in Malay already published by the government. The usual reason given was that books written by the missionaries were not included in the catalog of textbooks used in government schools, and therefore did not fulfil the standards which had been established. That being the case, the Batakmission itself was required to arrange and pay for the publications of its own books. Sometimes this had to be done in Germany.

The *Bible*, which formed the main textbook for all kinds and levels of schools, was translated in stages. 44 The translation of the New Testament into the Angkolan Batak dialect was begun in

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>42</sup> See for example, G. van Asselt, Buku Parsiadjaran ni angka Anak Sikola di Hata Angkola (1876); I.L. Nommensen, Tobasch Spelboekje [Batak Spelling Booklet] (Batavia, 1877); Ph. Chr. Schütz, Buku Siseon ni angka anak Sikola di Hata Angkola (no year given); A. Schreiber, Duabolas Turi-turian [Twelve Stories From Long Ago].

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>43</sup> For example, the works of Nommensen and Schreiber already mentioned. Later, Van Asselt's and Schütz' books, though published in Germany, were used in government schools.

According to G. Radjagukguk, *Culture and Gospel* (unpublished M.Litt. thesis, 1981), p. 202; the RMG made efforts to make a new and complete translation of the Bible as a replacement of Van der Tuuk's trans-lation which could no longer

1869 by Schreiber with the help of his students in the Parausorat Catechetical School<sup>45</sup>, while the translation into the Toba Batak dialect was finished by Nommensen in 1876.<sup>46</sup> Both translations were printed in Germany using the Batak script and with help from the English Bible Society. The New Testament and Psalms were printed in the Latin script in 1885, again with help from the same Society. The translation of the Old Testament was begun in the 1870s by Johannsen with the help of his students at the Pansur Napitu seminary (especially Josua Hutabarat). In 1884 he tested his translation with participants at a pastors' school, and finally completed it in 1891. Printing was done in Barmen in 1893.<sup>47</sup>

*Hymns*, which were very important in the schools, were translated from the beginning of the Batakmission. <sup>48</sup> All of them were either translations or adaptations of European church hymns. <sup>49</sup> A

be justified, among other reasons because he was a humanist and not a Christian (cf. J.L. Swellengrebel, *In Leijdeckers Voetspoor* I, In the Footsteps of Leijdecker], 1974, p. 146).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>45</sup> BRMG 1870, p. 78. Because Schreiber returned to Germany before the translation was completed, it had to be finished there.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>46</sup> Nommensen's translation was revised by O. Marcks with the help of J. Warneck during the first decade of this century; J. Warneck, *Sechzig Jahre*, p. 210. Later, Meerwaldt improved this revision.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>47</sup> Radjagukguk (*loc. cit.*) evaluates Johannsen's translation, which has yet to be revised, with these words, "It is not easy to read, it is rigid and not fluent, and sounds strange to the Batak." Meerwaldt, before, had made a note of a number of errors in the translation; regrettably he never gave a detailed analysis and place of the errors.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>48</sup> In connection with the teaching of singing in the schools, many missionaries noted that Batak children enjoyed this subject, but they were difficult to teach because they rarely sang before the coming of the missionaries (see, for example, Betz in MB February 1863, Klammer in MB December 1863, and Johannsen in BRMG 1866, p. 276). In other words, according to them, it was the missionaries who developed the Batak interest in singing and raised their ability to sing. But that opinion is debatable, especially because they described the Bataks as very musical later (see for example, JB 1885, p. 33).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>49</sup> J. Warneck, "Die Entstehung einer christlicher Literatur bei dem Batakvolk" [The Origin of a Christian Literature Among

revision of the whole collection was undertaken by Meerwaldt for the Toba Batak edition, <sup>50</sup> and by Schütz for the one in Angkola Batak.

In addition to translating and publishing the Bible, hymns and textbooks, the missionaries were busy to provide readings for adult members of the congregation. One of the most popular books was John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, which was reprinted repeatedly within a short time. Besides translating works, the missionaries wrote reading books for congregational members, for example Johannsen's *Sipaingot sian holong ni roha* (Advice Based on Love).

In it he advised parents to cooperate with teachers and church in teaching their children. He explained that the missionaries' and parents' educational goal was planting the seeds of obedience, righteousness, industriousness, self-control, neatness, cleanliness and politeness in the hearts of their children. The involvement of parents or family in the process of school education was in harmony with the RMG principle, "pupils must continue to be united with their families". <sup>51</sup> In that way, they remained rooted in their environment.

Providing literature for both the needs of school and congregation involved not only such technical matters as skills in translating, writing books, printing and paying for their publication, etc., but also the introduction of Bataks to a way of thinking which the Batakmission workers considered to be Christian. With reference to this, J. Warneck wrote:

Christianity brought a new world of thought to the Batak people, one which penetrated into the entirety of their life and culture .... The school was the principal means for its communication. This was the case because the young people who attended school were interested in obtaining

the Batak People] in *BRMG* 1905, especially p. 87. This policy was based on the idea that original Batak musik remained tainted by paganism, and its artistic quality was inadequate (for a further analysis of this subject, see Chapter Five, D.l.c.).

Later, the hymn book (*Buku Ende*) was revised and Meerwaldt's editing has been revised and completed by Quentmeyer (see E. Quentmeyer, "Das Gesangbuch der Batakkirche", in *BRMG* 1941, pp. 52-56).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>51</sup> E. Mundle, "Schulen und eingeboren Gehilfen" [Schools and Indigenous Helpers] in R. Wegner, *Rheinische Missionsarbeit* 1828-1903 (1903), pp. 52-56.

something new and reworking it independently for themselves .... The schools taught Christian people to think. The missionaries were involved in indirect teaching of their Christian pupils and those whom they wanted to become Christian through day by day conversations and the whole influence of their personal lives, but their most important teaching was through education for baptism (*Taufunterricht*), through the village schools and the training of indigenous workers.

As soon as the missionaries had finished laying a foundation, i.e. had succeeded in attracting pupils to the mission schools, it became rapidly apparent that literature was a prime requirement to meet the needs of their students. A people in the process of advancement must have books; through them the missionaries were meeting the people's growing spiritual needs. 52

Whether providing literature and other educational activities also involved an effort to bring two different worlds of thought to an encounter, remains to be answered in later chapters, and especially the final one.

# 3. Financing the Schools

In harmony with the principle of the unity of congregation and school, financial support for the schools at this period was not yet separated from the congregation. During the initial years of the Batakmission, the entire cost of the schools was born by the mission treasury. But beginning in the 1870s, the Batakmission began a policy of cultivating congregational self-support based upon two reasons: (1) the RMG financial resources were very limited, and continually experienced a deficit; (2) the Batakmission wished to have growth on the part of the Batak Christians in feeling that the schools and congregations were theirs.

At a conference held on April 25, 1873, the missionaries decided that one long term project of the Batakmission was to teach the congregations to become responsible for all their needs: to construct church and school buildings, to provide for their equipment and to help their workers. As a first step towards helping the congregations to be self-supporting and self-governing, the Batakmission linked its nurturing program with *Culturarbeit*, an initiative which required pioneering work beforehand.

J. Warneck, "Die Entstehung", pp. 53ff.

The Culturarbeit program was an effort, to encourage the planting of commercial crops such as coffee, rubber, etc. which could become export commodities. In the beginning, this program was tried as a way of obtaining funds to support its work. The RMG formed trading companies to support its financial needs, as we have indicated in Chapter Three. In 1863, the missionaries requested that their Barmen headquarters open a commercial network in Sumatra's west coast ports: Padang, Sibolga and Barus. The Indies government gave its support to this idea and promised to help its implementation.

In order for this program to proceed smoothly, in 1870 the Batakmission formed a Agricultural Commission which was entrusted with the task of (a) cooperating with the trading companies and government, and (b) providing capital for congregations ready to plant the commercial crops mentioned, and to collect their production for export afterwards. It was hoped that with this program, the Batakmission itself would receive an increase of funds, and that the congregations would obtain working capital for increasing production in order to become self-supporting. <sup>53</sup>

As to later developments, some of the missionaries felt that the *Culturarbeit* was not the best way to teach congregations to be self-supporting and self-governing.<sup>54</sup> Furthermore, the company which was allied with the Batakmission was disbanded in 1884 due to bankruptcy.<sup>55</sup>

Although this commercial venture was not continued, the policy of providing working capital

 $<sup>^{53}</sup>$  This program reminds us of the <code>Cultuurstelsel</code> which the <code>Dutch Indies</code> government operated in Java during the years 1830-1870, although in distraction to the government, the <code>Batakmission</code> did not force the congregations to plant certain crops.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>54</sup> "Minutes of the Synodical Conference of July 23-30, 1882". At this conference there was a debate about the *Culturarbeit*. The missionaries who were opposed to this program stressed that the effort to bring about self-governing/self-supporting congregations did not need to be related to the planting of specific commercial crops, because there was already a spirit of independence within congregations which ought to be given the freedom to find its way in self-support.

That is, the Missions-Handels-Aktien-Gesellschaft (see Chapter Three about Fabri's idea and effort in this regard). But another trading company which was a partner with the RMG when the latter worked in Kalimantan, i.e. Rheinisch-Bornesische Handels-Verein which included the Fa. Hennemann & Co., continued in business. In 1898, this firm opened places of business at several places in the Batak area, and became one of the financial backers of the Batakmission; see Chapter Six, A.4.

to congregations was continued, but without connecting the loans to the planting of particular commercial crops. The Batakmission obtained funds for this purpose from friends in the Netherlands to be loaned to the congregations for a term of step five years. The results were encouraging; in a brief period of time many congregations became self-supporting. <sup>56</sup> Because rice-growing was the major means for gaining a livelihood for most church members, the movement towards self-sufficiency for school and congregational needs was built around this culture as well; each harvest the rice was collected to pay those needs. Monthly tuition payments in cash were maintained in just a few places.

As acknowledged by RMG leaders themselves, it was not difficult to teach the Batak society, especially the Christian community, to be responsible for church and school affairs because the willingness and habit of giving had already been planted in them by their adat and tribal religion. Most importantly, once the Bataks were convinced of the usefulness of the institutions of church and school for their own lives, they felt themselves to be owners of what they founded and paid for. On the basis of this understanding, the Batakmission did not follow a policy of centralization in terms of supporting funds and providing physical facilities; it entrusted this responsibility to each congregation. This policy of decentralization invited competition on the part of congregations. Congregations which were in a parallel relationship to clans and villages liked this competition because the competitive spirit between margas had long formed a part of their way of life (see Chapter Three).

Here and there of course, competition gave rise to negative excesses such as rivalry, jealousy, even quarrels between margas and villages. But in general, missionaries and indigenous workers

<sup>1889,</sup> to there 41 which Uр were congregations financially self-supporting so that totalling 15,000 per salaries £ year were borne by "Die finanzielle A. congregations. Schreiber, Selbständigkeit unserer Batta-gemeinden", in BRMG 1890, p. 36.

were able to control the situation so that competition could be directed towards healthy purposes. Sometimes quarrels could actually be blessings in disguise, because they spurred initiatives on the part of church members to open and operate schools. But later decentralization was abandoned for certain purposes, such as payment of teachers—salaries, in favour of centralization in order to promote the development of schools in economically weak areas (see Chapter Six, A.4.).

Although the Batakmission endeavoured to nurture congregations towards self-sufficiency, nevertheless it must be noted that most congregations, especially 'daughter' congregations were not yet able to be self-supporting. In emergencies congregations were able to pay for the construction of church and school buildings, especially if this were a pre-condition for obtaining the services of a teacher. But most congregations were unable to pay the full support of a teacher even though the teacher's salary was less than that paid a government school teacher, so the Batakmission had to try to supplement the salary from other sources. The inability of the congregations to pay for the school's full support was due to their membership being often small in numbers and having an inadequate income, and the absence of a money economy in Batak society. As a result, gold and silver coins were turned into jewelry rather than used as payment for valid obligations.

Thanks to the hard work of missionaries in nurturing congregations towards self-sufficiency, and thanks too to the seriousness and hard work of the congregations themselves later, the total number of self-supporting congregations continued to rise. It would not be too much to say that up to the 1890s, almost all school buildings and equipment were the result of the congregation and local community's own effort, and thus the buildings became their possessions. Nevertheless, the congregations continued to be unable to pay the full cost of operating schools so a government subsidy was needed.

### 4. Collateral School Functions

#### (a) Health and Medical Ministries

As a result of epidemics of infectious diseases such as cholera, in several places missionaries, aided by teachers and pupils, undertook health ministries, such as nursing the sick, distributing medicines, and offering counselling. Seeing how frequently these epidemics broke out, missionaries began to see that health ministries were one of their biggest activities. These included struggling against the treatment of the tribal healer's (*datu*) treatments which missionaries considered erroneous both from the standpoint of medical science and the Christian faith. For that reason, in the Pansur Napitu seminary, and before that in the *Sikola Mardalan-dalan* (see C.1. below) the students were given medical studies in order for them to be able provide some health services in their place of work.

### (b) Ministries of Reconciliation

Even though this occurred infrequently, there actually were schools which were founded as a result of quarrels. But in most cases, schools became reconcilers of inter-village conflicts, such as that which took place between Balige and Laguboti. To reconcile the two clans, the missionaries organized a celebration in Balige with its content being provided by pupils from the two villages. The headmen and residents of the two villages were invited to attend. After seeing that their own children were able to work together in a harmonious atmosphere, they agreed to have peace. <sup>57</sup>

 $<sup>^{57}</sup>$  This "peace-feast" was celebrated on January 1, 1886; see  $\it BRMG$  1886, p. 120.

# (c) Locales for Evangelism

Even though the *Gemeindeordnung* of 1866 stressed that the school was meant for child-ren of Christians (congregations), nevertheless in reality, the schools were never closed to 'pagan' and Islamic children. Thus, these persons, too, became the focus for evangelization. But children were not just targets or objects of evangelism, rather they themselves became subjects who brought the Gospel to their families and those about them, both as individual students and with others.<sup>58</sup> Rather frequently, parents received the Gospel and became Christians after hearing its teaching from their children.

Sometimes the evangelistic function took place indirectly. For example, while still elementary school students, Markus Siregar and friends were invited by a local missionary to fell a tree because it was thought to be occupied by spirits and had been used before as a place of idol (sambaon) worship. In other places, teachers mobilized their pupils to build a church building. The involvement of school children in such activities tended to play a role in introducing the new faith in each ones family and to help bring about its spread. In this sense, the school accomplished a double goal: the pupils received the Gospel and were aided in deepening the way of living it out, and their families and non-family members received the Gospel through them. This achievement was congruent with the RMG's principle of the inter-connectedness of school pupils and families.

### C. Education of Indigenous Workers, especially Teachers

 $<sup>^{58}</sup>$  For example, Klammer made it a habit of taking his school children on walks around the village on Sunday; this activity attracted many inhabitants to hear the Gospel. JB 1864, p. 61 and BRMG 1865, p. 150.

During the beginning years of the schooling ministry, the European missionaries became the teachers of the schools which they founded. In several places, especially at stations just opened, this situation continued up to the 1880s because there were as yet very few Bataks who were teachers. But at the same time, missionaries appointed several of their best students from the very beginning to become their aides (*Schulgehilfen*) for school-teaching.

But the missionaries quickly realized that such a way of obtaining teachers was unsatis-factory, both in maintaining the quality of the school (especially where it was in competition with a government school) and in supporting the activities of the missionaries in general. Because of that, a special institution for the teaching of teacher candidates was needed. From the Batakmission's earliest days of ministry, it held that the educational ministry was an integral part of its whole effort among the Bataks, including the goal of christianizing them. Therefore, making teachers available must go hand in hand with providing evangelists and other workers for congregations. In other words, the school teacher must function as an evangelist, and as a worker in the congregation.<sup>59</sup>

The idea of establishing a teacher-training institution had been broached by Nommensen in 1862<sup>60</sup>, but it was only brought to fruition after the arrival of A. Schreiber in Sipirok in 1866. As a theologian and graduate from a university theological school, Schreiber was sent by the RMG to become the leader of the Batakmission and at the same time to be a teacher in the Catechetical

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>59</sup> Later, Meerwaldt gave the Biblical foundation for this dual function of the teacher, 2 Timothy 2:2 (see Meerwaldt's address at the "Barmer Festwoche", in MB 1896, p. 75).

See Nommensen's report on Barus, 1862 in *BRMG* 1863, p. 136. That idea was stressed by Nommensen again after he had worked in Silindung in a letter published in *MB* October 1865.

School to be founded to help nurture Batak adults. This school was a first step to be followed by others.

#### 1. The Parausorat Catechetical School

This school started in April 1868. The first five students had already been baptized and were chosen as the best graduates from the elementary schools. The length of the course at Parausorat had been set for two years. Schreiber was the main teacher, helped by two missionaries, Klammer and Schütz, who were working there. In 1870, Chr. Leipoldt became a fulltime teacher. His coming coincided with the reception of the second class of students.

The following subjects were studied: (1) knowledge, exegesis and history of the Bible, (2) catechism, (3) Indies and world geography, (4) history, including the ancient people who history was related to that of Israel, church history and Islam's struggle with Christianity, and modern history which described the "development of European people's position in exercising authority over the world", (5) arithmetic, (6) singing, and (7) natural science. With the coming of Leipoldt,

These five were: Ephraim, Thomas, Paulus, Johannes and Markus. Choosing them reflected the principle of selection (Sichtung), which continued to be defended by the Batakmission in its efforts to supply Batak workers. The main criteria for selection was intelligence and good character as evaluated by the missionary. But sometimes a different criterion was applied, i.e., the social status of the pupil as the child of a headman. This type of weighing had been used at this Catechetical School. While the five mentioned students had been studying several months, the school received a new student, Willem Dja Muda, the son of Sutan Baginda, the headman of Baringin who was a non-Christian, in the hope that Dja Muda would evangelize his family and village later (BRMG 1870, p. 67; cf. MB April 1869). But later, the missionaries were disap-pointed because Dja Muda, who was baptized in 1876, switched to Islam after he became a village headman; moreover he became a fierce opponent of the Batakmission (Castles, op. cit., pp. 27f.).

the Malay language was taught, and strangely enough German as well!

Both Latin and Batak scripts were used in reading and writing because both had been mastered since the students were in the elementary school. Nevertheless, the catechetical school encountered one of the elementary school's main problems: the difficulty of obtaining textbooks. Therefore, as an emergency measure, Schreiber and Leipoldt laboured energetic-ally to translate European books for the students use while supplementing these with knowledge which would fulfil the needs of students for their work in their own people later.

The Batakmission's evaluation of the students, and especially that of Schreiber and Leipoldt, was very positive; these had great hopes that the school's graduates "would prove to be very useful in supporting us in the proclamation of the Gospel". An even more positive evaluation of the graduates was made after their placement in congregations to work alongside the missionaries. The first five graduates were given high praise, "they have accomplished their valuable ministries in utilizing their considerable talents". In general, the following graduating classes were given a similar high evaluation 4, although there were a few who were not praised, due to the fact that they had resigned their teaching positions.

 $<sup>^{62}</sup>$  Schreiber in BRMG 1871, p. 53.

 $<sup>^{63}</sup>$  As described by the RMG based on Schreiber and Leipoldt's report, in JB 1871, p. 39.

During the nine years of the school's operation (1868-1877), three classes were graduated, totalling 27 persons; nine of whom became pastors, and one a famous blind evangelist, Bartimeus. J. Warneck in *Der Bote* 1905, pp. 308f.

Paulus and Kilian, for example, resigned from teaching because they thought f 15.00 per month was inadequate, and that amount had to be received from the congregation as though they were beggars. Kilian even described the teacher's work as "being a kind of slave" (BRMG 1877, pp. 336f and 365).

After 1875, there were also some graduates who, with the concurrence of their super-vising missionaries<sup>66</sup>, changed their vocation to that of government service. This loss issued in mixed feelings on the part of the missionaries. On the one hand, they regretted their departure because they were mindful that educated Batakmission personnel were in such short supply and the needs of the field so extensive, but on the other hand the missionaries were pleased to know that there would be Christians in the government. Besides that, some of the graduates in government service continued to be active in evangelization.

It is interesting to note, too, that in the summary of the development of this catechetical school, the RMG pointed to the mission conference held in Bremen in 1872 which had dealt with the theme, "Nurturing a self-supporting church as the ultimate goal of Protestant Missions" (see Chapter Three, B.2.a.). This meant that the RMG had anticipated the theme of this conference when it began the Parausorat catechetical school, i.e. the school was founded as a means for nurturing local Christians within the framework of forming an indigenous church which would be self-supporting and self-governing. As we shall see in our discussion of the seminaries at Pansur Napitu, Sipoholon and Narumonda, the importance of implementing the goal of education for indigenous church workers continued to be maintained; moveover it continued to develop.

Because the centre of the Batakmission's activities increasingly shifted to the northern area after the 1870s, where the people used the Toba Batak language, in 1877 the Batakmission decided to move the school to Pansur Napitu. However, the decision was not implement-ed until 1879. Although more and more of the Parausorat students were Toba Batak, never-theless the Angkola

Ephraim (Harahap) for example, became an employee in the attorney general's office. In fact, from 1885-1910, he was the for chief prosecutor Tapanuli Residency. his the descendants became prominent persons, for example, Syarifuddin, Todung Sutan Gunung Mulia, F.J. Nainggolan, and Gindo Siregar; Castles, op. cit., p. 29.

Batak language continued to be used as a medium of instruction. Such a situation only complicated matters for the Toba Bataks and contributed to the move.<sup>67</sup>

## 2. The Pansur Napitu Seminary

The expansion of the Batakmission's working area to the northern part of the Batak area resulted in a critical need for more indigenous personnel, a need which could not be filled by the catechetical school in Parausorat because of the language problem. In addition, the distance from the Toba to the Angkola region was too far to be travelled by Toba students because road and transportation means were unsatisfactory.

Before the Pansur Napitu seminary could be opened as a replacement for the one in Parusorat, an emergency step had to be taken for the sake of training Toba Batak students, namely the founding of a *Sikola Mardalan-dalan* (literally: "a walking school") in Silindung in 1874. The three missionaries in the area - Nommensen, Johannsen and Mohri - chose 20 of the best elementary school graduates and taught them in turn.

The 'institution' they were founding was called "a walking school" because there was no permanent place for the students to study. They had to move from one missionary to another. On Mondays and Tuesdays they studied with Nommensen in Saitnihuta (*Huta Dame*, "peace village"), Wednesdays in Pansur Napitu with Johannsen, and Fridays with Mohri in Sipoho-lon. On the other

connection, this it is interesting note In to the evaluation of Johannsen that the Angkolan Batak had "malayized" ("vermalaisiert") at the Batakmission was endeavouring to maintain the purity of the Batak language.

days the students did their homework or helped each's home congregation.

The courses studied were almost identical to the ones in Parausorat: Nommensen taught homiletics, Biblical background, history, natural science, medicine<sup>68</sup>, and German (?!)<sup>69</sup>; Johannsen taught Biblical knowledge, geography, world history, church history, arithmetic and the catechism; Mohri taught Islamic history, dogmatics, the Malay language, and music. The period of study was two years. Tuition was paid by the parents. They also provided for the students' food, clothing, and school needs. This policy was part of the program to make the congregation self-supporting.

The teachers were pleased to see the seriousness and achievement of their students, but they realized that their learning situation could not be defended for any length of time. This was the reason why the missionary conference held in June 1877 decided to found a catechet-ical school at Pansur Napitu (later it was called a seminary), and at the same time move the one at Parausorat to it.

When the Pansur Napitu Seminary opened with 15 students, there was neither a school building nor dormitory. Teaching took place on Johannsen's veranda; in the beginning he was the only teacher. At the same time he was serving his congregation and its branches. The first class studied two years under these emergency conditions using the same curriculum as that of the *Sikola Mardalan-dalan* earlier. 13 students finished the course; the other two had died, most likely because of the emergency conditions under which they had lived.

 $<sup>^{68}</sup>$  According to Nommensen, the course on medicine was given to overcome the danger of the datu's treatment (BRMG 1874. p. 205).

 $<sup>^{69}</sup>$  These punctuation marks were added by the <code>BRMG</code> editor. It seems he was rather surprised that German should be taught in that school (however, it was given before as well in

In 1879, Johannsen placed three of the students in the government school in Padang Sidempuan. They were placed there to obtain advanced study in order to be qualified for teaching in government schools. They were graduated from the school during the same year and received the highest grades. The other ten students were examined and were graduated at the August 1879 Missionary Conference. Afterwards, they were placed as teachers in various congregations.

Even though Johannsen was pleased and happy with the achievements of his students, nevertheless along with the other missionaries, he knew that the school could not continue under such emergency conditions. Therefore, in 1879, several remedial steps were taken. In addition to increasing the number of teachers, a house for the teacher and a dormitory for the students were erected on the same location where people had once worshipped a pagan spirit (sombaon). The church building became the classroom.

In 1879, Johannsen also realized that two years was too brief a period of time for study; instead, the course of study should be raised to four years. But because of limitations in various fields, his idea only came to fruition with the entering class of 1881, but by then Johannsen had already returned to the Depok seminary (see "excursus" below).

In order to fulfil the need for evangelists who were not tied to work in either school or congregation, a course for evangelists was begun in 1880. This was located in the Pansur Na-pitu seminary, but was discontinued within a short time because the need for it was less basic.

Along with Schreiber and his colleagues at Parausorat earlier, Johannsen, too, quickly

 $^{70}$  The Teachers' School at Padang Sidempuan was founded as a replacement of the Tano Bato Teachers' School closed in 1874.

Parausorat). German did not enter into the curriculum at the Pansur Napitu Seminary (see Chapter Five, D.I.c.).

experienced difficulties because of a lack of textbooks. To overcome this lack, he set aside time each day for the preparation of books, most of which were translations or adaptations of those written by Europeans. This was in addition to teaching and serving a congregation. Johannsen worked diligently on the task of preparing study materials for both seminary and congregation; not infrequently this caused him to complain that the burden was too heavy. This feeling was heightened by the fact that he was frequently ill, and that even though he had requested help from his brother missionaries, they were not prepared to come to his aid.

The facilities of the seminary were of such an emergency nature that admission of stu-dents had to be limited, even though parental interest was high in wanting their sons to study there. Parents had to pay tuition and room and board costs, in a way similar to that required of them for the *Sikola Mardalan-dalan* earlier. Not only that, but the cost of constructing the buildings in 1879 was paid for by the parents of the 39 students of the second entering class. The burden of this financial support did not reduce parental interest to have their children attend the school even though this meant that the new facilities built before were no longer able to provide for all the students. In 1881, the third class was received, but the second class would not be graduated until 1883 resulting in total student body of 70 persons, even though the maximum capacity was 46.

The over-extension of facilities happened because of high community interest and the fact that no entrance examination was used. The seminary received all students sent by the cong-regations after screening by the local missionary. This situation gave rise to many problems such as the students studying and living under sub-standard conditions, an insufficiency of learning helps, including books, plus the inability of just two teachers to teach so many students. Later, when Johannsen was transferred to Depok, there was just one teacher, Bonn. As a result, the quality of instruction was very low and the results of the final examination for the graduating classes of 1883 and 1885 were very disappointing.

The Batakmission realized that the regrettably low quality of instruction could not be attributed to the fault of the students, but instead to the Batakmission itself. Therefore, in 1883, the seminary did not receive a new class; this allowed the teachers to devise a new educational system in addition to increasing learning facilities.

Why did the community which was so eager to send its children to this seminary be so willing to allow them to study under such deplorable conditions? We do not have any primary information from the Batak communities, but we do have teachers' reports which help us see several reasons.

In the first place, society's interest and appreciation for education kept rising rapidly. Its members were no longer satisfied to have their children to be graduated just from the elementary school; no alternative highschool existed in all of the northern area except this seminary (the second was not begun until the 1900s; see Chapter Five).

Secondly, and closely connected with the first reason, the Batak community saw that the seminary education opened opportunities for their children to become teachers, or governmental employees, positions much more prestigious to them than those involving unskilled labour, such as agricultural work. It was this reason which prompted parents to work hard and save in order to pay the school costs for their children. This was especially the case for parents who came from a line of chieftains where the motivation to obtain honour loomed high, even though their children were neither interested in attending school nor had any aptitude for it.

In missionary writings and reports during subsequent years even up to the close of the work of the Batakmission, we frequently read notations about society's motivation such as reported in the previous paragraph. This gave rise to difficult problems for the Batakmission such as clashes and contradictions between the educational motivation and the objective of the Batakmission on the one

hand, and the Batak society on the other. We will come back to this problem when we analyze the issue of progress or advancement, *Hamajuon*, in Chapter Six.

The third reason bears some relationship to the second. Up until this point, Batak society had perceived that the datu or traditional religious leader possessed *sahala* knowledge (see Chapter Two). But now it began to think of his *sahala* as having moved to the teacher and church workers, in general. We have seen the significance of possessing *sahala* in whatever field for the pre-mission Batak community; now by having this *sahala* knowledge through the church, Bataks would increasingly be able to attain their noblest ideals, with possessing power as the highest of those ideals (see Chapter Two, C.1.).

Fourthly, the Batak community was very pleased to have its children taught entirely by missionaries because their faith in the missionaries was extremely high, especially on the part of those already Christian. They were certain that under the tutelage of the missionaries, their children would become truly 'human'. This faith on the part of the Batak community conti-nued to grow due to the close relationships developed with the parents of students, especially those relationships begun by Johannsen. Each time parents brought supplies for their children, Johannsen took the opportunity to talk with them about their children, about the Gospel, and about the parents' lives themselves. Usually, these conversations were ended with prayer, and such a situation impressed itself deeply upon the parents.<sup>71</sup> Of course, this experience was shared with others so that the interest and trust of the community continued to expand.

The community's trust never flagged even though their children were subjected to strict discipline. On the contrary, just because of the strict discipline, the community was happy about

 $<sup>^{71}</sup>$  Johannsen used this conversational opportunity to bring parents to confess their sin, and to discipline errant children in front of their parents (MB 1880, p. 71 and BRMG 1882, p. 41).

having its children attend the seminary, especially so if parents felt unable to teach their children whom they considered unruly. The Common Common

This kind of education for discipline involved two sides: (a) the use of time: the course of study demanded much of the students because of the number of subjects taken and the home and hand work which had to be completed; and (b) implementation of regulations with reference to study, dormitory life, worship and the forbidding of marriage during the four years at the seminary.

 $<sup>^{72}</sup>$  Later on, Meerwaldt criticized the idea held by parents or community that the seminary was a place for teaching naughty children.

 $<sup>^{73}</sup>$  This characteristic of obedience was strongly emphasized by the German educators of the 16th-19th centuries (see Chapter Two, A.), but the Batakmission embraced it as obedience to the Lord and to the teach-er. This application gives the impression that the demand for obedience was rigid and without reservation.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>74</sup> According to Schreiber, "Welche sind die Ziele der evangelischen Mission?" [What Are the Goals of the Evangelical Mission?], BRMG 1888, pp. 13-23, the independence which was needed within the framework of establishing self-supporting and self-governing congregations refers especially to inner self-governing, i.e. a personal understanding of faith expressed in ones own language and pattern of thought, and this is what was taught to the Pansur Napitu seminary students.

The actual details of the teaching of discipline and related problems and the subsequent

development of education at the seminary and steps towards improvement begun in 1883 will be

discussed in the next chapter.

Excursus: Seminary at Depok

This seminary, some 30 km. south of Jakarta, was opened in 1878 with the RMG's

involvement from its planning stage. The Batakmission sent a number of its elementary school

graduates there beginning in 1879, with 67 persons having been graduated by the time the seminary

closed in 1926. 75 According to Johannsen and Hennemann 76, for the most part, the Batak students

had done well while there. This judgment was supported by the competen-cy shown when they

returned to the Batak region and began their ministries, according to the Batakmission missionaries

as well as in the judgment of Bataks themselves later. 77

In Johannsen's position as leader of the Pansur Napitu seminary as touched on above, he

undertook a comparative study in 1881 of the Pansur Napitu and Depok seminaries. He saw several

Th. Müller-Krüger, Sedjarah Geredja di Indonesia History of the Church in Indonesia], 1966, p. 205. Most of the Bataks were sent during the first 20 years of this seminary's life; after the end of the 1890s, the sending of the Batak students was gradually stopped, and finally ended for certain reasons (see Chapter Five, D.I.a.).

 $^{76}$  J.Ph. Hennemann was an RMG missionary in Kalimantan and was the director of the Depok Seminary from 1878-1905.

 $^{77}$  According to Harahap, op. cit., p. 70, "from the beginning the Depok teachers were preferred in the Batak area because of their fluency in Indonesian, and also because their experience and viewpoint beyond Tapanuli was extensive".

positive elements in Depok which could be adapted to the school in Pansur Napitu. The most important one was the four-year period of study and the curriculum which contained many courses on general knowledge. These were among those aspects which influenced Johannsen and colleagues in revising the Pansur Napitu seminary curriculum in 1882 (see Chapter Five).

Although the Batakmission documents do not explicitly reveal the reasons which prompted it to send its Batak students to Depok, nevertheless several reasons can be mentioned, based on facts from the Batak field and information obtained later: (1) In line with the rapid development and expansion of the Batakmission s work, it needed many more indigenous workers. But their number could not be fulfilled by the Batak seminary. (2) The Batakmission could economize on 'the production costs' of indigenous personnel because the Depok seminary was supported by a Depok board in the Netherlands. Furthermore, it was subsidized by the Indies government; in effect then, the Batakmission did not have to pay for the cost of sending its students there. (3) The RMG/Batakmission wanted to cooperate with the Dutch mission boards and learn about its system of education for "Indonesians", especially its pedagogy which tended to be used by the government schools as well.

## D. The Role of Bataks in Developing the Educational Ministry

After we have observed the effort of the Batakmission in preparing a number of Batak

The government subsidy (in addition to funds from the supporting bodies mentioned) did not only involve funds for food, clothing, books, etc., but also travel expenses for the student from and to his place of origin; J. Warneck in *Der Bote* April 1897, p. 64.

nationals, especially elders and teachers, we will investigate their role in supporting the development of education in the Batak area during this period.

## 1. Elders

The elders of course did not teach in regular classrooms even though some of them had been involved in the school for elders. But their roles were very pronounced in determining the growth or contraction of schooling in each's village or congregation. This matter can not be separated from the background of their appointment as elders. Most of those appointed during this early period were, either village headmen or clan and village council members (pangituai) or from both groups. From the outset, they had a role in determining whether a school was needed or not in their villages. They, too, took part in the effort made for the placement of a missionary or teacher in each's village, and therefore pioneered in readying means for the operation of a school, i.e. a school building, its furniture, and a residence for the teacher. After the school was in operation, they accompanied the teacher in calling in the villagers' homes, appealed to them to send their children to school. In fact, there were elders who went to the school each day to check on attendance and the neatness of the children.

Section 6 and 8 of the *Kirchenordnung* of 1881 set out the task of elder, their meetings and the clarification of their roles in the field of education:

The elders have the task of finding funds for the poor, the church and school ....; they must be present in examinating candidates for confirmation, baptism, and the school children .... Meetings of elders must take care so that the responsibilities entrusted to the congregation are fulfilled in meeting the expenses of having a teacher, evangelist and Batak pastor, as well as

for constructing and maintaining church and school buildings. 79

In short, based on the principle of the unity of church and school, the elders had a major role in the development of Batakmission schooling, especially in providing basic education in the villages. This was why the Batakmission personnel never ceased in their endeavour of raising elders abilities, in part through meetings between themselves and the latter.

#### 2. Teacher

In line with the Batakmission ideals of winning the whole Batak community for Christian-ity and founding a self-supporting folk church, the teachers were expected to be evangelists and educators for clan and tribe. In accomplishing this purpose, children of village headmen and council members received priority in becoming seminary students, and most of them did not disappoint that hope. The same goal played a part also in the policy of teacher placement. If the situation permitted, or if a specific need arose, for example the lack of a teacher in the village, or an insufficient number of teachers, then to the extent possible, the Batakmission would place a teacher who had come from that village, or a member of the *marga* of most its residents. In

Benih Yang Berbuah, pp. 157f. In 1888, Mohri wrote up a detailed proposal about the scope of elder's more responsibilities, but in the main, the part touching school was not different from the Church Order of 1881 above. It is interesting that the analysis of the elder's tasks was linked with his suggestion that elders be freed from forced labour, a suggestion which was approved by the government later; JB 1888, 43. After 39 and BRMG 1889, p. the approval of suggestion, the issue of freedom from forced labour (and freedom from taxation) became one of the strongest motivations The formulation of the Church people to want to become elders. Order of 1881, together with Mohri's version of responsi-bilities continues to be heard in the description of elder's task still included in the liturgy ordination of elders in the Batak Churches of the present day.

general, this was congruent with the desires of the community that the teacher to be placed in their village would be one of its sons, or be one of their marga. <sup>80</sup> In line with looking at the teachers' role in the development of the educational effort of the Batakmission, there are two aspects which need to be held up for scrutiny.

## (a) Daily Activities

Because the teacher had to do double duty in congregation and school, they were the busiest people in their area. From morning until afternoon, they taught in the school; late afternoon they prepared people for baptism and taught the catechism, and in the evening they called upon members of the congregation, including school children or led evangelistic worship services. Each day they had to fill out a daily work report as the basis for filing a monthly and annual report later. At least once a month, they had to attend a meeting of pre-paration (or *sermon* as it is now called by the Batak churches) at the home of a missionary. And if possible he had to lead an elders' meeting or assist the missionary in it.<sup>81</sup>

In the midst of all the time and energy expended in bearing the loads mentioned, the teacher still needed to 'steal' time to work his rice field and garden, usually a plot provided by the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>80</sup> It is true that during the earlier years, there were villages which preferred to ask for a mission-ary while rejecting a Batak teacher (see note 21), but that happened because that teacher in question was neither from that marga (clan) nor from that village.

The description of the teacher's responsibility was first given in a detailed and written form in the Church Order of 1881, Chapter 11 (see *Benih Yang Berbuah*, p. 158). Especially with reference to the school, the description was given in a more detailed fashion in "the Order of 1898 for the Work of the Teacher in the School" (see Chapter Five).

congregation, because the salary provided by the congregation was insufficient for his livelihood.<sup>82</sup> Moreover, not infrequently he was called upon to help the missionary with various tasks.<sup>83</sup> The teacher's continuous involvement in the village and work load were increasingly felt to be burdensome because in many congregations there was but one teacher, even though there were sufficient numbers of pupils for more than one class. In spite of all that, they were still expected to be model figures in morals, in the family, in fact in all aspects of life.

Without having the work load balanced by satisfactory material remuneration several teachers felt themselves forced to neglect their work for the sake of meeting the needs of their household, and yet the missionaries accused them of being lazy. In fact, there were teachers who not only neglected their responsibilities; they left the whole teaching profession.

Earlier we saw the case of Paulus and Kilian who left the teaching profession because they felt their salaries were insufficient (see note 65). In addition to them, there were others as well. But the most striking case of this period was that of Samuel Siregar. He was a former slave who had been redeemed, taught and baptized by Van Asselt in 1864 (see note 6). Later he became an evangelist. During the years 1870-73, he was in Europe to study with Rev. Witteveen in Ermelo, and in the Vorschule of the Barmen seminary. He even had an affair with a German girl. After 1874, he became a teacher in Silindung. Even though he was no more capable than other teachers, according to missionaries, his facility in foreign languages made him arrogant. In 1883, he changed profession becoming a government employee in order to obtain a larger salary, in Warneck's judgment. In 1884, he married into the family of Si Singamangaraja XII. He gave as his reason his hope to serve as a mediator between this noted chieftain, and the Batakmission and Dutch Indies government. But according to Warneck, he failed to accomplish that function. He concluded that Samuel Siregar was a prototype of an indigenous worker who was taught in a foreign country and removed from his roots. Based upon the experience with Siregar, Warneck was persuaded that it was unnecessary to educate indigenous candidates for church work in a foreign country because such an experience did not

 $<sup>^{82}</sup>$  According to the wage scale for teachers as specified by the Batakmission, the wage ranged from f 10 to f15 per month, and frequently even that amount was not paid by the congregation.

Several of them helped the missionaries prepare literature: Markus Siregar helped Van Asselt, Jonathan, Johannes and Josua aided Nommensen, for example. But there were also those who helped with household work; see for example Gr. Lukas' diary in Parsambilan, 1908-1909.

cause them to become more reliable workers upon their return.<sup>84</sup>

In addition to those who resigned because of insufficient salary, there were teachers, too, who received an unsatisfactory evaluation from both the missionaries and the community without leaving their profession. But cases such as Paulus, Kilian and Siregar, as well as a negative evaluation of some teachers' teaching proficiency were small in number compared with the numbers of those receiving positive marks for their teaching abilities.

In reports or writings of missionaries and the RMG leadership, there are found praises and expressions of appreciation about the seriousness, faithfulness and abilities of the teachers. They were called the main pillars for the development of congregation and school, the spearheads for founding congregation and school, the spiritual and moral guides of the community, and other similar expressions of praise. In Warneck's opinion<sup>85</sup> the teachers' role was as follows:

The work of the Batakmission could not have taken place without the support of its national workers, especially so in view of its rapid advance from year to year with the opening of new places of ministry; there was an incontestable need for workers from among those who had been won to Christ.

One only needs to think about ministry to so many congregations, including hundreds of school children and church members of branch congregations, who needed catechetical instruction for baptism and confirmation, and others who needed pastoral care and worship leadership on Sundays. Even though missionaries realized that all these services were assigned to them, nevertheless they did not have sufficient strength to carry them out unless the Lord raised up sufficient numbers of workers from the midst of the nationals themselves for the purpose of ministry.

The dedication of just these indigenous workers had accomplished very much, and praise must be given to God for this. They must make do with salaries far below those paid by the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>84</sup> J. Warneck, "Samuel Siregar", in *Der Bote* January 1897, pp. 53-58; cf. J.Warneck, "Eingeboren Helfer ...", in *EM* May, 1897, p. 10; *JB* 1874, p. 15; 1875, p. 19; 1878, p. 40; *BRMG* 1889, p. 24; *MB* 1889, p. 57. Samuel's own explanation why he married a relative of Si Singamangaraja was set forth in his letter of July 12, 1885 which was attached to "the General Synod's Minutes, July 20-27, 1885".

 $<sup>^{85}</sup>$  J. Warneck, Sechzig Jahre, p. 193, and p. 203.

government to its young people with an education similar to that of the Batak church workers.

## (b) On The-Job-Training/Nurturing

Even though the Batakmission gave high marks for its national teachers' praiseworthy efficiency and achievement, nevertheless there was a felt necessity to continually improve their abilities and the quality of their work. This was the case in spite of the fact that the education which the teachers had received at the seminary in terms of knowledge, skills and training in discipline had achieved good results, according to the missionaries. At the same time, the Batakmission was aware that the quality of its schools was far from satisfactory. Therefore, in order to improve the skills and seriousness of the teachers so that their role in developing the congregation and school might be raised, the Batakmission initiated several steps towards that end.

## (i) Meetings for Preparation

In almost every station (huria sabungan; mother congregation; place of missionary's residence), each missionary organized a regular meeting with the teachers of each resort. <sup>86</sup> Their frequency depended upon the conditions and distinctive needs of each. The meeting included Bible study (especially the Biblical texts for the succeeding days and weeks), study of the school lessons, and discussion about problems which had arisen in congregation and school. It would be ended by directions or instructions from the missionary.

## (ii) Conferences

A conference especially for teachers was held for the first time at Parausorat in 1878.87 The

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>86</sup> Officially the term *resort* began to be used in the Church Order of 1881 and means "the mother congregation with its branch congregations (huria pagaran)".

Because of the difficult conditions and limited facilities, the frequency of conferences for teachers was not fixed. But beginning in 1886, an effort was made to hold a conference each year in a different location. In 1881, in addition to conferences for teachers, a synodal conference was held for teachers, elders and headmen, but in general the

conference was always led by a missionary and with a program which included sermons and lectures by missionaries. Beginning in 1886, the conference also included papers by the national teachers on topics given by the missionaries. At the conference, too, each teacher was given an opportunity to report on his work, problems related to their work and life, along with requests related to both matters. 89

In addition, the teachers' conference was used by the Ephorus to communicate admonitions and advice related to errors of the teachers, and regulations connected with the work of teaching, including those which regulated their relationships with the Batakmission, i.e. the Ephorus. For example, at the teachers' conference at Sibolga in 1886, Ephorus Nom-mensen delivered admonitions which reached even to aspects of their lives considered most personal, i.e. the sexual activities of the teachers:

There are several teachers who have intercourse not only once each night but even twice, so that, as spoken by the apostle they besmirch their honour because they do not let themselves be led by the Spirit of God, but instead follow the desires of the flesh and are controlled by the reins of the devil.

speakers at this conference were only missionaries. Not until 1893 were the voices of elders heard.

At the teachers' conference in Sibolga in 1886, example, three teachers prepared papers for discussion: Kilian: "Ngolu Parsaripeon di Halak Kristen" (Christian Family Life) which analyzed why children must be taught from birth to marriage, and the characteristics of this Christian education in comparison with education in other religions; (2) Philippus: "Songon Diama Sahalak Raja Kristen gabe Tiruan di angka raja na marugamo Sipelebegu dohot Silom" (How a Christian Headman May Be an Example to Headmen Who Embrace Tribal Religion or Islam); (3) Elias: "Pilippi 1:21, Eksegese dohot Panghonaanna" (Philippians 1:21, Exegesis and Its Application). The custom of presenting papers such as these was maintained in succeeding conferences, even beyond them. For the latter, the writing was part of a contest. Teachers were asked to prepare papers on various topics. (See Chapter Five, cf. J. Warneck, Sechzig Jahre, pp. 199f.)

 $<sup>^{89}</sup>$  According to R. Wegner (BRMG 1899, p. 138) the pattern for these teachers' conferences was identical to that of teachers' conferences in Germany.

In order to avoid such a situation and at the same time improve the results of the teachers, Nommensen delivered the following regulation and suggestion:

If it so happens that the teacher is not occupied with school or congregation, it is recommended that he be working for himself, either in the garden, or other kind of work, or restudy his seminary books. The main thing is that he should be working in his garden or outside his house each morning and late afternoon. In that way, he will not be think-ing so much about women, and thus become a good role model for those around him.

In addition to the Ephorus' regulations and advice above, the teachers' conference also specified several others, for example:

(1) Teachers may not attend tribal religious rites (*Götzenfest*); (2) Teachers may not take part in games of self-defense (Batak: *marmonsak*) which are dangerous according to Batak understanding, and are related to datuism; in contrast, they should do physical exercises and involve themselves in other physical activities; (3) Teachers may no longer pick their teeth.

The examples of regulations specified (we assume that the writers were missionaries) reflected the attitude and selective evaluation by the Batakmission at that time towards Batak culture. This selective attitude in turn was planted in the minds of the national teachers, and in fact in the minds of Batak Christian lay persons. J. Warneck's conclusion about the significance of this teachers' conference was given as follows:

This conference raised a healthy class consciousness (*Standesbewusstsein*) and also much stimulation .... Although among the teachers, there could still be found parts of the regulations which they did not consider useful. ... Yet in general they were ready to acknowledge their value. 90

In subsequent chapters, we shall investigate the continued effort of the Batakmission to

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>90</sup> J. Warneck, "Die Entwicklung der Batakmission im letzten Jahrzehnt (1886-1896)" [The Development of the Batakmission during the Last Decade (1886-1896)] in AMZ 1898, p. 148; cf. J.

improve the general skills of the teachers and national workers in terms of up-grading their role in the development of church and school system.

E. Statistics

The following table indicates the quantitative growth of congregations and schools, 1867-1882 (Main= Main congregation; Miss. = Missionaries; Elem.= Elementary; HS= High School).

Year	Congregation Members		Miss.	Batak Workers	Sch	School		Students		
	Main Branch		Men	Teacher Elder	Elem.	HS		-		
1867	7	115	7	-	7			120		
1868	7	728	7	-	7		1	161		
1870	10	1.071	10	5	10	1				
1871	10	1.250	10	5	15	1				
1875	11	2.056	11	13	15	2	265			
1877	11	2.156	12	20	24	2	837			
1879	11	3.402	11		31		1	995		

Warneck, Sechzig Jahre, p. 199.

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1880	11	26		16	28 64	37		1	1.132
1881	13	34	5.988	15					1
1882	14	43	7.586	16	38 125 57		1		