DUTCH MISSIONARIES

VOLUME 2

To the Ends of the Earth

Eight Dutch missionaries, from Antonius Hambroek to Truus Lemmens

Then I said, "Here am I! Send me."
Isaiah 6:8

WIM KAMPHORST

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To the Ends of the Earth. Dutch missionaries, volume 2

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The sources consulted are listed after each chapter. Stories known only from a person's own testimony or from later tradition, or that cannot be verified, are marked as such in the text and in the overview at the end of each chapter.

This book can be read and downloaded free of charge at whisper-magazine.org.

Introduction: here am I

When the prophet Isaiah heard the voice of the Lord in the temple, asking whom He would send, he gave a short answer: *Then I said, "Here am I! Send me."* (Isaiah 6:8)

It sounds simple. The eight people in this book found out how little simple it is. One of them went back to the enemy camp and never came back. One left against the wishes of her own mission leaders. One married a man who was on the other side of the world, and only then traveled after him. One went to Pakistan as a mission sister and stayed there until her death.

This is the second volume of *To the Ends of the Earth*. As in the first volume, it is about men and women who were born in the Netherlands and gave their lives somewhere else. They came from Rotterdam and Amsterdam, Oud-Loosdrecht and Veenendaal, Zwolle, Eibergen and Venray. They worked on Formosa, Curaçao, Celebes, Java and in Pakistan. The order follows time, from a minister who died on Formosa in 1661 to a sister who died in Karachi in 2000.

Facts first

In this volume too, I have looked into what is certain and what is only told about each person. For a few people that was difficult. Few of their own words survive from Riek Luinenburg-Pelle and Caroline Gunning, and what has been written about them often comes from a single family archive or a single archive description. That is why I have kept their chapters shorter. Better a short story that is true than a long story I filled in myself.

After each chapter there is an overview of what is certain, what comes only from the person's own testimony or their own circle, and what is unconfirmed. Then come the sources.

Honest about the shadow

Some chapters in this book are not pleasant to read. A bishop on Curaçao built schools for children who had nowhere else to go, and he himself owned enslaved people. A young missionary in Toraja was killed, and to this day the stories differ about why.

I tell these things because they happened. The Bible does the same with its own heroes. If you only see what is beautiful, you learn nothing from what went wrong, and nothing of the grace that worked through it.

How to read this book

Each chapter stands on its own. You can start with the name you know, or with the name you have never heard. Read it with a map beside you and with an open Bible.

And read it with that short sentence of Isaiah in the back of your mind. None of these eight knew, when they left, how it would end. They only said: here am I.

Antonius Hambroek: the minister who went back

In Fort Zeelandia, on the coast of the island we now call Taiwan, a minister said goodbye to his two daughters. It was the end of May 1661. The Chinese commander who was besieging the fort had sent him inside with a letter: the Dutch had to surrender. His wife and two of his children had stayed behind in the enemy camp as hostages.

Inside the walls he had done the opposite of what he had been told to do. He had advised the governor to hold out. Now he was about to go back to the man who had threatened to kill him if he did not like the answer. His married daughters begged him to stay. According to the daily register of the fort, the journal the Dutch kept there, they hung around his neck, overcome with grief.

He went anyway.

The man's name was Antonius Hambroek. For thirteen years he had been a minister in Mattau, a village on the plain in the southwest of the island. Before that he had been a minister for fifteen years in Schipluiden, a village near Delft. A century after his death, a

playwright made him a Dutch hero, and a painter put that farewell on canvas. Much has been written about his dying. Far less has been kept about his life and his work. I want to tell the two side by side, because the man who walked back to the camp was the same man who had spent thirteen years training teachers.

It began in Rotterdam.

A student paid for by the States

Antonius Hambroek was born in Rotterdam, around 1606. He grew up in a well-to-do family, writes Simonetta Carr, who retold his life in 2022.

On January 30, 1623, he enrolled as a student in Leiden. He was admitted to the Staten-college, a school for future ministers, paid for by the States of Holland, the government of the province. Whoever studied there became a pastor in the Reformed church, the Protestant church that was then the official church of the Dutch Republic.

In Leiden he also met the woman he would marry, Anna Vincenten Moij. That is how more recent accounts tell it.

Fifteen years in the same pulpit

On April 4, 1632, Hambroek was installed as minister in Schipluiden. To install means to place someone in office in a solemn church service. On June 1 of that year he married Anna.

Schipluiden was a small village between The Hague and Rotterdam. The old church still stands. According to a 2018 article in the *Taipei Times*, the church and the pulpit look just as they did when Hambroek left. Whoever walks in today looks at the pulpit where he stood for fifteen years.

Once in those years he left the village for very different work. Around the turn of the year 1637 to 1638, Admiral Maarten Harpertsz. Tromp asked him to sail with the fleet that went out against the Dunkirk privateers, pirates who preyed on Dutch merchant ships. Hambroek went along as fleet chaplain, a minister on board, on behalf of the States. It lasted only a few months. After that he was back in his pulpit.

In the village his family grew. The old dictionary mentions one son and two daughters. More recent sources speak of four children: one son and three daughters. Their names have not come down to us.

A calling to the other side of the world

In 1647 Hambroek was about forty. He had a settled congregation and a family. That year the classis of Schieland sent him out to the East Indies. A classis is a regional assembly of ministers and elders in the Reformed church. The classis made the decision, and the Dutch East India Company paid.

I do not want to skip that side of the story. The ministers in Asia were employed by the VOC, a trading company with its own soldiers, forts and courts. They preached to the Dutch in the forts and worked among the native people, but their salary and their posting came from the Company.

Why would a man of forty go to the other side of the world with his wife and children? Hambroek did not leave us the answer. Robertus Junius, who had worked on Formosa for fourteen years, was a minister in Delft in those years, a few kilometers from Schipluiden. Carr writes that Junius knew Hambroek from Schipluiden and may have helped bring about his call. She names no source for it.

The family traveled with four children and was almost a year on the way. Hambroek arrived in Batavia, now Jakarta, the headquarters

of the VOC, in the fall of 1647. On April 20, 1648, he was called to Formosa.

Mattau: a village the Dutch had not forgotten

Formosa, now Taiwan, had been partly in Dutch hands since 1624. At the bay of Tayouan, now Anping in the city of Tainan, stood Fort Zeelandia. On the plain behind it lay the villages of the Siraya, one of the native peoples of the island.

The first minister on the plain was Georgius Candidius, who arrived in 1627. He refused to live in the fort and settled in the village of Sinkan. His judgment of the people has been kept. They were friendly, loyal and kind-hearted, he wrote, and quick to understand: what took others a fortnight, they grasped in a week. He also wrote that they were feared headhunters when they went out raiding. Kern, who wrote a survey of the Dutch period in 1914, calls Candidius a good observer without prejudice.

Kern lists the line of gospel workers who served on the island: Candidius, Junius, Van Breen, Happart, Hambroek, Vertrecht and others. Hambroek belonged to that line. He became minister of the district of Mattau, now Madou in Tainan, and he would stay there thirteen years. If you read the chapter on Junius in volume 1, you know that name. Mattau had once been the most powerful village on the plain, and it had turned against the Dutch. In 1635 VOC soldiers marched there, with Junius among them, and set the village on fire. Thirteen years later a new minister came to live there, a man with a weak body and a Bible.

What the people of Mattau thought of him, we do not know. Not a single voice from the village itself about him has been kept. The nineteenth-century dictionary by Van der Aa writes that he enjoyed

great affection and respect among his congregation. Where that writer got this, he does not say. I pass it on as it stands.

Very weak and extremely sickly

Hambroek was not a strong man. In 1655 the Council of Formosa, the VOC government on the island, wrote that he was "very weak and extremely sickly." He had offered to continue the church visitations, the visits in which a minister inspected the congregations in other villages. Batavia turned that offer down.

It is one small sentence in an old dictionary. It says something about the years in Mattau. A man who was judged too weak for the journeys between the villages still stayed at his post for six more years.

Paul wrote to the church in Corinth: *Even though our outward man is perishing* (2 Corinthians 4:16). He wrote that as a man who knew his own weakness. What went on inside Hambroek, we do not know. We do know that his weak body did not drive him away from the island.

One hundred and forty-five boys and a school for teachers

On Formosa the mission had its own way of working, described in the chapter on Junius: native schoolmasters taught in the villages. Kern counts, for 1643, one hundred and ten pupils at the boys' school in Sinkan, fifty-eight men at the men's school and one hundred and sixty-four women at the women's school. In Mattau there were one hundred and forty-five pupils at the school for boys and men. That was five years before Hambroek came. He built on what was already there.

The teaching was not strong. Kern writes that in 1643 there were fifty native teachers, and not all of them could even read and write. Around 1648, the year Hambroek began his work, teaching

in Dutch got under way. The church leaders reported that the children turned out to have good memories.

Here Hambroek made a difference. In 1657 it was decided to start a school to train Formosan men as teachers. Hambroek was put in charge of it. That is in the old dictionary, and the *Biographical Dictionary of Christian Missions* mentions the same training from 1657. It was a step beyond scattered schoolmasters: a place where their own people were prepared to teach their own people.

An old wish took shape this way. Years earlier, Junius had proposed training four or six young Formosans in Holland. A native minister, he said, could accomplish more than all the Dutch ministers together. He offered to take the boys into his own house and teach them himself. He wanted children from ordinary families, not the sons of chiefs. Governor Putmans, too, had thought in 1634 of young people being sent to Holland under strict supervision, so that they would not be spoiled like the Ambonese students. Junius's plan came to nothing, because the church could not spare a minister. In Mattau it was about teachers and not ministers, and it happened on the island itself.

Paul wrote to Timothy: *commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also* (2 Timothy 2:2). A school for teachers rests on that thought.

According to the *Taipei Times* article, Hambroek also taught girls and women in the afternoons, and played a part in putting the Siraya language into writing. Other reference works credit him with a share in the translation of the Gospels of Matthew and John into that language. His colleague Daniël Gravius, who had served in the neighboring village of Soulang since 1647, revised the translation. It appeared in 1661 in Amsterdam from the publisher Michiel Hartogh, under the title *Het heylige Euangelium Matthei en Johannis*,

with Siraya and Dutch side by side. That same year Gravius published with the same publisher a form of the Christian faith, *Patar ki tna-'msing-an ki Christang*, with a Dutch subtitle. Among his notes is a remark that shows how far this language stood from Europe: Siraya had no words for gambling, for servants or for slavery.

A reference work on mission history adds a caution. The teaching on Formosa, it says, was aimed at conversion and church life, less at the rest of people's lives. It also mentions the wars between the villages themselves. Hambroek is said to have warned Batavia of coming unrest and asked for military help, without an answer.

What is left if you strike out everything that comes from only one source? A sickly minister who stayed thirteen years in the same district, who was put in charge of training native teachers, and who worked in a language that was not his own. I think that is already a lot.

Two weddings in 1659

In January 1659 a daughter of Hambroek married Johannes van der Burch in Mattau. In May of that year another daughter married Dominicus van Vorster. They are small facts, but they show something. The minister's family belonged to the Dutch community on the island. The children grew up there, they married there and they built a life of their own there.

Two years later the two married daughters lived in or near Fort Zeelandia. That would make the difference between life and death.

April 1661: Koxinga's fleet

Across the sea, in China, a new imperial house had seized power. Zheng Chenggong, known in Europe as Koxinga, stayed loyal to

the old Ming dynasty and fought with his own army and his own fleet.

In April 1661 he landed on Formosa. His men took about five hundred Dutch people prisoner. Hambroek hurriedly left the village of Soulang, near Mattau. It did not help. He fell into Koxinga's hands, and with him his wife, his son and a daughter. His two married daughters were in the fort.

Koxinga laid siege to Fort Zeelandia. Inside were Governor Frederik Coyett with his soldiers and the refugees.

A letter to the fort

At the end of May 1661, Koxinga sent Hambroek to Fort Zeelandia. He carried a letter demanding that the Dutch surrender the fort and leave the island. Koxinga threatened to kill him if the answer did not please him. His wife and children stayed behind as hostages.

Inside the fort, Hambroek did something that could cost him his own life. He urged the garrison to hold out. That is already in the dictionary of Van der Aa. Later writers also give his reasons. Koxinga's supplies were running out, Batavia had promised reinforcements, and he doubted that Koxinga would spare the Dutch after a surrender. Coyett and his council refused the demand.

Then comes the farewell from the opening of this chapter. His daughters begged him to stay. He had every reason to do so. In the fort he was safe for the time being. Outside waited the man who had threatened him with death. The daughters hung around his neck, the daily register of the fort says, overcome with grief and tears. He chose his wife and his other children in the camp. A modern account says he went because he had given his word, and because he feared that Koxinga would otherwise take revenge on them. Hambroek himself left no explanation.

I have stood a long time at that moment. What would you do, with your children around your neck and your wife on the other side of the wall? There is no good answer. He had a wife, a son and a daughter in the camp, and two daughters in the fort. He walked out of the gate.

Jesus said: *Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends* (John 15:13). Whether Hambroek thought of those words, we do not know. We do know that he walked back to the camp where he had been threatened with death.

What happened to the prisoners

Hambroek returned to Koxinga. He was imprisoned again and then beheaded, together with other prisoners. His son was also killed.

The Dutch in the fort heard about it only later. Caeuw, the commander of a relief fleet from Batavia, wrote about it. In October two native boys came into the fort. They told how Koxinga, the month before, had ordered in a rage that all the male Dutch prisoners be beheaded, Hambroek included. Caeuw also noted that the women had been given to commanders and the small children sent to China.

What happened on the island that summer was bigger than the fate of one minister. According to Dutch reports, in August 1661 Koxinga had Dutch prisoners from the interior killed, because he suspected them of stirring up the native villages against the Chinese. The reports speak of about five hundred men. Women were given to commanders or sold to soldiers.

The siege lasted about nine months. On February 1, 1662, Koxinga and Coyett signed a treaty, and after that Coyett surrendered the fort. The Dutch were allowed to leave. Hambroek had warned that Koxinga would kill the Dutch even after a surrender. It did not

turn out that way. Whether his warning was justified, we do not know. The favorable terms came only after the Dutch had held out for months. In Batavia, Coyett was later found guilty of the loss and banished to the Banda Islands. In 1674 he was allowed to return to the Netherlands, on condition that he never set foot in the East Indies again. He wrote an account in which he blamed Batavia for ignoring the warnings and for sending no reinforcements. Koxinga died that same year.

In Taiwan, school textbooks honor Koxinga as the man who won the island back from a European power. In the Netherlands, Hambroek became the martyr of that story. So there are two sides, and the native peoples of the plain were given little voice in either story.

The minister's daughter

There is a story about the daughter who stayed in captivity with her mother. Koxinga is said to have taken her, a girl in her teens, as a concubine. Caeuw is said to have written of her as a very sweet and charming girl.

This story is repeated often, in English and Dutch books and on the internet. I have not been able to find it in a primary source, and Carr, too, calls it unconfirmed. It is tradition. What happened to Hambroek's wife and this daughter, we do not know for sure. About the two married daughters, Carr writes that after the surrender they left for Colombo, on Ceylon, present-day Sri Lanka, and had children there.

How a story became a hero

The oldest account of the farewell is in *'t Verwaerloosd Formosa* (Neglected Formosa), a book from 1675 that may have been written by Coyett himself. Coyett had returned from his exile in 1674, the year

before. The historian François Valentijn told it almost the same way in 1726 in his great work on the East Indies. He was also the first to compare Hambroek to Regulus, and later writers took that over: Jeronimo de Vries spoke of "this Dutch Regulus." Regulus was a Roman general who, after a failed embassy, returned of his own will to captivity in Carthage. That is how a weak minister from Mattau won a place in the hero stories of the Republic.

More than a century later, in 1774, the playwright Joannes Nomsz wrote a tragedy in five acts: *Anthonius Hambroek, of de belegering van Formoza* (Anthonius Hambroek, or the siege of Formosa). It was published in 1775 by Izaak Duim in Amsterdam. A copy is in the library of the Rijksmuseum, the national museum in Amsterdam.

The play is literature. Nomsz set it in 1662, after the fall of the fort, while Hambroek died in 1661. He gave his characters words and feelings that appear nowhere in the archives. What the actors said must therefore be read as the voice of an eighteenth-century writer, not as Hambroek's. This play made him famous in the Netherlands. It was also performed far beyond, as far as South Africa. On September 5, 1867, the company Aurora II staged it in Paarl, with a short piece by Andersen as the afterpiece.

In 1810 Jan Willem Pieneman painted the farewell in the fort. The canvas measures a little over a meter in height and width and was bought in 1817 for what is now the Rijksmuseum. The title speaks of the voluntary self-sacrifice of the Reverend Hambroek. A contemporary, the writer Jeronimo de Vries, praised Hambroek's bearing and thought the fainting daughter too ivory in color. The poet Helmers also sang of his death. In the Laurenskerk in Rotterdam, the city where he was born, there are, according to a Taiwanese news agency, two tall black-and-white murals in comic-strip style about his story. That same news agency wrote in 2024 that the murals show a different view from the Taiwanese school textbooks.

There, a Dutch rule of thirty-eight years ended with Koxinga's victory.

A work of art makes a person larger and simpler than he was. I have tried to show the smaller man here: a village minister in poor health, a father of married daughters, the man who oversaw a little school for teachers. In 1914 Kern spoke of "the heroic conduct of Hambroek." That conduct fit into a few days. The years before were ordinary work.

Jesus said: *He who is faithful in what is least is faithful also in much* (Luke 16:10). The days in the fort are on paintings. The thirteen years in Mattau came before them.

What remained on the plain

After 1662 the Dutch government of the island was gone. What remained on the plain? There are traces. A French Jesuit, Father De Mailla, traveled across the island in 1715. He wrote that he met several inhabitants who could speak Dutch and read Dutch books. He also met people who believed in a triune God. Kern cites it in his survey from 1914. Texts in Latin letters have since been found, written between 1724 and 1796 in a language of the plain. One researcher called the writers grandchildren of the people who had sat at the feet of Candidius.

A 1903 book on Formosa under the Dutch contains a conversation with an old man from Sinkan. He told how, in his youth, the villagers looked to the west in times of famine or sickness. They called on our red-haired good friends to have pity on them. Kern writes in 1914 that the hope of their return will not be fulfilled. I find it one of the most moving sentences in the whole Dutch story of Formosa, because it comes from the village and not from the fort.

A square in Schipluiden

In 2018 a memorial to Hambroek was unveiled at the old church in Schipluiden, in the presence of the Taiwanese representative in the Netherlands. The plaque bears a text from the Gospel of Matthew, in old Dutch and in Siraya, the language of the people of Mattau. Since then the square in front of the church has been called the Hambrouckplein.

Siraya is now being brought back to life, the same newspaper writes. The language had almost disappeared and has been rebuilt from, among other things, the works of Gravius.

Inside the church the same pulpit still stands. Outside, on a plaque on the square, are words from a Gospel in the language of Mattau, the village on the other side of the world where the minister of Schipluiden went, and from which he never came home.

What is certain and what is told

Certain (several independent sources): birth in Rotterdam; studies in Leiden; minister in Schipluiden from 1632 to 1647; a short time as fleet chaplain under Tromp around 1637-1638; sent out in 1647 and arrival in Batavia that year; called to Formosa in 1648 and minister in Mattau until 1661; oversight of the training of Formosan teachers from 1657; marriages of two daughters in 1659; capture by Koxinga in 1661; the mission to Fort Zeelandia at the end of May 1661, his advice to hold out and his return; beheading in 1661 on Koxinga's orders; the tragedy by Nomsz (1775) and the painting by Pieneman (1810); the memorial in Schipluiden (2018). The school figures of 1643 (Kern) and the Siraya prints by Gravius from 1661 are also certain. That Siraya then almost disappeared and is now being rebuilt comes from the Taipei Times and from Wikipedia. Gravius's remark about gambling, servants and slavery, and his stay in

Soulang from 1647, appear only on Wikipedia. The treaty of February 1, 1662 is known from the text in Campbell, *Formosa under the Dutch* (1903). Coyett was able to return in 1674 and wrote an account; so Carr reports, and it fits the book of 1675. A commenter under a blog about Hambroek thinks his prediction was not clearly wrong, because the Dutch received good terms by holding out; that is an opinion, not a source.

Only from own testimony: nothing. As far as I could find, Hambroek left no account of his own; his motive for going back we also know only from later descriptions. The oldest account of his return is in *'t Verwaerloosd Formosa* (1675), which may have been written by Coyett himself. Valentijn (1726) follows that book closely and made the comparison with Regulus.

Unconfirmed (from one source or later descriptions): the name of his wife and the wedding date of June 1, 1632; the judgment of the Council of Formosa in 1655 and the refused offer of church visitations; the lessons for girls and women; his role in putting Siraya into writing and his share in the translation of Matthew and John; his warnings to Batavia; his motive for going back (his given word and concern for his family); the affection of his congregation (Van der Aa); the possible role of Junius in his call (Carr); the departure of his daughters to Colombo (Carr); his exact year of birth (1605, 1606 or 1607); the number of children (three or four); that he came from a well-to-do family (Carr); the exact date of his arrival in Batavia (October 11 or November 14, 1647); the exact day of his mission to the fort (May 24 or 25, 1661); the exact date of death (sources give May 5, which is impossible, July 21 or September 16, 1661); the fate of his wife; that his whole family was beheaded (so one reference work writes), against other sources. The story that the Dutch in the fort almost wanted to give in before Hambroek spoke comes from a blog and is contradicted in a comment there. A blog also says

that Coyett saw Hambroek still alive in August and that the ministers Mus and Winsmius were killed as well; I have not been able to check that in a primary source.

Tradition: the story that Koxinga took his teenage daughter as a concubine is tradition, with no primary source that I could check (according to Caeuw, via Manthorpe, a sweet and charming girl). Literature: the tragedy by Nomsz and the painting by Pieneman are works of art; the words, feelings and scenes in them should not be read as history. Pieneman dated the farewell to 1662, the year after the real year.

Interpretation: the figures for prisoners and dead come from Dutch reports by one side in a war. In Taiwan, Koxinga is remembered as the liberator of the island. The reference work by Anderson notes that the teaching on Formosa was aimed mainly at conversion. The story of the old man from Sincan is in Campbell, *Formosa under the Dutch* (1903), as Kern quotes it in 1914; I have not been able to consult Campbell myself.

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Martinus Johannes Niewindt: the bishop between church and plantation

On June 30, 1863, two names were entered in a register of manumissions on Curaçao. Martina Gregoria, born around 1825. Maria Magdalena, born around 1850, a girl of about thirteen. District commissioner J.H. Dam issued the certificates. Behind both names was the same note: "having belonged to the late M.J. Niewindt." They received a certificate of registration under the law of August 8, 1862, which abolished slavery in the colony. They also received a family name. From then on they were both called Holly.

The next day, July 1, 1863, slavery on Curaçao was over. Everyone who had been enslaved on the islands was free at once. The ten years of state supervision that applied in Suriname did not apply here.

The man to whom these two people had "belonged" had already been dead for three years. He was the first Catholic bishop of Curaçao. When he arrived in 1824, there was one Catholic church on the island. At his death there were six, each with its own school. He wrote booklets in Papiamentu, the language of ordinary people on the island. Time and again he asked the government for educa-

tion, also for slaves. He was knighted. There is a statue of him on Curaçao.

And he owned people.

This book is full of people I admire, and it is tempting to show only their good side. With Martinus Niewindt that is impossible. His life can be read from two sides, and the sources give both. I set them side by side and leave the judgment to you.

A priest from Amsterdam

Martinus Johannes Niewindt was born on May 17, 1796, in Amsterdam. He became a secular priest. That is the name for a Roman Catholic priest who does not belong to a religious order but falls directly under a bishop. So he was not a friar or a monk. He was an ordinary priest from the Netherlands who was sent to the West.

One man played a large part in this: Baron Cornelis Ludovicus van Wijkerslooth. In the Catholic magazine *Lux*, an author wrote in 1944 that Van Wijkerslooth had been Niewindt's teacher and always remained his most faithful friend. He made sure that Curaçao got Father Niewindt as its pastor, together with a curate named Eijsenbeil. A curate is an assistant priest alongside the parish priest. Niewindt owed much of his support and success to this friend in the Netherlands.

August 27, 1824

Niewindt was appointed prefect of Curaçao, according to the reference works as early as 1823. A prefect apostolic is the leader of a mission territory where the church does not yet have a regular diocese. He has authority over the priests and churches there, but is usually not a bishop himself.

His work on the island began on August 27, 1824. That date is in the subtitle of the biographical sketch that Father G.J.M. Dahlhaus wrote about him in 1924, next to the day of his death.

In 1824 Curaçao was a Dutch colony in the Caribbean Sea, off the coast of Venezuela. Today it is a country within the Kingdom of the Netherlands. The island had a governor, plantations and enslaved people. On the whole island there was one Catholic church.

Niewindt stayed. He would work there for the rest of his life, more than thirty-five years. A Dutch magazine wrote in 1906 that he had worked for almost forty years for what it called the "native population," the people born on the island.

Baptized heathens

Who were the people he came for? Most of the Catholics on the island were enslaved people and free people of color. The historian Hofland, writing in a thesis on emancipation on Curaçao, summarizes what Niewindt saw. Many of his believers had been baptized but never came to church. He called them baptized heathens. He wanted enslaved people to be able to marry, and he wanted money from the poor fund for teachers who gave lessons in the evening.

Not a single request was granted. So he went to work himself. Every two weeks he held services in the east and the west of the island, and he read aloud from religious books in Papiamentu. He hoped, Hofland writes, that these services could prevent slave uprisings. The district master, a local administrator, was far from agreeing with the priest, according to the same writer, and tried to work against him.

According to a popular website about the island, there was in those years a piece of land near Barber that is still called Hòfi Pastor today, the pastor's garden. Every Sunday Niewindt is said to have held a

Mass in Papiamentu there, and more than five hundred enslaved people are said to have come. Plantation owners feared an uprising, and in 1829 the governor is said to have banned the gatherings. I have not found a second source for this story. What is certain is that the area is called Hòfi Pastor. Wikipedia reports that in 1827 a church was built on the Barber plantation and that the plantation was sold to the Catholic church in 1832.

Sometimes in Niewindt you read something of a man who came for the people and would not be held back by those who did not like it. Hofland writes that shortly after his arrival he already pleaded for the interests of enslaved people, which may have contributed to the slave regulations of 1824. An earlier priest on the island, Stöppel, wrote to the king in 1816-1818 about the mistreatment of slaves. Unlike Stöppel, Niewindt did not stand against slavery itself.

Peace and calm

How did this priest look at the people who worked on the plantations? For that we have his own letters, and they are not easy to read.

In 1828, four years after his arrival, he wrote that the influence of the church was the best means of keeping the enslaved quiet. Later he put that idea even more sharply. In a letter to the government, a few years before abolition, he wrote that the influence of the church would do more "to maintain peace and calm in this colony" than a large garrison of soldiers.

Hofland, quoting Goslinga, sees three goals in Niewindt's work: defending the rights of Catholics, increasing the influence of the church, and what he calls an offensive of civilizing and discipline. For the people on the plantations, that idea had two sides. The church offered them baptism, instruction in the faith and a commu-

nity. But that same church also taught them to be faithful to their masters and to accept their lot.

Historian M. Groenewoud summed it up like this in a 2017 dissertation: Niewindt focused on a Christian way of life in personal life, and through education on an attitude of submission toward authority. The theologian Armando Lampe gave his book a title that says a lot: *Mission or Submission?* He concluded that both the Catholic priests and the German Moravians supported colonial policy, and that this policy held up the liberation of the slaves.

A catechism in Papiamentu

There was one thing Niewindt did that many of his contemporaries left undone. He wrote in the language of the people.

Papiamentu is the language spoken in daily life on Curaçao. Its vocabulary comes mostly from Spanish and Portuguese. In the time of slavery it was the language of the enslaved, and the Catholic church adopted it.

In 1833 Niewindt published a text with the title *Prefecto Apostolico di Curacao na Cristian di su mision*, a message from the prefect to the Christians of his mission. In 1837 followed the *Catecismo corticu pa uso di catolicanan di Curaçao*, a short catechism for Catholics of Curaçao. A catechism is a little textbook with questions and answers about the faith. They are two of the earliest texts in Papiamentu. New editions of them came out in 2001.

Linguist Gabriel Antunes de Araujo gave a lecture about them in 2021 at Cornell University in the United States. He showed that Niewindt devised his own spelling, based on Spanish. Another Dutch missionary, J.J. Putman, wrote a book in 1850 with the title *Kamiena di kroes*, with a spelling that leaned more toward Dutch. Their systems clashed. According to De Araujo, each of them also

wanted the spelling to give a picture of Curaçao and the Netherlands as one political unit. Together they did form the basis for the spelling that became official at the end of the twentieth century. The words in those three texts are mostly Iberian, with few Dutch words. The faith of the enslaved was closely tied to their language.

This touches me, because I myself write about hearing God's voice. If you want people to come to know God, you have to speak with them in their own language. Niewindt did that long before there was any official spelling for that language.

On the day of Pentecost in Jerusalem, people from all kinds of countries said: *we hear them speaking in our own tongues the wonderful works of God* (Acts 2:11). A catechism in Papiamentu is not a Pentecost miracle. But it goes in the same direction.

Reading and writing on Sunday

On November 14, 1834, Niewindt wrote a letter to the Minister of Colonies in The Hague. By then he had been on the island for about ten years. He complained about the great lack of civilization, as he called it, among the lower classes, and asked the government to pay teachers who could teach reading and writing, possibly also to slaves, in the evening or on Sunday.

Since July 25, 1837, he himself had been a member of the school commission of the island. According to historian W. Renkema, the bishop regularly clashed with the government of Curaçao, also over education for the enslaved.

He made clear himself what exactly he had in mind. In one of his letters about education he wrote: "I certainly do not mean extensive education here." What mattered to him was simple reading and writing.

In the years that followed he founded three schools where poor children were taught for free. The government paid nothing toward them. According to the magazine *Neerlandia*, in 1842 he also hired a teacher, B. Huijke, for a boys' school. In 1849 Niewindt praised his school in a letter, and according to the school commission it was the best in town.

Five sisters on the Maria en Jacoba

On January 12, 1842, the ship *Maria en Jacoba* arrived at Curaçao. On board were five Sisters of Charity. That is what women were called who, in a Catholic congregation, gave their lives to teaching and to caring for the poor and the sick. They came from the congregation of Roosendaal, in the province of Noord-Brabant. According to the article in *Lux*, Van Wijkerslooth had worked in 1841 to get them to the island. Niewindt received them.

He had had to promise something for this. The administration wanted the sisters' teaching not to be founded on a religious basis, and the school to be open to girls of all classes. A Catholic historian, Goslinga, wrote in 1943 that such a demand was unrealistic: a school run by Catholic sisters, he said, could never have anything but a Catholic character. Niewindt is said to have seen that and accepted the condition anyway.

A month later, on February 14, 1842, the sisters opened their first school, with three departments: for the children of notables, of citizens and of the poor. In 1843 five more sisters came. Between 1851 and 1853, sisters' schools followed in Santa Maria, Pietermaai and Santa Rosa.

Niewindt wanted more. In 1857 he asked Archbishop Zwijsen of Utrecht for brothers for boys' schools in the parishes. Brothers are male religious who are not priests and who often work in education.

The request came to nothing, and later requests to other bishops did too. As long as he lived, no brothers came.

Bishop of a vanished city

On September 20, 1842, the mission territory of Curaçao was raised to an apostolic vicariate, with Niewindt as the first vicar apostolic. It is a step above prefect: a vicar apostolic is a bishop who leads, on behalf of the pope, a territory where there is not yet a regular diocese.

He had to become a bishop without a diocese of that name existing. That is how he came to be titular bishop of Chytri. A titular bishop bears the name of an old diocese that no longer exists. On August 24, 1843, he was consecrated bishop. From then on he was called Monsignor, Mgr. Niewindt for short.

He also visited the other islands, according to Wikipedia already in 1836: Sint Maarten, Sint Eustatius and Saba. He is said to have come to Saba together with the Venezuelan priest Manuel Romero, and the first Catholic Mass is said to have been celebrated there on June 21, 1836. I have found no other source for that story.

The government valued his work and made him a Knight in the Order of the Netherlands Lion.

The girl from the sisters' school

In November 1844 Niewindt got into a quarrel with the administration of the island. It began with a baptism.

Dorothea Hendrina Gorsira was the daughter of a Protestant father. She was seventeen when she was enrolled shortly after the sisters' school opened. For about nine months she attended lessons. Then her father took her out of school, just before her eighteenth birthday. A younger sister did stay.

On November 20, 1844, almost two years later, Niewindt baptized her. Her parents did not know. Father Schermer was a witness. On December 19, Doortje, as she was called, told her father what had happened. A day later he complained to the lieutenant governor, Baron Van Raders.

On December 22, Van Raders wrote Niewindt a personal letter. Six days later he took a provisional measure: Niewindt was removed from the school commission. On December 30, Niewindt defended himself in writing. Doortje had received no religious instruction at all at the school, he wrote; she had been there only nine months and was baptized almost two years after she left. On January 31, 1845, he wrote again. On February 27 he complained about Van Raders to the governor-general in Paramaribo.

In the meantime the commission investigated the school. Its report is dated January 25, 1845. It described, among other things, a Protestant girl who was persuaded to become Catholic, and a sister who painted a frightening picture of hell.

Doortje died on March 31, 1846. Niewindt wrote that she had died a Catholic and called her the first martyr of the Catholic people on Curaçao. Later in 1846, Governor Esser dissolved the old school commission. Niewindt received an honorable discharge, and Father Schermer did get a place in the new commission.

How should you read a story like this? Goslinga, who wrote it down in *Lux* in 1943, calls Niewindt devoted, selfless, courageous and sharp-minded, and believes that the sisters acted out of pastoral care and not out of ill will. The same writer is critical of the biographical sketch by Dahlhaus, which he calls polemical. He does hold that neutral education does not exist in practice. A Protestant father would have seen it differently. For him, his daughter had been baptized without his knowing. Hofland also reports that un-

der the same Van Raders the Catholics received thirty percent of the poor relief funds, that the church was allowed to teach the ignorant masses, and that a school came to Santa Rosa. The conflict over one baptism does not cancel that, and the other way around does not work either.

June 1848

In 1848 France abolished slavery in its colonies. On Sint Maarten and Sint Eustatius there was unrest that year. On Sint Maarten the administration recognized the freedom of the slaves in practice on June 6, although formal abolition was put off until 1863. On Sint Eustatius a strike was suppressed by military force on June 12, with dead on both sides. Reinforcements came from Curaçao.

On Curaçao too there was ferment. In June 1848 enslaved people demanded immediate freedom, and an uprising threatened. According to the 2025 article, Niewindt then used his authority to prevent that uprising. How exactly he did that, with sermons, visits or letters, is not in the source I read.

About his attitude in that period, the same article is clear. From 1848 on he saw emancipation as something that could no longer be stopped. But he thought an immediate, general release would be a disaster for the colony. Freedom had to be prepared for.

What would you have done, as a priest between a governor who wanted calm and a congregation that demanded freedom? I ask that question without knowing the answer myself. Whoever reads afterward knows how it ended. Whoever stood in the middle of it did not.

Three schools and an offer

A month later, on July 17, 1848, Niewindt wrote to the government again. We know this letter because a writer in *Neerlandia* quoted it at length in 1906.

Almost all the slaves on Curaçao had been baptized Catholic, he wrote, except for about twenty-five. They already received religious instruction. That was not enough. He believed the slaves had to be prepared by education for the emancipation that was coming. "Ignorance, or rather stupidity, is not only the mark of a lack of civilization," he wrote. In his view, ignorance was also often the source of vice and disorder.

He made a concrete offer. If emancipation came, he would admit the children of freed slaves to the three schools he had founded, as far as space allowed. Those schools were free and ran without government money. His concern, he wrote, was above all the rising generation and less the slaves who were living then.

In the same year he asked for more. On February 11, 1848, he had already asked for a school for the poor on the Cabrietenberg in Barber. No teacher was willing to settle there. On December 11 he asked for a sisters' school on Bonaire. According to a writer in *Neerlandia*, the bishop repeated his offer there urgently, but not a single slave came to the school. Why not, the source does not say. On June 29, 1849, the government refused a sisters' school on Sint Maarten. It appealed to a decree of 1819: the governor had to give permission for every private school.

In these letters you see a man who looked ahead. He knew slavery would end and wanted to prepare people for a life in freedom. You also see a man who wanted to tame that freedom. Both things are in the same letters.

Twenty-three people

In a letter of January 8, 1850, Niewindt put his thoughts on paper once more. Suppose the slaves are not freed, he wrote. What then keeps them obedient? He answered with a question: "Will it not be religion?" The clergy, he wrote, urged the enslaved to be faithful and to accept their situation, and it was of great importance to strengthen that influence still further.

For a reader today this is heavy. The faith Niewindt gave his life for, he used here as a means of keeping people under the yoke.

Paul wrote to the Galatians: *there is neither slave nor free* (Galatians 3:28). The verse goes on: *for you are all one in Christ Jesus*. Those words stood in the same Bible that Niewindt explained on Curaçao.

There is more. The bishop himself owned a plantation. Historian Armando Lampe, in an article from 2025, calls it one of the large plantations with many slaves. In 1859, a year before his death, twenty-three enslaved people worked there. Which plantation it was, the source does not say.

How do you square that with the man who asked again and again for education for slaves? I do not really know. At any rate it shows how deeply slavery was rooted in that society, right into the bishop's house.

Perhaps Martina Gregoria was one of those twenty-three. Perhaps also Maria Magdalena, born in 1850, the year of that letter about obedience. Whether they lived on the plantation is not in the register. We only know that they had belonged to him.

January twelfth, 1860

In 1858 Niewindt founded one more orphanage for girls. It was one of his last great works.

On January 12, 1860, he died, sixty-three years old. *Neerlandia* wrote in 1906 that on that day he laid his weary head to rest for good, after almost forty years of work for the spiritual well-being of the population.

What did he leave behind? Six Catholic churches, where he had found one. A school with every church. Sisters who ran schools there. Booklets in Papiamentu. An orphanage. A church to which almost all the enslaved on the island belonged.

And a plantation with people on it.

Three years after his death, on July 1, 1863, slavery was abolished. Niewindt did not live to see it. Freedom came all at once, without the long transition he had hoped for.

Two pictures of one man

After his death a picture of Niewindt as a liberator grew. A popular website about Curaçao calls him a tireless fighter for human rights, who is said to have played a decisive role in the abolition of slavery. That last part cannot be right as it stands. He had been dead for three years when abolition came, and historians do not see the church as the decisive force in the debate on emancipation.

The historian Valdemar Marcha wrote in 2003 that many people saw Niewindt as an emancipator, partly because he was one of the few who worked for the enslaved. Marcha also wrote that the bishop looked down on them, and that the formation the church gave was aimed at keeping them subordinate. In the same piece he did acknowledge that Niewindt worked for the Catholics, and therefore for the enslaved. Hofland quotes a third voice: Niewindt saw education as the way to keep the system in place, and whoever worked for the enslaved was not thereby in favor of emancipation.

I think both pictures are true, and that the most honest thing is not to cancel one out with the other. Niewindt built schools for children who had nowhere else to go. He wrote in their language. He clashed with the administration to be allowed to teach them. And he saw in the faith a means of keeping them quiet, and according to historian Armando Lampe he himself owned twenty-three people in 1859.

When Samuel had to anoint a king, he was told: *for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart* (1 Samuel 16:7). His letters show that heart only in part.

His statue stands on Curaçao.

In a register from 1863 there are a woman and a girl who were once counted among his property. Behind their names there is now a surname of their own. From that day on they were called Holly.

What is certain and what is told

Certain (several independent sources): birth on May 17, 1796, in Amsterdam; start of his work on Curaçao in 1824 (according to Dahlhaus on August 27); the role of Van Wijkerslooth as teacher and friend; his Papiamentu texts of 1833 and 1837 and the book by Putman from 1850; the letter of November 14, 1834, about education; his membership of the school commission from July 25, 1837; the arrival of five sisters on January 12, 1842, and their first school on February 14, 1842 (Goslinga gives March 14); appointment as vicar apostolic on September 20, 1842, and consecration as bishop on August 24, 1843; the Gorsira case from 1844 to 1846; the letter of July 17, 1848, with the offer of his three schools; the requests for Barber and Bonaire; his failed request for brothers in 1857; the orphanage of 1858; the knighthood; his death on January 12, 1860; the

abolition of slavery on July 1, 1863; the registration of Martina Gregoria and Maria Magdalena Holly on June 30, 1863.

From his own letters (as quoted by later writers): his view, in 1828 and 1850, that religion kept the enslaved quiet and obedient; his action in June 1848 to prevent an uprising; his judgment that immediate emancipation would be a disaster; his defense in the Gorsira case on December 30, 1844, and January 31, 1845, and his words about Doortje in 1846 (as Goslinga reports them). These points come from one recent article that quotes his letters (De Linkerwang, 2025) or from Goslinga's article in *Lux* (1943); the ownership of a plantation with twenty-three enslaved people in 1859 comes from the same 2025 article. His services in the east and west of the island, his complaint about baptized heathens and the refused requests come from Hofland, who quotes Lampe and Renkema.

Unconfirmed: the Sunday Masses in Papiamentu at Hòfi Pastor for more than five hundred enslaved people and the governor's ban in 1829 (one popular website); the church at Barber in 1827 and the sale of the plantation in 1832 (only Wikipedia); the journey to Saba and the first Mass there on June 21, 1836 (only Wikipedia); his training, ordination as priest, parents, place of death and burial (not found).

Interpretation: the picture of Niewindt as the liberator of the slaves is disputed. He died before abolition. Historians such as Marcha, Lampe and Groenewoud point out that his church supported colonial authority, while at the same time he worked for education for poor and enslaved people. Hofland also quotes the claim that Niewindt, unlike his predecessor Stöppel, was not against slavery. On the Gorsira case there are two readings: the biographical sketch by Dahlhaus judges the commission sharply, while Goslinga (1943) qualifies that on the basis of the minutes. A Protestant perspective is not to be found in the sources I opened. The full biographies by

Dahlhaus (1924) and Brada (1957 and 1958) were not consulted for this chapter.

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Nicolaus Adriani: the scholar who went to listen first

In the spring of 1926 a sick man of sixty made a long journey through Central Celebes. His route ran by way of Pendolo, Taripa and Tentena, through the land of the To Pebato, and back to Poso on the coast. All his life his body had troubled him: injuries to his feet, wounds on his legs, a weak stomach, three operations. This journey wore him out. He had gone to Pendolo to gather more language material for his description of Bare'e. In the land of the To Pebato he fainted. He walked on anyway to Poso, where he arrived on April 21. There his lungs became ill.

He died on May 1, 1926, in the house of his friend E. Gobée, the assistant resident of the region. His wife Mia nursed him to the end. The next day they carried him to his grave. According to the language scholar Ph.S. van Ronkel, who wrote his memorial notice that year, the sympathy shown was beyond compare. The people, he wrote, would tend that grave and keep it in honor.

The man's name was Nicolaus Adriani. He was a doctor of letters, awarded his doctorate with the highest honors. Thirty years earlier

he had arrived in a small coastal town at the mouth of the Poso River, with the task of translating the Bible. He began with something else.

He went to listen.

It began in a parsonage in Oud-Loosdrecht.

A sickly boy in the parsonage

Nicolaus Adriani was born on September 15, 1865, in the parsonage of Oud-Loosdrecht, where his father, the Reverend M.A. Adriani, was the minister. Later his father became director of the Utrechtsche Zendingsvereeniging (the Utrecht Missionary Society), one of the societies that sent missionaries to the Dutch East Indies. His mother was a Gunning, from a well-known family of theologians. In 1870 the family moved to Maarssen.

Nico was not a strong child. Van Ronkel writes of long illnesses in his youth. At the gymnasium (the Dutch grammar school) in Amsterdam he was sick for a long time, and as a student he lay for months in his room. Before the gymnasium he lived for a time with the family of his uncle, the theologian J.H. Gunning. In that house there also lived a cousin, Maria Louise. She would later become his wife.

In Utrecht he began studying theology. After a year he passed his propedeuse, the first exam. Then he took another path, for the languages of the Indonesian archipelago drew him more.

An alumnus of the Bible Society

In October 1886 the Nederlandsch Bijbelgenootschap (the Netherlands Bible Society) took him on as an alumnus: a student whom the society had trained so that he could later translate Bibles as a linguist. The society had earlier sent out men such as Matthes and Van der Tuuk. Adriani would follow in their footsteps.

In January 1887 he began his studies in letters in Leiden. He was taught by the linguist Hendrik Kern, who fascinated him, according to Van Ronkel. From B.F. Matthes, who had worked for years on Celebes, he learned Makassarese and Buginese. Meanwhile he read the books of the Bible with the theologian Kuenen.

In 1889 the Bible Society decided where he would go. On the suggestion of a former missionary, Graafland, it became Poso, in the middle of the large island of Celebes, now Sulawesi. That same year Adriani got to know a young man who would also go there: Albertus Christiaan Kruyt. Together they sat with Matthes to learn Buginese. So began a partnership that would last the rest of their lives.

For his dissertation he chose Sangirese, the language of the islands between Celebes and the Philippines. Clara Steller, a missionary's daughter who spoke the language fluently, helped him. He was a purist: when he published Sangirese stories, he replaced the Malay loanwords with Sangirese words. In 1893 he received his doctorate under Kern. According to Van Ronkel it was the first doctorate with the highest honors ever given in this field.

A quiet year in Noordwijk

After his doctorate he went to Noordwijk, then still a quiet village by the sea. Van Ronkel writes that he stayed there a whole year, as the only guest. In that silence he came to complete clarity about his faith and his relationship with God.

Van Ronkel tells no more. He gives no conversation, no Bible verse, no date. Still, I find it telling that a young scholar with a brilliant doctorate first sought out the silence. Only when he knew for Whom he was going did he set out.

For Adriani that quiet time was a whole year by the sea, in which the noise fell away and he knew where he stood. Psalm 62 says: *Truly my soul silently waits for God; from Him comes my salvation* (Psalm 62:1). What Adriani read or prayed in that year, Van Ronkel does not say.

At the beginning of 1894 he married Maria Louise Gunning, the daughter of his uncle and a cousin he had known since his gymnasium days. Everyone called her Mia. She had worked as a teacher, in the Netherlands and in South Africa. According to the language historian J.L. Swellengrebel, she herself had a great talent for languages. Van Ronkel describes the two of them as one unit. In all his work she would become his closest co-worker.

In June 1894 the couple left for the Indies. First they spent a few months visiting mission posts on Java and in the Minahasa, in the north of Celebes.

A second apprenticeship

In mid-March 1895 Nico and Mia Adriani arrived in Poso, together with foster children and pupils from the Minahasa and the Sangir Islands. At first they stayed with Kruyt, who had settled there earlier. Kruyt had been sent out in 1892 by the Nederlandsch Zendelinggenootschap (the Netherlands Missionary Society).

The two men each had their own assignment. Kruyt was a missionary: he had to bring the gospel and found a congregation. Adriani was the language delegate of the Bible Society: he had to learn the language and translate the Bible. According to his instructions he was to begin translating as soon as he mastered the language.

In the mountains around Lake Poso lived people whom the Dutch called Toradja. Their language was called Bare'e, after the word for negation. Today the language and the people are called Pamona.

Kruyt had already made a start on the study. Adriani had to finish it.

Adriani himself called his first years in Poso his second greenhorn time, the way a first-year student is called a greenhorn. He and Mia had to learn the language and also the manners. In 1895 he wrote to the Netherlands that a Bible translation was impossible for the time being, because the Toradja had no words for Christian concepts. He estimated that about forty thousand people spoke Bare'e and about fifty thousand understood it. He put a choice before the Bible Society: stay in Poso for the language work, or go to the Minahasa to translate with the linguist Schwarz. The Bible Society chose Poso.

In 1896 Kruyt baptized two foster children of the Adriani family, boys from the Talaud Islands: Petrus and Filippus. Nico and Mia had no children of their own, as far as the sources mention. Van Ronkel does speak of the grief over a foster child they lost.

"Do not write, sir"

How do you learn a language for which no dictionary exists? Adriani did it with his ears. He sought out the storytellers of the villages. He wrote down stories at night by the light of resin torches, while the storytellers spoke. According to Swellengrebel, a storyteller once said to him: "Do not write, sir, that is not good." After that Adriani wrote on an upturned rice basket, by the fire.

In his lecture of 1908 he tells how it went in those first years. On Sundays he told Bible stories, and the people listened poorly. It sounded stiff, they said. They criticized above all the form and the language. A Toradja said that the Dutch talked among themselves like chirping birds. Adriani learned that telling stories among the Toradja is an art: stories are sung and are about plans and deliberations, and telling is allowed only after the harvest, because stories

about the ancestors can harm the rice crop. So the teacher became the pupil. He let the villagers react to his stories and improved his language with their remarks.

There was humor in those years too, and respect. A guide did not want to take rice stalks or cucumbers from a strange tribe, Adriani writes, because that would be stealing. When he suggested spending the night in the village, the guide asked how many nights they would stay. He thought it important that people could ask each other for something and give something.

The Toradja were curious, but not impressed. They decided how much contact there would be, he wrote, because the missionaries did not know the language or the customs. Chiefs often sent a child or a slave to the Sunday gathering instead of coming themselves. When schools came, an old chief said that the ancestors would die of want. Adriani wrote that the Toradja honored their ancestors because family life goes on after death.

"Not the work of years, but of centuries"

In Poso Adriani did something that went against expectations. Van Ronkel sums it up like this: first learn the language and then start translating the Bible, Adriani did not think of that. He wanted first to be completely absorbed in the people and to learn the language as the people themselves spoke it. A catechism or a Bible translation that came too early he thought undesirable and even harmful to the people who became Christians. He did not want a descent to the people, Van Ronkel writes. He wanted to become equal with the people.

That took patience. What you might call Christianizing a language, Adriani wrote, is "not the work of years, but of centuries." Words had to slowly take on a new meaning. He used the image of leaven

for it, which slowly works its way through the dough. So it stands in the dissertation that the theologian Gerrit Noort wrote about Kruyt in 2006. In 1922 Adriani wrote that five months for learning the language were far from enough.

He also did not want missionaries to speak Malay with the population, the trade language of the coast. Whoever did not speak the mother tongue could not get to know the soul of a people, he held. Whoever spoke Malay to a Toradja knew neither his concepts nor his religion. When the Malay loanwords were avoided, the To Pamona themselves found a word for gospel and sermon: *nuntu ngkatuwu*, word of life. So it stands in Noort.

A translator, Adriani thought, must receive and also give. He wanted to let his reading books appear only when the congregation had helped and people longed for the Bible. In 1900 he wrote that in the long run the Indonesians had to translate themselves, and that for the time being he did it for them because it could not yet be otherwise.

James wrote: *let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak* (James 1:19). Adriani came to Poso with the assignment to translate a Bible. When his stories did not get through, he first became a pupil of the storytellers.

How long can you wait for something you think is important? Adriani waited years before he let a gospel be printed.

The people who helped him

A translator never works alone. Of Adriani's helpers only a small part of the names has been kept. Noort mentions a few.

Two teachers from the Minahasa, guru H. Kolondam and guru W. Tawaloejan, helped with the reading books for the schools. Kolon-

dam worked from 1894 to 1910 in Poso and Mapane and kept a diary. Tawaloejan settled in Poso in 1898. To a village chief, Papa i Bora, also called Soedipi, Adriani read his translations aloud. Whether he really worked as a language helper, or only listened and reacted, remains uncertain. A man named Tomalengi corrected Adriani's Bare'e. And at the daily Bible reading in the house, the household translated along aloud.

In Kolondam's diary of 1895 there is a question from a villager, which Noort quotes: may we not ask God that we do not die? What came before it, I do not know. It is one of the few sentences that reach us from the villages themselves.

Until November 1898 the Adrianis belonged to the small Malay-speaking congregation in Poso. After that they moved to Panta, farther into the interior. When Kruyt was ill or away, Adriani sometimes led the service. In October 1908 they settled in Tentena, on Lake Poso.

In 1899 he traveled for about nine months with his cousin J.W. Gunning, secretary of the Missionary Society, through Java and Sumatra. He practiced Javanese and spent weeks with the Karo-Batak. Their letters to each other are frank and often witty, sometimes sharp in tone about the state of affairs in the Indies. Van Ronkel dates a journey with Gunning and Van Boetzelaer van Dubbeldam in 1900.

Mia worked along, as a linguist beside her husband. When Adriani worked for the government in the Minahasa for a few years around 1903, they made together a dictionary, a collection of texts and a grammar of Tontemboan, a language from that region. They built on notes of an earlier missionary, J.A.T. Schwarz. The book *Hoofdstukken uit de spraakkunst van het Tontemboansch* (Chapters from the grammar of Tontemboan) from 1908 bears both their names.

What the chiefs told him

In his lecture of 1908 Adriani wrote down what the people told him about their own world. The Toradja honored above all their ancestors, because family life goes on after death. Priestesses mediated with the higher gods. Internal illnesses people left to them. External wounds the missionaries treated with success.

Women suspected of witchcraft were tested by ordeal: they had to put a finger in boiling resin. Adriani asked the chiefs whether such a judgment always pointed out the guilty one. The answer he recorded: no, innocent people had certainly often been condemned. Headhunting the chiefs defended as a duty toward the dead, and slavery belonged in their eyes to the order of the world. Adriani pointed to the damage: tribes with slaves worked less and went hungry more often.

He wrote about all this with respect, in the words of his time. He used words like primitive, but according to Van Ronkel he wanted to make himself equal with the people. For a reader today some of those words sound strange. The people he wrote about were taken seriously.

1905: the government comes

Until 1905 the Netherlands had hardly governed the mountains around Lake Poso. That year it changed. On August 30, 1905, an army column marched to Napoe, west of the lake. The population surrendered without a fight, and a buffalo horn was handed over as a sign of the covenant. The principality of Loewoe, which formally claimed the area, was subdued. Adriani describes these events himself in his lecture of 1908.

For the people in the mountains it had great consequences. According to Noort, the government banned headhunting, the temple ser-

vices and the great funeral feasts. Villages on hilltops had to move to the new road between Poso and Tentena. Wet rice cultivation came. The priests of the land lost ground because of this. The old rituals for the life force and the veneration of the ancestors lost their footing.

The mission did not stand outside this. As early as 1904 Kruyt had told a few chiefs that he was only a subject of the government. They laughed at him and called him the tame buffalo with which the government wanted to catch the wild buffalo. Talasa, the chief of the To Lage, never became a Christian. He did sign up for baptismal instruction. Kruyt called him a friend, but wrote that they remained strangers to each other. Talasa saw Kruyt's work as preparation for colonial rule.

Adriani supported the transition. In the villages where the missionaries had the people's trust, he wrote in 1908, the chiefs took the new situation calmly. Where that trust was missing, they prepared for resistance. According to Van Ronkel he used his influence to make contact between officials and the population run more smoothly, and afterward he received a royal decoration for it. The same Van Ronkel writes that after the departure of the tyrannical datu of Loewoe the population showed its affection for him.

Adriani himself explained in 1908 how he saw it. The government's measures were necessary and largely just, he thought, but they touched the inner life of the people, and there the mission could do better. An old chief had once asked him whether you could live without religion and remain hanging in the air. So it went with authority too, according to Adriani: the people needed a new lord and a new foundation. Still, he called it a shift that he accepted reluctantly. He asked for patience and warned against new measures that would overwhelm the population. If Dutch

officials governed, he thought, Dutch missionaries had to come as well.

I do not want to step over that too quickly. A language scholar who loved the people helped a colonial government find its place. Kruyt himself acknowledged that the government, without intending it, played a large part in the spread of Christianity. How you weigh that, I leave to you.

Luke in Bare'e

In 1906 Adriani went on leave to the Netherlands for the first time, where he gave many lectures about the mission. A year later, in 1907, the Gospel of Luke appeared in Bare'e. Bible reading books had already appeared earlier, with stories from the Old and New Testaments, and reading booklets and game booklets for the schools. Some members of the Bible Society feared that his free retelling would confuse the readers. Adriani held that a literal rendering would be misunderstood under these circumstances.

He translated freely. He kept asking himself whether the reader from the Pamona villages got the right impression of what was written. Swellengrebel already sees in this the way of translating that later became normal: by meaning and effect, less word for word. Kruyt sometimes found it too free. According to Noort he saw more of a paraphrase in it than a translation. Teachers, missionaries and pupils tested the text for clarity. According to Kruyt the pupils found it an excellent translation.

Two years after Luke, in 1909, the first Pamona were baptized in Kasiguncu. That was seventeen years after Kruyt was sent out. At Christmas 1909, Swellengrebel writes, the first one hundred and seventy Toradja were baptized. Noort mentions in that first group a man named Marisi Mbau. A chief, Papa i Woente, had already said

in public earlier that he wanted to become a Christian. The outward obstacles had fallen away, he said, and he wanted to give himself to God. Many of the adults who were baptized were former pupils of the school in Panta.

In an interview in 1994, Y. Silele said of that time: they already believed, but were not yet converted. In 1911 Ta Mawodja, a priest from Longkida, said that he did not want to leave his family behind and that he had laid his heart in Jesus' hand. On August 1, 1911, Kruyt addressed Papa i Woente and the district chiefs of Kasiguncu about their responsibility for the salvation of their people. They attended the baptismal examination and judged the candidates.

About the first baptism itself less has been kept than I would like. The exact date and the number differ by source. That Christmas 1909 and Kasiguncu are the same moment, I assume, but I cannot prove it.

A book in three volumes

From 1912 to 1914 the great joint work of Adriani and Kruyt appeared: *De Bare'e-sprekende Toradja's van Midden-Celebes* (The Bare'e-speaking Toradja of Central Celebes), three volumes, printed by the Landsdrukkerij (the government printing office) in Batavia. It described land, people, religion, customs, language and stories. The third volume, with the folk poetry, they dedicated to the Bible Society, which turned one hundred on June 29, 1914.

Kruyt had, according to Van Ronkel, the strong body that Adriani lacked. He called them together the builders of a new science. A later anthology of Indonesian folk poetry calls them masters in translating folk poetry, and above all Adriani. Their translations themselves became poetry.

They did not always agree, not even about the translation. Kruyt urged Adriani to translate the great books of the New Testament. After him, no one would be able to come so close to the people, he wrote. In 1910 the mission conference asked him to begin with Acts. He did that only after his Bare'e book was finished in 1911, and the draft of Acts was done in 1916. Still, in a letter from 1938 Kruyt called him a friend with whom he had known a deep bond of the soul.

Teacher in Oegstgeest

In the first months of the First World War Adriani came to the Netherlands. He was operated on there for the third time and stayed until 1919. In those years he trained missionaries and linguists: first in Bilthoven, then in Noordwijk aan Zee, and finally at the Zendingsschool (Mission School) in Oegstgeest. He taught them Bare'e and other languages of Celebes. According to Van Ronkel he taught them above all love for the people.

He was an inspired speaker. Kraemer described him as a man who drew people at student camps, with humor and seriousness side by side. Van Ronkel called him a restless researcher in the field, who in his open-mindedness could be a child. He was also too generous and too trusting, Van Ronkel writes. His own salary from the government he spent largely on the salary of a new missionary, and that only came out later. His critical nature made him strict with himself, so that he published less than he could have.

In Oegstgeest he wrote the book *Posso* (*Midden-Celebes*), about the land, the people, their religion and language, and the history of the mission. In the same years *Het animistisch heidendom als godsdienst* (Animistic paganism as a religion) appeared.

The orientalist Snouck Hurgronje praised him as someone who felt a people's religious awareness from within. The missiologist Hendrik Kraemer called him a wholly new type in the history of the Bible Society. According to Wikipedia, which cites data from the Royal Academy of Sciences, he became a member of that Academy in 1918. I have not been able to check that year in a second source.

A glorious work

In 1917 Adriani complained to the Bible Society that they saw translating the Bible as his most important task. That was wrong, he thought, but it was the way it was. He himself wanted to describe the language completely, in a great grammar and a dictionary. In 1919 he returned to the Indies. First he lived for seven months in Tjitjoeroeg and Soekaboemi, in West Java. There he hoped, with the support of the government or of a learned society, to publish his grammar and dictionary of Bare'e. Then he went back to Poso.

The work on the New Testament went on. Romans was finished in 1919. Between 1921 and 1924 Matthew, Mark and John followed in draft. In 1926 Acts was published. At his death about seventy percent of the New Testament had been translated.

Kruyt urged him on. At the beginning of 1924 only four books were done. If he did not go on, Kruyt wrote, someone else would have to take over, and then the quality would suffer. Adriani answered that he would do what he could. In 1924 he wrote about his work on John that it was difficult and yet a glorious work. In a letter of May 7, 1924, he wrote that he did not want to have his translations printed before a mission committee had tested them for usefulness.

In 1925 he wrote a letter that Noort has found again. The most important thing for him, Adriani wrote in it, was the awareness that he could be missed. The work did not depend on him. Unlearn-

ing desire he called, in the same letter, an incomprehensibly useful exercise. A year later he was dead.

That sentence stays with me. It comes from a man who gave his life to one language and knew that he would not finish the work.

John the Baptist said about Jesus: *He must increase, but I must decrease* (John 3:30). Adriani wrote something like that, about a work that had never been his alone.

After May 1, 1926

After his death Mia faced a question. Should she finish the translation? She had worked on languages with him for years. She refused. According to Noort she said it could only be done in Central Celebes itself, with local language helpers. So she stayed true to the way of working they had chosen together. About her own changes in the text of Luke she wrote later that there were things she had to change. When and where she herself died, I have not been able to find.

The work went on in other hands. In 1928, two years after his death, the *Bare'e-Nederlandsch woordenboek* (Bare'e-Dutch dictionary) appeared from Brill in Leiden, finished by S.J. Esser and by Mia. The grammar followed in 1931. In 1929 Kruyt was given the assignment to finish the translation, with the young linguist Esser as adviser. In 1933 the New Testament appeared in Bare'e. From 1939 the missionary H. Perdok worked on a revision, together with Talungkea Magido, a Pamona who had graduated in 1919 from the teachers' training school in Pendolo. That revised edition appeared in 1954.

Kraemer wrote about him after his death: "The language and way of thinking of the people had passed into his flesh and blood." Van Ronkel closed his memorial notice with the image of a man who wanted to serve and put his own interest aside. He also wrote that

hundreds of people came to say goodbye to him when he left Poso. They sang songs for him and he answered with improvisations.

A grave in Poso

The church that grew out of the work in Poso still exists. On the internet you find that the Gereja Kristen Sulawesi Tengah, the Christian Church of Central Sulawesi, was founded in 1947. That date I found only in an Indonesian encyclopedia. In 1926 Kruyt counted, in the district of Pendolo, 1830 Christians among 3661 inhabitants, and on average 1178 people at the Sunday service. For the people of Poso, he wrote, it holds that it is done together or not at all.

The finished Bible in Bare'e Adriani never held in his hands. The dictionary he left behind, he did not publish himself.

What he did do was listen. To storytellers in the villages. To a village chief who heard his translations. To his wife, with whom he made dictionaries. And in a quiet year in Noordwijk, to God.

On the day after May 1, 1926, the people of Poso walked behind his bier. They carried him to a grave in the town where he had arrived thirty years earlier to learn their language.

What is certain and what is told

Certain (several independent sources): birth on September 15, 1865, in Oud-Loosdrecht, son of a minister who later became director of the Utrechtsche Zendingsvereeniging; studies in Leiden under Kern and Matthes; doctorate cum laude in 1893 on Sangirese; marriage in 1894 to his cousin Maria Louise (Mia) Gunning; arrival in Poso in March 1895 as language delegate of the Nederlandsch Bijbelgenootschap; cooperation with Albertus C. Kruyt; the intervention of the government in 1905; the Gospel of Luke in Bare'e in 1907; *De Bare'e-sprekende Toradja's van Midden-Celebes* (1912-1914);

death in Poso on May 1, 1926 and burial the next day; posthumous completion of the dictionary and the New Testament.

Only from one source or own testimony: the year in Noordwijk and his spiritual clarity there (only Van Ronkel); the royal decoration and his mediation after 1905 (Van Ronkel); the course of events with the Sunday stories, the storytellers in the villages, the statements of the chiefs and his judgment on the measures of 1905 (Adriani's own lecture of 1908); the names of helpers and baptized persons, the letters of 1924 and 1925, the words of the villager in Kolondam's diary, the statements of Papa i Woente and Ta Mawodja and Mia's refusal to finish the translation (Noort); her work as a teacher in South Africa, the remark "Do not write, sir," the letter of 1895 with the numbers of speakers, the journey with Gunning in 1899 and the baptism of 170 people at Christmas 1909 (Swellengrebel); his generosity with his salary and the farewell in Poso with songs (Van Ronkel).

Unconfirmed: the date of death August 5, 1926, which stands on Wikipedia, is contradicted by Van Ronkel (1926) and Swellengrebel (1978), who both give May 1, 1926; the years of his stay in the Minahasa (1902-1904 or 1903-1905); the journey with Gunning (1899 according to Swellengrebel, 1900 according to Van Ronkel); membership of the Academy in 1918 (only via Wikipedia); the founding date of the church in Central Sulawesi; the exact date and the number at the first baptism in 1909 (Noort gives no number; Swellengrebel gives 170 at Christmas 1909); the year of the complete edition of the New Testament (1933 according to Noort, early 1934 according to Swellengrebel); the beginning of the work in Poso (Kruyt was sent out in 1892; according to Swellengrebel he settled in Poso in 1893, according to Adriani's lecture of 1908 the work began at the end of 1893); date and place of death of Mia Adriani-Gunning.

Interpretation: the role of the mission in the colonial intervention of 1905 is judged in different ways. The sources show that Adriani supported the transition, that he himself accepted it reluctantly, and that a chief like Talasa saw the mission as a forerunner of the government. That Mia Adriani wrote the words "There were things I had to change" about the text of Luke comes from Swellengrebel; I have not seen her own text. The image of "chirping birds" and the anecdote of the guide come from Adriani's own account, which lets the people speak through him.

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Antonie Aris van de Loosdrecht: the missionary who stayed in Bori'

On July 26, 2023, one hundred and six torches burned on a hill near Rantepao, in the highlands of Sulawesi. The place is called Buntu Ria, in the neighborhood of Karassik. Young people of the Gereja Toraja, the Protestant church of the Toraja people, stood that evening around a grave that has been well cared for for more than a hundred years. They talked, shared what they themselves had experienced with God, and lit a torch for every year since his death.

At the same moment about a thousand church members gathered in Bori'. At a house of bamboo on stilts, which has since been restored, they held a service and read aloud his life story. The church remembers the day of his death every year, wrote the local news site Kareba Toraja.

The man in that grave came from Veenendaal. He worked in Toraja for less than four years, as the first missionary that the Gereformeerde Zendingsbond (the Reformed Missionary Union) sent to this area. On July 26, 1917, he was killed with a spear in Bori'. In Toraja they call him a martyr. His arrival in 1913 is

seen there as the beginning of a church that now has hundreds of thousands of members.

He was thirty-two years old. His story begins with a wedding.

A wedding in August, a train in September

Antonie Aris van de Loosdrecht, Anton to everyone, was born in 1885 in Veenendaal. He chose the Gereformeerde Zendingsbond, the GZB, an organization founded in Utrecht on February 6, 1901, which published a magazine called *Alle den Volcke*. The union had its eye on a new field: the mountain country of South Celebes, now South Sulawesi, where the Toraja lived. Someone had to start there. Anton volunteered.

On August 7, 1913, he married Alida Petronella Sizoo. She was called Ida. A month later, on September 5, they boarded the train in Rotterdam to Genoa. There they went aboard the steamship Vondel. On October 4, 1913, they arrived at Tanjung Priok, the harbor of Batavia, now Jakarta.

Much of what we know about their life comes from their letters to the family in the Netherlands. Their children later published those letters. In 2005 an Indonesian edition appeared in Toraja, under a title that translates as *From the smallest seed grows a tree. The story of Anton and Alida van de Loosdrecht*. The book comes from the Gereja Toraja itself. Where my story leans on it, I say so.

On the ship they already met the first people from the land they were heading to. According to an Indonesian article that draws on the letters, Toraja nobles were traveling back from Makassar with their servants: Pong Maramba and Puang Tarongko. Nobles like them were called *parengnge'*. The name Pong Maramba returns later in this story.

In Batavia Anton spoke with Dr. Nicolaus Adriani, a linguist who had worked in Poso, in Central Celebes, since 1895. After that the journey went by way of Surabaya and Makassar to Palopo, the port town on the edge of the mountains. For the last stretch Anton went ahead alone. According to the letters, Toraja men came to escort him, sent by the controleur in Rantepao. A controleur was a Dutch administrative official who managed a district on behalf of the government. Anton found the journey exhausting, he wrote, and remained grateful.

In November 1913 he stood in Rantepao. The sources differ on the day: November 7, 8 or 10. The church in Toraja holds to November 7. He told the controleur and the village chiefs what he had come to do: preach and start a school. According to his letters he was welcomed.

A land without a Creator, he wrote

In one of his first letters Anton described a journey along the Sa'dan River, north of Rantepao. They walked past the sawahs, the wet rice fields, and enjoyed the view. The air was fresh. He thought it a beautiful country.

What pained him, he wrote, was that in that whole landscape he found no one who knew or honored the Creator. In the same letter he called on God and asked how long it would still be before the sun of righteousness would rise here too. An Indonesian article about the letters quotes those passages.

So wrote a missionary from the GZB circle in 1913. He called it a land of heathenism. The Toraja had a religion of their own, Aluk Todolo, with their own priests and rituals. Anton saw in that veneration above all superstition: people honoring the creatures instead

of the Creator. The Indonesian article showed both sides, his love for the land and his harsh judgment of what the people believed.

What would you have seen, if you had walked into that valley in 1913? The beauty, the strangeness, or the people?

Language lessons in Tentena

Without the language you cannot start a school. In December 1913 Anton traveled with Ida to Poso. In Tentena they stayed for several months with Adriani. According to the Indonesian Wikipedia, they took three young Toraja with them. An American researcher who describes Anton's training also mentions the missionary Albert Kruyt: Anton spent three months with him, to see his work up close. From experienced missionaries like Adriani and Kruyt he heard about the customs and the adat, the customary law, of the interior.

In the spring of 1914 they were back in Rantepao. According to the Indonesian Wikipedia, Anton returned on May 9, with two new teachers, Runtuwene and Abraham. According to the blogs about the letters it was the beginning of April.

Together with Adriani, Anton made the first reading booklet in Toraja, and later a second. That he wrote textbooks in Toraja for the schools is found in more sources. His wife wrote a letter on May 25, 1914, to Mrs. Kruyt, the wife of his teacher in Poso. Ida told about her first impressions and about her husband, who was away from home for days because requests for a school came from so many villages. She hoped for more missionaries.

Schools along the Sa'dan

Anton built his work around schools. The first stood in Balusu, with about eighty children. Nanggala followed, and after a few months

Sa'dan. In a short time dozens of schools arose, with hundreds of pupils. The Indonesian Wikipedia speaks of nine hundred enrolled children in 1914.

The teachers came from elsewhere: from Ambon, the Sangihe Islands and Manado. They were Christians from other parts of the archipelago, who had to learn the language and worked far from home. One of them, according to the Indonesian Wikipedia Manemblu, had already traveled with Anton from Makassar. In most accounts their names are hidden behind the missionary. In the story of his death one of them turns up again.

Anton also devoted himself to the boys who came to live in his house. He wanted to train them as teachers and evangelists, and a researcher who describes his method says that he preferred to prepare the girls for their life beside those young teachers. Ida taught the girls housekeeping, hygiene and sewing. Curious women from the household of Pong Maramba later visited Ida, and above all wanted to see the bed, the sewing machine and the organ.

Ida wrote to the family that Anton worked from half past five in the morning until eleven at night. Besides the teaching they gave medical help, for health and hygiene were poor, they wrote. Ida did not stand aside. Much later their daughter would say that her father and mother had worked there together as missionaries.

With the nobility Anton was careful at first. In his first conversations he avoided the faith itself. He told stories: about Abraham, about Noah, about the prodigal son. He sat with the chiefs in a relaxed tone, and they smoked. He stressed that all people descend from the same ancestors and should honor the same God.

Whoever did not want to wait could go to Makale

With baptism Anton was careful. In Makale the missionary Kelling had baptized twenty pupils, sons of chiefs, without the permission of their parents. The anger among the influential families was great. Anton wanted faith to rest on good understanding.

According to the Indonesian accounts about him, the first fruit was four young men from the circle of the parengnge. At first he refused to baptize them. They first had to receive long instruction, catechesis. Whoever did not want to wait could go to Makale, to another minister. After long catechesis four of them were baptized.

Other sources give a larger number. The Indonesian Wikipedia speaks of twenty-nine baptized on a Pentecost day, eleven of them adults, in Anton's house, and another Indonesian site mentions five young Toraja on May 23, 1915 and eleven in 1917. How those figures relate to each other, I do not know. I put the differences in the box at the end.

A Christmas feast with twenty-four pigs

One event shows how Anton's work was tied to the power of the government. In 1915 he wanted to show at Christmas that the Christians were there. He devised a feast in Rantepao that combined a Torajan slaughter feast with singing by schoolchildren and a Christian service.

The chiefs did not respond. They let nothing be heard from them. Only when the controleur Brouwer put pressure on Pong Maramba, the chief of Rantepao, did he give a pig. His rival Ne' Mattandung answered with a buffalo. Then the others followed, until about twenty-four pigs and a buffalo had been sacrificed and all the chiefs had promised to come.

The American researcher Terance Bigalke, who describes the years 1913 to 1917, sees in this feast how mission and government worked together to put pressure on the traditional elite. What Anton himself meant by it, we cannot tell from this.

The land was not empty

The land where Anton arrived had already received a new authority. With the missionary came officials, taxes and new rules from the government of the Dutch East Indies.

One of those rules concerned slavery. The government banned the slave trade, and that aroused anger above all among the nobility of Toraja. The English Wikipedia writes that taxes were kept high and that this undermined the wealth of the elite. According to the same page, the first missionaries met strong resistance above all from that elite.

The Reverend Henriette Hutabarat Lebang, an Indonesian minister for whom the Gereja Toraja is her home church, explained it in 2022 in an interview with evangelisch.de. In the beginning, she said, the population strongly resisted the missionaries. They were easily connected with the Dutch colonial power.

Was that connection fair? Anton worked together with the controleur, and his first escorts were sent by the administration. On the other hand, according to the Indonesian Wikipedia, in January 1914 he is said to have criticized in *Alle den Volcke* the hasty measures of the government against the old religion and slavery. He preferred to work slowly, through the schools.

He and his pupils also had the Torajan markets in view. The Indonesian Wikipedia tells that Anton had his pupils march to the market singing in two rows. There they played games to draw the adults away from the buffalo fights. About five hundred people are said

to have come to listen, mostly women. This story too I have found only there.

The friend who asked for Ida

In the Indonesian tradition about Anton, Pong Maramba returns, the noble he met on the ship. According to those stories he first became a good friend of Anton. Bigalke writes that Anton visited him repeatedly, and that Maramba at first did not respond. After a few attempts Anton found him at home, fresh from a funeral feast. The conversation was cordial, Anton tells later, and he kept the faith out of it.

Then Pong Maramba asked, so the story goes, whether Anton would sell his wife to him. For a parengnge that was an honor. Anton refused. In the Christian faith, he explained, a wife is a co-worker and not property. Pong Maramba did not understand.

The friendship cooled. Maramba let himself be advised by Muslim teachers, and during an outbreak of dysentery in Bori' he had offerings made that the missionary had forbidden. He had a tomb monument built with an Islamic dome. He did not let himself be converted. In 1916 he was convicted of extortion and banished. Anton tried to reach him even in his cell, without success.

I tell this because it is told about him in Toraja. The story of the wife appears on Indonesian Christian websites and blogs, which take it in part from the couple's letters. A scholarly source for it I have not found. We also hear it from only one side. How Pong Maramba himself saw it has not been handed down.

A translator for the Toraja

Schools and sermons were not enough, Anton understood. The Toraja needed a Bible in their own language, and for that a trained

linguist was needed. As early as 1914 he asked the GZB to send the linguist Hendrik van der Veen.

The request was granted. On September 11, 1916, Van der Veen arrived in Rantepao, where the Van de Loosdrecht family and the missionary Johannes Belksma welcomed him. Van der Veen began with the Gospel of Luke. It became his life's work: in 1960 the whole Bible appeared in Toraja. He stayed more than forty years in Indonesia.

Anton would still see the beginning of that translation. The end he would not.

Paul wrote about his work and that of another: *I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase* (1 Corinthians 3:6). Anton started schools and asked for a translator. What grew was not the work of either one alone.

The year it began to chafe

In 1917 tensions rose. On March 2 the governor visited Rantepao to speak with the missionaries. What exactly was discussed is not clear. According to the Indonesian account it concerned a proposal of Anton to abolish cockfights and the death feast and to ban the market on Sunday. How true that is, I do not know. At any rate a rumor went around that the Dutch wanted to convert all the Toraja. The chiefs gathered in the chiefs' hall of Rantepao and protested.

Many villagers saw the schools as forced labor. Children were then not working in the fields, clothing cost money, and parents were fined if their child stayed away. The building of the school buildings caused trouble almost everywhere. In Tondon the people at first refused to let a school be built. In Nanggala the chiefs forced the teacher to leave, and the school closed. In Bori' they withheld

food from the workers building the structures, until armed police stepped in.

The government also banished influential chiefs. Pong Maramba was one of them. That aroused the fear that other opponents of the mission would follow.

Bigalke writes that in those years Anton changed his mind about the nobility. At first he saw the chiefs as naive children, later as shrewd opponents. He turned more to the poorer layers and spoke out against death feasts, gambling and cockfights, because in his view they made people poor.

The evening of July 26, 1917

What happened that day has often been told in Toraja through the years. The core is in many sources: Anton was killed with a spear in Bori' on July 26, 1917. The details come from the Indonesian tradition, which goes back to the account of his widow and of the police commander, and to the confessions of the perpetrators.

Anton had wanted to go to Nanggala that day, and after that to Balusu. He changed his plan and went first to Bori', where a school was being built. Around four o'clock he left, and around five he arrived. He took a bath in the river behind the teacher's house. According to Kareba Toraja it was the house of a teacher named Manumpil, in the hamlet of Rantedengen.

Afterward he sat on the veranda with the teacher. They discussed which Bible stories they would translate into Toraja. Bigalke writes that Anton read aloud by lamplight.

Then men came. One of them, his face blackened with charcoal, leaped onto the veranda and thrust a spear into Anton's chest. An-

ton fell from his chair. The lamp fell over, and the veranda went up in flames. The men fled.

A pupil wanted to go and get Ida, who was in Barana'. Anton held the boy back. It was not necessary, he said, according to the tradition. He would die soon. He asked the boy to greet his wife, the wife he loved dearly, and his children. Then he asked to be left alone to pray. Within about a quarter of an hour he died, praying. He was thirty-two years old.

Those last words are not in a document I have been able to see. They are passed on in Toraja, a little differently in different places. A reader under one of the blogs remarked that much of it rests on hearsay. That may be said. That he was killed with a spear and died quickly is in all the sources. I tell it the way they tell it in Toraja, and I believe it along with them.

On Saturday, July 28, two days later, he was buried in Rantepao with a great procession, according to the Indonesian Wikipedia. He still lies at Buntu Ria in Karassik.

Psalm 116 says: *Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of His saints* (Psalm 116:15). That verse does not say why someone dies. It does say that such a death does not pass unnoticed by God.

What lay behind that evening

A single clear answer about the motive does not exist, and I am not going to make one. We can, however, sketch the lines.

According to Bigalke, Pong Massangka, adopted son of Ne' Mattandung, led the attack. Around July 15 he had wanted, with some twelve men, to ambush the controleur Brouwer at the market in Rantepao, where he was walking around in the late afternoon. When Brouwer's child fell and began to cry, the family went home.

The attack failed. In Pangli Ne' Mattandung held a gambling feast for the group. After that a second attack was devised, this time on Anton, at his home in Barana'.

On July 26 the men slaughtered a pig and prepared a meal. When it turned out that Anton was in Bori', at a teacher's, thirteen men went there in the dark. So Bigalke tells it in his text on government and mission in Makale-Rantepao.

The Indonesian Christian accounts make the connection with a decision of the government about gambling. The administration had first allowed twelve days on which gambling was permitted, and later cut that back to four. A group of fervent gamblers is said to have sworn in response to kill the controleur. According to these accounts the murder was meant to provoke an uprising against the authority of the Dutch East Indies. Anton happened to come by that evening and became the target. The perpetrator is said to have known him well: his child went to the school.

The Indonesian Wikipedia names four men who were arrested: Bujang, Ne' Malandong, Tandi Bua and Pong Masangka. Their names I have not found in any other source.

The Reverend Lebang put it more briefly in 2022. The first missionary, she said, was killed by local leaders who were fighting in various places against the Dutch colonial power.

It is also told that cockfights or other rituals were the cause. In the sources I have been able to read, it is about gambling. Van de Loosdrecht's own opposition to gambling and cockfights does appear in Bigalke's description as one of the tensions.

What remains is this: a missionary who himself had criticized the haste of the government died in a conflict between that government and the people it governed. Whether his killers saw him as a servant

of God or as one of the Dutch, we do not know. Perhaps they made no such distinction. Perhaps in 1917 that was hardly possible.

"The Dutch are killing all our great men"

In the same night and the day after, the perpetrators and their followers plundered and burned the new market stalls in To' Karau. Three bridges near Pangli went up in flames, partly out of anger over the rice fields taken from Massangka for a road. In Pangli barricades were thrown up.

Brouwer marched with half a brigade of armed police to Balusu, because he thought Ne' Mattandung was behind it. Around Balusu about five hundred armed followers gathered. Troops came from Palopo and Enrekang and extra police from Makale. There were dead and wounded before the uprising fell apart. Mattandung was taken prisoner, Pangli surrendered without a fight, and Massangka surrendered later.

For two weeks hundreds of people were arrested. Fifty-six people from Rantepao were banished. Pong Arung of Bori', who according to Bigalke had played both sides, committed suicide in his cell.

The missionary who followed Anton wrote down a rumor that was going around in Bori': the Dutch are killing all our great men. That is how the uprising was read in the region.

After the uprising the controleur took a step back. Toraja were no longer to be taken from the field for gatherings of the mission. Schools were from then on to be built at the request of the village chief and with voluntary labor. The police were no longer to be sent to fetch truant children and fine their parents.

A daughter who bore his name

Ida was left with two small children, and she was pregnant with a third. About half a year after Anton's death a daughter was born in Palopo. She was given his name: Anthonia Arisa van de Loosdrecht.

According to an Indonesian source, Ida moved in 1918 with her three children to Solo, on Java, where she ran a small mission hospital.

In 1989 the daughter went back to Toraja. It was not her first visit: about twelve years earlier she had been there with her husband, to meet the younger generation and to see the land where her parents had worked more than seventy years before. Stichting Oorlogsverhalen (the War Stories Foundation) keeps part of what she said in 1989. She was glad about the changes and progress in the church, she said. Her parents would have been happy with so many flourishing congregations, and with so many young church members who took part with enthusiasm. She compared it to the mustard seed from the parable of Jesus. *Which indeed is the least of all the seeds; but when it is grown it is greater than the herbs* (Matthew 13:32).

That same image later became the title of the book with the letters of her parents.

What Toraja made of it

The church that grew from this beginning did not become a Dutch church. On March 25, 1947, the congregations in Rantepao came together in a first synod and formed the Gereja Toraja. According to the Reverend Lebang, the church afterward developed its own theology and church order. It began to think about the relationship between gospel and culture and gradually freed itself from the strong influence of the GZB. Theologically and financially it now

stands completely on its own feet, she said. In 1938 the GZB already counted more than fourteen thousand baptized in the area, reports an Indonesian source.

How large the church is now depends on whom you ask. The World Council of Churches names about 350,000 members, Stichting Oorlogsverhalen speaks of about half a million, with a thousand congregations. Both numbers come from church reports.

In Bori' stands a life-size statue of Anton. The house where he died has been restored, and the place has become a garden for reflection, with statues and reliefs of martyrs of the Gereja Toraja. A museum about his life is planned. Anton is not the only martyr the church remembers. According to the World Council of Churches, in the late fifties and early sixties people died in attacks by the rebel movement Darul Islam on Christian villages.

The chairman of the commemoration committee in 2023, a grandson of another martyr of the Gereja Toraja, the Reverend Pieter Sangka' Palisungan, asked aloud on that occasion why Anton had come all the way from the Netherlands to such a remote region and not to the cities. "Toraja was truly chosen by God," he said.

I notice that I write more carefully in this chapter than in others. There is much I do not know for sure, and what I do know comes in part from the side of the mission. But the people who now go to Bori' every year are Toraja. They have taken up the story and made it their own. They call him *syahid Injil*, martyr of the gospel.

Jesus said: *Most assuredly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain* (John 12:24). He was speaking about His own death. The grave at Buntu Ria lies at the beginning of what grew afterward in Toraja.

On the hill near Karassik lies the man from Veenendaal. In July 2023 young people stood around his grave with one hundred and six torches, one for every year he has lain there.

What is certain and what is told

Certain (several independent sources): birth in 1885 in Veenendaal; sent out by the Gereformeerde Zendingsbond as the first missionary in Toraja; marriage to Alida (Ida) on August 7, 1913 and departure in September 1913; arrival in Rantepao in November 1913; language preparation with N. Adriani in Poso (1913-1914); founding of schools and textbooks in Toraja; his request for Hendrik van der Veen and the latter's arrival in Rantepao on September 11, 1916; his death by a spear in Bori' on July 26, 1917; his grave in Karassik, Rantepao; the birth of a daughter after his death; the connection of the mission with colonial authority in the eyes of many Toraja; the visit of the governor and the unrest of 1917 (Bigalke); the independence of the Gereja Toraja in 1947; the yearly commemoration on July 26 and the centenary in 2013.

Only from own testimony or tradition of the family and the church: his first impressions and prayer at the Sa'dan; the working days from half past five to eleven; the first four baptized and his refusal to baptize without instruction; the course of the last evening in Bori' and his last words; the speech of his daughter in 1989; the meeting on the ship with Pong Maramba and Puang Tarongko; the request for Ida.

Unconfirmed: the exact date of birth (March 1 or 21, 1885) and date of arrival (November 7, 8 or 10, 1913); his origin and study in Heidelberg and Rotterdam (only the Indonesian Wikipedia; another Indonesian site also mentions Heidelberg, an American researcher mentions a mission institute near Leiden); the pupil numbers, the figure of twenty-nine baptized, and the market gatherings at the

buffalo fights; his critical letter in *Alle den Volcke*; the story of Pong Maramba and Ida; the names of the four arrested men; the gambling restriction as the cause; a role of cockfights (not mentioned in the sources consulted); Ida's move to Solo in 1918.

Where the sources differ:

- *Return from Poso.* Early April 1914 (blogs based on the letters), May 9, 1914 (Indonesian Wikipedia), late 1914 (a blog).
- *First baptism.* Four young men after long catechesis (blogs); five young Toraja on May 23, 1915 and eleven in 1917 (Jawaban.com); twenty-nine baptized on a Pentecost day (Indonesian Wikipedia, with the year 1997, probably an error).
- *Arrival in Palopo or Rantepao.* October 28, 1913 in Palopo (Jawaban.com); November 7, 8 or 10 in Rantepao.
- *The house in Bori'.* The house of the teacher Manumpil (Kareba Toraja); Bigalke mentions only a teacher in Bori'.
- *What Anton did that evening.* Talking about the translation of Bible stories (Indonesian sources); reading aloud by lamplight (Bigalke).
- *Pong Maramba.* Arrested without reason (blogs); convicted in 1916 of extortion and banished (Bigalke).
- *The motive.* Gambling and an attempt to provoke an uprising (Indonesian Christian sources); resistance of local chiefs against colonial authority (the Reverend Lebang); a conspiracy around the controleur Brouwer, the mission schools and the banishment of chiefs (Bigalke).
- *Size of the church.* 350,000 members (World Council of Churches) or about 500,000 (Stichting Oorlogsverhalen).
- *The torches.* One hundred and six, according to Kareba Toraja, as years since his death.

Not consulted: Bigalke's book *Tana Toraja: A Social History of an Indonesian People* (2005), the book by Th. van den End on mission

sources (1994) and the family book of 2005 itself. What I use from Bigalke comes from his text on government and mission on Cornell eCommons and from a blog that retells his book. Of the couple's letters I know only what other authors quote from them.

Interpretation: the Gereja Toraja sees him as a martyr. Torajan voices at the same time stress that the mission was experienced by many Toraja as part of colonial authority, and that the church later went its own way. Both belong to this story.

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15. Wikipedia (Indonesisch), “Gereja Toraja”
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Hendrik Kraemer: the orphan boy who never became a minister

In December 1938, hundreds of Christians from all over the world arrived at a university campus in Tambaram, near Madras in South India. Some had spent two months on a ship. An American magazine counted exactly 464 delegates from seventy countries in April 1939. It was the third world conference of the International Missionary Council, a gathering of mission organizations and churches. The meeting was supposed to take place in China, but war had broken out there.

For the first time at such a large gathering, most of the participants came from the young churches outside Europe and North America. The largest and most impressive groups came from China and India, and they were not missionaries. They were Christian leaders from those countries themselves.

The chairman, John Mott, was seventy-three. He gave his opening speech from memory. He spoke about one of the most decisive moments in the history of humankind, wrote a reporter who was there.

One book had been written as a study paper for that conference: *The Christian Message in a Non-Christian World*. The author was a Dutchman of fifty. He had never studied theology and had never been a minister. He had grown up in an orphanage in Amsterdam.

His name was Hendrik Kraemer. After Tambaram he became one of the best-known thinkers on mission of the twentieth century. He became a professor in Leiden and the first director of an ecumenical institute near Geneva. But if you follow his life, you do not start with the books. You start with a boy who had no parents.

An orphanage in Amsterdam

Hendrik Kraemer was born in Amsterdam on May 17, 1888. We know little about his parents. According to the Indonesian Bible Society, his father died when Hendrik was six, and his mother five years later. Other sources say it more briefly: by the time he was about twelve, he no longer had parents. A Norwegian obituary from 1965 says that his father was a German craftsman who had moved to the Netherlands.

He ended up in the orphanage of the diaconate of the Nederlandse Hervormde Kerk (the Dutch Reformed Church) in Amsterdam. A diaconate is the part of the church that cares for the poor, the sick and orphans. The Norwegian piece speaks of a strict upbringing.

That house had a library. According to the Indonesian Bible Society, it became the boy's favorite place, and there he came into contact with the Bible. He read it, the same source tells us, in Latin and Greek. He taught himself what he needed.

The Norwegian piece tells one more thing. The boy worked as a postman. One day he heard a missionary from New Guinea speak, and he felt called. I give it as it stands. I have not found a second source for the postman and the missionary from New Guinea.

At sixteen, Hendrik knew that he wanted to become a missionary. Several biographies of him say so. According to the Indonesian Bible Society, he was also baptized at that age. What went on inside him, who helped him, and what he himself said on the day he decided: I have not found a single word about it. So I will not fill it in.

What I do know is this: a boy without a father or mother, without money and without connections, chose a life far away. He seemed to have been given nothing. But that is where the story of Hendrik Kraemer began.

Psalm 68 calls God *a father of the fatherless, a defender of widows* (Psalm 68:5). For Hendrik, that care had an address: the orphanage of the diaconate, where the church took him in when he had no parents left.

A trainee in Rotterdam

In 1905 he went to the Zendingshuis (Mission House) in Rotterdam, the Dutch mission school. He was trained there as a *kwekeling* of the Utrechtsche Zendingsvereeniging, a Protestant mission society that sent workers to the Dutch East Indies, today's Indonesia. A *kwekeling* is a student being prepared for a trade, in this case for the mission field. He stayed until 1909 and graduated when he was twenty.

There is a point here that sometimes causes confusion. English sources say that he never attended a seminary. They mean a theological training for ministers. He indeed never had that. Kraemer remained a layman his whole life, a believer without an office in the church. Much of what he knew of the Bible he had taught himself. But he did go through a mission school.

Learning Javanese from a scholar

After Rotterdam, his life took a turn. Kraemer went to the University of Leiden to study Indonesian languages. According to the Dutch Wikipedia, he did so on the advice of Nicolaus Adriani, a well-known Bible translator on Celebes, now Sulawesi. The Indonesian Bible Society at least names Adriani as someone he was closely connected with.

He became chairman of the Dutch Christian Students Association, the Dutch Wikipedia reports, and steered it more toward its missionary task. Conservative members felt that this came at the expense of its orthodox character. In Leiden he studied under Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje, an expert on Islam. Kraemer chose Javanese. In 1921 he earned his doctorate with a study of a Javanese primbon from the sixteenth century, a handbook of wisdom, prayers, magic and religious knowledge. He was thirty-three at the time. The Norwegian obituary speaks of a dissertation on Islamic mysticism in Java and Sumatra.

In between, he married. On January 28, 1919, Hyke van Gameren became his wife, the Indonesian Bible Society reports. The year 1919 also appears in other sources. I could find little else about her life. That is a pity, because she went with him to the other side of the world.

Before he left for Java, Kraemer went to Cairo. He wanted to get to know modern Islam up close. According to the Dutch Wikipedia, he also spent three months in Paris and four months in Cairo.

That order says something about him. First listen, then speak. First understand what someone else believes, before you explain your own faith. It would stay that way his whole life.

Working for the Bible Society

In 1922 he arrived in the Dutch East Indies, now Indonesia. He worked there for fifteen years, until 1937, as a linguist and adviser for the Nederlandsch Bijbelgenootschap (the Netherlands Bible Society). One of his first tasks was the work on the Javanese Bible. He also advised missionaries and churches about language, translation and their work.

According to the Indonesian Bible Society, he arrived in Batavia, now Jakarta, and then moved on to Yogyakarta. In 1925 he moved to Malang in East Java. There he studied how Javanese society was changing.

It was the time of the colonial government. The Netherlands ruled the archipelago, and the government decided where missionaries were allowed to work and where not. Mission was limited to certain areas. According to the English Wikipedia, Kraemer argued that mission should be allowed in the whole archipelago, including outside the areas the government had designated.

A friend who remained a Muslim

The Indonesian Bible Society tells of a friendship you might not expect. In Yogyakarta, Kraemer became friends with Ahmad Dahlan, the founder of Muhammadiyah. That was, and still is, a large Islamic movement in Indonesia. The two men respected each other, and both remained in their own faith.

The same source writes that from the start Kraemer saw a deep gap between the Dutch and the Indonesians. He chose not to make that gap wider. For this friendship and this attitude I have only this one source, although it is the organization that carried on his Bible work.

I find this one of the most beautiful things in his life. He was convinced that Christ is unique, and he later wrote a whole book about it. But he could sit at the table with a man who did not believe that, and call him a friend.

Can you do that? Hold on to what you believe, and at the same time really know the other person?

Later, in his major book, he answered a question that preoccupied missionaries: where do you find a point of contact with people of another religion? According to Kraemer, it is not in their teaching. The only real point of contact, he wrote, according to a review of the book, is the attitude of the missionary himself. That made mission a matter of how you live, and not only of insight. Whoever reads that thinks of a table in Yogyakarta.

Peter wrote that Christians should always be ready to give a reason for their hope, *with meekness and fear* (1 Peter 3:15). Kraemer wrote a whole book about Christ. His friendship with Ahmad Dahlan shows the second half of that sentence.

Churches that had to stand on their own feet

In Malang, Kraemer worked with the missionary B.M. Schuurman on a theological school, Balewiyoto. Javanese Christians were trained there, with attention to their own culture. The Indonesian Bible Society reports this. It also calls Kraemer someone who helped prepare the birth of independent Javanese churches in East and West Java.

He was more a mediator and adviser than a translator, the same organization writes. He advised churches about independence, among others in Minahasa, Ambon and Sangir-Talaud. He also mediated between the Rhenish Mission Society and the Batak.

From these reports comes the picture of a man who wanted a church on Java to become a Javanese church, with its own leaders. In later years he spoke of a Copernican revolution that mission needed, says the Norwegian obituary. In his view, Western mission societies had to hand over responsibility and leadership to the young churches quickly and completely. Mission was a task that churches in Europe, America, Africa and Asia shared, and so they also had to carry it out together. He later wrote a book about it, *From Mission Field to Independent Church*. In 1934 he was involved in founding the Hogere Theologische School (Higher Theological School) in Buitenzorg, now Bogor. That school later moved to Jakarta.

Meanwhile he wrote. The two volumes of his study of Islam appeared in 1928 and 1933. After independence the Indonesian government banned that work, according to an American reference work on the history of mission. It does not say exactly why. In 1928 he also played a leading role at the mission conference in Jerusalem, according to the Norwegian obituary. The Dutch Wikipedia adds that he fought syncretism there, the mixing of the gospel with other religions. In 1937 his Dutch book *De wortelen van het syncretisme* (The roots of syncretism) appeared.

A Bible for a seeker on Bali

On Bali it was different. The Dutch government wanted to keep the island, with its Hindu culture, as much as possible the way it was. An American church website uses the word museum for this. Missionaries from outside were not welcome there.

Still the gospel came to the island, and not through a Dutchman. In 1929 the British Bible Society sent a colporteur from East Java, Salam Watias, who sold Bibles and tracts. A local teacher and mystic, Pan Loting, was already dissatisfied with Hinduism. He received a Bible and became captivated by the story of Jesus.

The Chinese evangelist Tsang To Hang was meanwhile allowed to work among the Chinese population of Denpasar. On November 11, 1931, the first Balinese were baptized in the Tukad Yeh Poh river: Pan Loting and eleven of his followers, twelve people in all. The baptism was performed by R.A. Jaffray, the leader of the Christian and Missionary Alliance, an American mission organization. That is the date the Balinese church itself holds. So the beginning of the Balinese church lies with Balinese people themselves and with a Chinese preacher.

The government stepped in. In 1933 Tsang was expelled from the island, after at least three hundred converts, a Balinese news platform writes. The young Christians were left behind in a place where mission was not allowed. Hindu leaders forbade contact with Christians. Christian merchants were boycotted, Christian relatives were disinherited, and children were excluded. Whoever turned away from the religion also lost his place in village and land, because in Balinese thinking these belong together.

Kraemer became involved in this struggle. In 1933 he wrote a book titled *De strijd over Bali en de zending* (The struggle over Bali and the mission). In 1934 a report followed on the state of Christianity on Bali, which was also translated into German and is kept in the archive of the Basel Mission. According to an American source, he was sent to support the young church on Bali, and that bond lasted until the Japanese occupation in the Second World War. How often and for how long he was there, I have not been able to establish.

The small church grew in spite of everything. According to the same American source, eighty-two more people were baptized up to 1935, and in 1955 there were five hundred seventy-nine Christian families on Bali. The largest Christian village on the island today is Blimbingsari. From these young congregations grew the Balinese Protestant church, which received legal status in 1949.

Tambaram, December 1938

In 1937 Kraemer returned to the Netherlands. He became a professor in Leiden, in the history and phenomenology of religion. That last word means describing what religions look like and how they work, seen from the inside.

Meanwhile he worked on the book for Tambaram. The International Missionary Council had asked him to write the study paper. What was in it? I will try to say it in plain words.

You can see other religions as a kind of preparation for Christianity. Christ is then the crowning of what Hindus, Buddhists and Muslims were already seeking. Kraemer saw it differently. He had lived among Muslims for years and had studied their faith, and he respected it. But he believed that the gospel is not an extension of a human search for God. It is God who comes to man, in Jesus Christ. So in his view there was no straight line from the religions to Christ. An American look back from 1988 calls that his central idea: the gospel stands in discontinuity with all other religions. He himself called his position biblical realism: the history of salvation is unique and final. In this he was influenced by the Swiss theologian Karl Barth.

He summed up his attitude toward other religions as a fierce yes and a fierce no. He warned against easy talk of Christian superiority and showed respect for believing people of other religions. What he missed in them was the greatest gift of Christ: the forgiveness of sins.

About Islam he wrote that it is a simple faith that grips its followers more firmly than any other religion does. He summed up the difference with Christianity in two sentences: in Islam the Word became a book, in Christianity the Word became flesh.

Not everyone agreed with him. T.C. Chao, a Chinese theologian from Peking, contradicted him. According to Chao, God also dwelt in creation, and the Chinese sages were inspired by the same God who had made Himself known in Jesus. The debate that began in Tambaram has never completely stopped. Fifty years later, in January 1988, about two dozen Christians from all continents sat in the same hall in Tambaram, called together by the World Council of Churches. They wrestled with the question of whether mission and dialogue with other religions form one witness or two separate agendas. Lesslie Newbigin, a former missionary and bishop, saw Tambaram as a turning point: mission must not be an outpost of Western Christianity. He defended Kraemer's main line, but called the idea that Christianity as a religion has a unique validity arrogant. Stanley Samartha argued for a more positive appreciation of the world religions. Wilfred Cantwell Smith considered denying God's saving work in other religions to be blasphemy. A Christian who is afraid that others will be saved, he said, does not have a Christian attitude. The American author of the look back notes that the discussion was sharp and at times uncomfortable. Whoever wants to understand Kraemer needs to hear that conversation too.

The book also said something about the church. The church is always in a certain crisis, he wrote, because there is a tension between her divine nature and her ordinary, visible condition. Mission must not remain the work of a small minority: the whole congregation had to contribute, and not just a few large donors. And the Bible was for him the only real source of what Christians know about God. On Christian ethics he quoted the church father Augustine: love God and do what you want.

The book was also about Europe itself. Kraemer looked at the West with the same sharp eye as at Asia. He saw a culture in which almost all fixed values had been replaced by the idea that everything

is relative. People then looked for something absolute after all, he wrote, and chose idols such as race, nation or a classless society. He also wrote that no human being can build the Kingdom of God, nor an ideal society. In his view the church had to dare to go all the way in its resistance against the evil in the world. A year after the book appeared, the Second World War broke out in Europe.

What is often forgotten in the discussion is also in the book. Kraemer wrote that the church in the non-Christian world was not at the end of its missionary work, but only at the beginning (my translation).

Ten years of preparation lay behind the gathering. The conference did not seek organizational unity of the churches, but wanted to examine how far they agreed in faith and practice. Joint statements came out on the victory of Christ over sin and death. The church had to testify against oppression and violence, comfort people and proclaim God's grace. Delegates who had not been sent by their own church were not allowed in.

The Indian press paid hardly any attention to the conference. The Adventist reporter himself found the gathering too academic and too slow. Ten years had been spent on what the world needed now, he wrote, and there was too much emphasis on society and too little on restoring the human heart. He also had understanding for how difficult the task was, for delegates from countries that differed enormously on race, religion and politics. An editorial from those weeks, which an Adventist reporter quotes, called Christianity in India no longer a challenge but an apology. Kraemer's book continued to shape the lasting impression of Tambaram, an American look back writes.

A hostage in his own country

In May 1940 the Netherlands was occupied. From 1942 to 1943 Kraemer was interned by the German occupier. English-language reference works say so. The Norwegian obituary adds that he was active in the resistance and spent a year in a camp. According to the Dutch and English Wikipedia, he was held in the hostage camp at Sint-Michielsgestel, where from May 1942 the occupier held prominent Dutch citizens. In reprisal for resistance, hostages could be shot. In August 1942 that happened to five of them. According to the same Wikipedia, Kraemer met there, among others, the Reformed minister Koeno Gravemeijer and the theologian Willem Banning.

He survived the war.

After the liberation he helped, according to the Dutch Wikipedia, together with Gravemeijer and Banning to reform the Dutch Reformed Church: from a church governed from above to a church with elected delegates. He helped shape the new church order of 1951, in which the apostolate, going out into the world, was given a place before confession of faith. He did so at his own insistence, the source says, and orthodox critics thought it went too far. His Dutch book on this theme was called *De kerk in beweging* (The church in motion, 1947).

In 1947 his only doctoral student in Leiden, Arend Theodoor van Leeuwen, received his doctorate. Twelve years later he wrote Kraemer's biography: *Hendrik Kraemer, dienaar der wereldkerk* (Hendrik Kraemer, servant of the world church).

A castle near Geneva

In 1946 an ecumenical institute opened in the castle of Bossey, to be part of the World Council of Churches. It lies between the villages of Bogis-Bossey and Céligny near Geneva. Kraemer became

its first director, according to most sources from 1948 to 1955. The Dutch Wikipedia gives 1947 as the start. In 1948, according to the Norwegian piece, he helped at the founding assembly of the World Council in Amsterdam.

He was a layman himself, and he kept thinking about lay people: ordinary believers, without an office in the church. In 1958 he wrote a book about it, *A Theology of the Laity*. A Norwegian translation appeared the same year. It contains the idea that the church only truly becomes the church when it does not exist for itself. A church that is only busy with itself forgets why it exists. The Norwegian piece calls him a layman among theologians and a theologian among laymen.

In a man who was never a minister himself, you read his own life in this. He had largely taught himself to read the Bible. He had worked as a linguist, as an adviser, as a teacher. No one had given him an office.

Peter called the whole congregation *a royal priesthood* (1 Peter 2:9). He wrote that to ordinary believers, and not to a small circle of leaders. Kraemer made a theology of it, and his own life already showed it.

Last years

In 1955 he said farewell to Bossey. After that he was a visiting professor for some time at Union Seminary in New York, from 1955 to 1957 according to an American reference work. He kept writing. In those years his books included *Religion and the Christian Faith* (1956), the book on the independent church (1958), *World Cultures and World Religions* (1960) and *Why Christianity of All Religions?* (1962). That last title sums up the question of his life: why Christ, of all the religions of the world?

In the later books he sharpened his position and took parts of it back. Religions are not merely human achievements, he wrote, because the Bible also speaks of a general revelation of God. The question of whether God also works in other religions, he answered with a yes and a no. Man is made for fellowship with God, but estranged from Him. He resists God and still seeks Him.

Visser 't Hooft, general secretary of the World Council of Churches, described his attitude at the end of Kraemer's life: a Christ-centered faith that does not waver, together with patience and care for the spiritual life of other religions. Few unite those two as strongly as Kraemer did, he thought.

He spent his last years in the Netherlands. He died in Driebergen on November 11, 1965, at the age of seventy-seven.

After his death an institute was named after him, the Hendrik Kraemer Instituut. According to the Dutch Wikipedia, it existed from 1971 to 2012.

Expectat resurrectionem

I searched for a long time for words of Kraemer about his childhood. What did the boy in the Amsterdam orphanage think when he decided to become a missionary? I did not find them. Perhaps they are in Van Leeuwen's biography or in an archive. For this chapter I had to make do with what is certain.

And what is certain makes you fall silent. A child without parents later worked for fifteen years for the Bible Society, among other things on the Javanese Bible. A layman with no title in the church wrote the book that Christians from seventy countries discussed together. A man who had been imprisoned in the war became the first director of an ecumenical institute.

Perhaps you are also someone without an office or a title. Perhaps you think that the work in God's kingdom lies mainly with ministers and pastors. Kraemer showed the opposite his whole life.

According to the Indonesian Bible Society, his gravestone bears two Latin words: *Expectat resurrectionem*. He awaits the resurrection. After the orphanage, Java, Bali, the camp and Bossey, those words stand over the orphan boy from Amsterdam.

What is certain and what is told

Certain (several independent sources): born in Amsterdam on May 17, 1888; orphaned young and raised in a Reformed orphanage in Amsterdam; at sixteen the decision to become a missionary; training at the Zendingshuis in Rotterdam (1905-1909); study of Javanese in Leiden under Snouck Hurgronje and doctorate in 1921 on a Javanese primbon; marriage in 1919; work for the Netherlands Bible Society in the Dutch East Indies (1922-1937); involvement in the Higher Theological School (1934); involvement with the young church on Bali (book 1933, report 1934); the first baptisms on Bali in 1931 and the expulsion of Tsang To Hang in 1933; professor in Leiden from 1937; the study book for Tambaram (December 1938, 464 delegates from seventy countries); internment by the occupier (1942-1943); first director of the Ecumenical Institute in Bossey; died in Driebergen on November 11, 1965.

Only from the organization of his work (Indonesian Bible Society): the ages at which his parents died; the library in the orphanage and the reading of the Bible in Latin and Greek; the baptism at sixteen; the name of his wife, Hyke van Gameren, and the wedding date; the places he lived, Yogyakarta and Malang; the friendship with Ahmad Dahlan; the Balewiyoto school with B.M. Schuurman; his role in preparing the Javanese churches and his advice

to churches in Minahasa, Ambon and Sangir-Talaud; the text on his gravestone.

Only from the Norwegian obituary of 1965: the German father; the work as a postman; the missionary from New Guinea who called him; his active role in the resistance; his work at the mission conference in Jerusalem in 1928 and at the founding of the World Council in 1948; the text about his later nuancing; the quote from Visser 't Hooft; the expression "layman among theologians."

Unconfirmed: Adriani's advice to study in Leiden; the months in Paris; the hostage camp at Sint-Michielsgestel as the place of his internment and the meetings with Gravemeijer and Banning (only Wikipedia); his contribution to the Reformed church order of 1951; the existence of the Hendrik Kraemer Instituut from 1971 to 2012; the ban on his study of Islam after independence (one reference work); the details of the visiting professorship in New York (one reference work); the exact starting year in Bossey (1947 or 1948); the details of the Balinese church history, which come from church circles; the question of whether Kraemer and Dahlan knew each other well: Kraemer only arrived in 1922, and I have not found the friendship confirmed anywhere outside the organization of the Bible work.

Where the sources differ:

- *His training.* A mission school in Rotterdam (most sources) or in Oegstgeest near Leiden (Norwegian obituary).
- *His age when he became an orphan.* Father died when he was six and mother five years later (Indonesian Bible Society), both parents gone when he was twelve (English Wikipedia).
- *The length of his directorship at Bossey.* 1948 to 1955 (most sources), 1947 (Dutch Wikipedia), almost two decades (Norwegian obituary).

- *The baptism on Bali.* November 11, 1931 (the Balinese church), November 12, 1931 (an English-language source and the Balinese news platform), eleven people baptized (news platform) or Pan Loting plus eleven followers, so twelve.
- *His dissertation.* A Javanese primbon from the sixteenth century (Boston University, Indonesian Bible Society), Islamic mysticism in Java and Sumatra (Norwegian obituary).
- *The length of his internment.* 1942 to 1943 (English-language reference works), a year in a camp (Norwegian obituary).

Interpretation: whether Kraemer's view of the other religions was right is a theological question on which Christians have thought differently since Tambaram. This chapter describes his position and the criticism of it, without deciding the matter.

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Caroline Gunning: to Soekaboemi against their wishes

In 1927, 346 children lived in the mission homes in Soekaboemi, a town in West Java now called Sukabumi. There was a home for toddlers, a children's home, a boys' home and a girls' home. Almost all of those children were orphans or had lost one parent. They were Indo-European, as it was called then: of mixed European and Indonesian descent. In the homes they were cared for, and they learned a trade.

The woman in charge of all those homes was in her late thirties. Her name was Caroline Gunning. She had gone to the Indies as a nurse, against the wishes of the Dutch mission leadership. Later she would set up an Indonesian branch of the Christian women's organization YWCA, survive the Japanese occupation in the women's camp Tjideng, and after the war help lead the mission of the Nederlandse Hervormde Kerk (the Dutch Reformed Church) for more than ten years.

I have not found a book about her, and no obituary. I have not found any text in which she tells in her own words what she believed or what God had said to her. What we know of her is mostly found in

archive descriptions: lists of boxes with letters, reports and photos. That makes this chapter different from the others. I tell what is certain, and I say where it stops. Her letters are kept in The Hague and Utrecht. Whoever someday makes a fuller portrait of her will have to start there.

It begins in Zwolle.

A record in Zwolle

On August 1, 1889, Johannes Hermanus Gunning registered the birth of a daughter in Zwolle, a city in the east of the Netherlands. She had been born the day before, on July 31. In the record her name is given as Carolina Henriette Constantia. In the archives she is later called Caroline. Her father was thirty and conrector, deputy head, at the gymnasium, the classical grammar school. Her mother's name was Cecilia van Eeghen.

It was a family in which faith was not a side issue. Her grandmother on her father's side, Petronella Pierson, came from a family of the Réveil, the nineteenth-century revival movement among Dutch Protestants, and was a sister of the writer Allard Pierson. Her grandfather, the chemist J.W. Gunning, had once been dismissed as an assistant because of his Christian views, according to a biography of his son. A great-uncle, J.H. Gunning, was a theologian.

And then there was her uncle Jan Willem Gunning, a brother of her father. From 1886 to 1897 he was a minister in Eerbeek. In 1897 he became director of the mission house of the Nederlandsch Zendeling Genootschap (the Netherlands Missionary Society) in Rotterdam. Together with his wife he cared there for the young men preparing for work as missionaries: they were their teachers, and at the same time house father and house mother. Later he became director of the Utrechtsche Zendingsvereeniging. He served on the

committee that continued the work after the great mission conference of Edinburgh in 1910, and he worked for cooperation between the Dutch mission organizations. He traveled to the Indies twice to look at the mission work: in 1900 and 1901, and again from 1916 to 1918.

So Caroline grew up in a family where the mission was talked about. Whether that gave her direction, we do not know from her own mouth. But it was there.

"A strong religious awareness"

We know most about her father, and what we know of him says something about the home she grew up in. Johannes Hermanus Gunning, known as J.H. Gunning Wzn., became one of the first educationalists in the Netherlands. In 1900 he became the first lecturer in education at a Dutch university, in Utrecht. Later he became a school inspector in Amsterdam and a special professor in Utrecht.

At the gymnasium, his biographer Ewald Mackay writes, "a strong religious awareness" awoke in him. It stayed. Of his own accord he took instruction in the faith from his uncle, the theologian J.H. Gunning Jr. He was a deacon in Utrecht and worked in care for the poor. He belonged to the ethical movement in the Hervormde Kerk, a current that wanted to keep faith and ordinary life together.

For him, bringing up children was at heart a moral matter, rooted in the Christian faith. Parents had to teach by example and deed, he thought, and not by preaching. The father too was supposed to take an active part. He called the family a haven, a place of rest, and harmony between the parents was the first condition for it. A child had to be seen as a unique person, whom you do not lock into uniform methods. And faith had to work through the whole of life.

Going to church and praying together were important to him, as long as they had real content.

That was how the man who raised Caroline thought. Later he wrote her letters, for years. But first came grief.

Shortly before 1900 her father studied education for two years in Germany, at the University of Jena. In the middle of those student years his wife died unexpectedly, his biographer writes. The children were placed with his mother and with a friend. He later remarried twice. The biography does not give the year or the name of the wife. He had married Cecilia van Eeghen in 1882, so presumably Caroline lost her mother then, as a girl of about ten. I do not know it for certain.

I write it down here because it struck me. A girl who had herself been cared for outside her own family for a time later became the director of homes for children without a father or mother. Whether she ever made that connection herself, the sources do not tell. The biographer also writes that her father's bond with his own mother was strained and with his father good.

An album of the Indies house

In the Gunning family archive in the Nationaal Archief (the National Archives) there are two small traces from her young years. The first is from 1910: papers and seven photo reproductions about Caroline and her mother, who took part in a historical procession, probably at the entry of Queen Wilhelmina into Amsterdam. Perhaps this was her stepmother. The inventory does not say.

The second trace is from 1913. Caroline kept a photo album of the "Indisch huis" (Indies house) at the exhibition De vrouw, 1813-1913 (Woman, 1813-1913). She was twenty-three at the time.

Why she kept that album, we do not know. Two years later she left for the Indies.

Against the wishes of the mission leadership

In 1915 Caroline Gunning went to the Dutch East Indies as a nurse. She was in her mid-twenties. The archive overview of the mission adds one dry clause: she went "against the wishes of the Dutch mission leadership".

That is all it says. We do not know who objected, or why, and I will not fill it in. It is striking, though, that in those years her uncle was one of the leaders of that same Dutch mission. Whether he was among those who objected, no source says.

What is certain is that her father did not let go of her. From the time she left, he wrote her letters. They are still in the Nationaal Archief, in four bundles: 1915 to 1919, 1921 to 1928, 1929 to 1935 and 1936 to 1938. There is also an unsorted pile of incoming letters and copies of what she wrote herself, from 1915 to 1946, partly meant as a circular letter for the family. Her own voice is preserved in those letters. I have not been able to read them.

How do you know that you must go, when the people in charge say no? Caroline left no account we can read of how she answered that question. Her actions do say something. She went, and she stayed faithful her whole life to the mission that at first did not want to send her.

Her first years in the Indies were also years of unrest at home. In 1916 and 1917 her father lost his job as district school inspector in Amsterdam, according to the summary of the archive. The summary does not say why. A few years earlier, in 1913, there had been an uproar about remarks of his on Christian education. Whether

Caroline heard about it, and what she made of it in her letters, is somewhere in those bundles.

Batavia, 1915 to 1918

She spent her first years in Batavia, now Jakarta, the capital of the colony. Until 1918 she did social work there, mainly for the Genootschap voor In- en Uitwendige Zending (Society for Inner and Outer Mission).

That name needs explaining. By inner mission, Protestants meant the work among people who had been baptized but lived outside the church, often in poverty. Outer mission was the work among people who did not yet know the gospel. This society carried both words in its name. It would later also run the homes in Soekaboemi.

The inventory shows that in Batavia she was occupied with neighborhood mission work, and with proposals for a school for girls and women. Those papers run from 1918 to 1938. So early on she was already looking beyond nursing.

In those same years, from 1916 to 1918, her uncle was on his second inspection trip through the Indies. He promoted cooperation between mission fields, encouraged conferences of missionaries per region and the founding of a mission consulate. Whether uncle and niece met there, no source tells.

Two years back home

From 1919 to 1921 Caroline was in the Netherlands on sick leave. What she suffered from is not recorded anywhere.

What she did after those two years says more. She went back.

The girls' home in Soekaboemi

In 1921 Caroline became head of the society's girls' home in Soekaboemi. In 1924 she made a trip to the Gede, a volcano in West Java. Her travel account, *Van den tocht op den Gedeh* (On the climb of the Gedeh), is still in her archive, one of the few things from those years that show more than her job.

The girls' home was one of the four homes that together formed the Soekaboemi Opvoedings Gestichten, the society's educational institutions. In 1923 she became director of the whole. She was not yet thirty-five.

To understand that work, you need to know something about the colony in those years. From 1892 onward, homes arose in the Dutch East Indies where children were taken in and re-educated. The best known was that of the missionary Johannes van der Steur in Magelang. The historian Annelieke Dirks earned her doctorate in Leiden in 2011 with research on these institutions. According to her research, Van der Steur focused mainly on Indo-European children, usually born to a Dutch father and an Indonesian mother. Contemporaries feared that such children, raised mostly by their mothers, would become too Indies. They had to be steered toward the European side, but not so far that they lost their place as people of mixed descent. From 1906, after a safety report by a former judge, re-education was also justified by the fear that neglected and criminal youths would be receptive to anti-colonial ideas. Later research found that fear exaggerated, the university writes. During the First World War the government began its own homes, mainly for Muslim children. The private homes filled up.

In such homes you received schooling and a trade. Boys learned metalwork and woodwork, sometimes farming or gardening. Girls learned housekeeping, handicrafts and sewing. The association Pro

Juventute, for which Caroline later wrote, worked with staff and board members from the Indonesian and Chinese communities, who often saw an opportunity for advancement in it.

That double side belongs to the story. The care was real. The children received a roof, food, schooling and a trade. But that care also stood within a colonial order that decided who was on top and who was not. Caroline worked within that order. How she herself thought about it, we do not know. I leave the judgment to you.

346 children

In 1927, 346 children lived in the Soekaboemi homes. Almost all of them had lost one or both parents. They were cared for and received vocational training, so that later they could take care of themselves.

Behind that number are toddlers, schoolchildren, boys and girls learning a trade. I do not know their names. They may be in the papers about the educational institutions that Caroline kept, from the years 1926 to 1934.

Jesus said: *Whoever receives one little child like this in My name receives Me* (Matthew 18:5). He was speaking about one child. In Soekaboemi in 1927 there were three hundred forty-six, each with a name of his or her own, even though I do not know them.

What exactly did a director do there? The sources say little. She led the four homes, and she sat on the board of the society's educational institutions. Her archive shows that she remained involved in the society's meetings and board matters for more than twenty years, from 1918 to 1939.

At the end of 1927 her time as director ended. A new assignment was already waiting.

An assignment from the Federation

During her second leave in the Netherlands, in 1928 and 1929, Caroline received an assignment from the Christen Jonge Vrouwen Federatie (Christian Young Women's Federation), the Dutch movement that belonged to the YWCA, the worldwide Christian organization for young women. The federation asked her to set up an Indonesian branch.

From 1929 to 1935 she sat on the federation's board. I have found no source on what that first Indonesian branch looked like, who joined it and how large it was. It is certain, though, that the Indonesian YWCA disappeared after the Second World War, and that it was founded again in 2001.

From the same years there are articles by her about Sumatra, from 1934. In 1937 and 1938 she wrote in the journal of the Verbond der Vereenigingen Pro Juventute in Nederlands-Indië (Union of Pro Juventute Associations in the Dutch East Indies), a union of associations that cared for young people. Dirks discusses Pro Juventute in her research on juvenile crime in the colony. Here too Caroline stayed close to her subject: young people who were in danger of falling through the cracks.

Behind the fence of Tjideng

In March 1942 Japan occupied the Dutch East Indies. In the years that followed, European civilians were locked up in camps. Caroline Gunning ended up in Tjideng, in Batavia.

Tjideng was a residential neighborhood that the Japanese had turned into a camp for Dutch women and children. At the start there were about two thousand people, at the end about ten and a half thousand, while the grounds kept shrinking. Every space was used for sleeping, even kitchens and bathrooms. In 2025 survivors

told the Financieele Dagblad, a Dutch newspaper, what it was like. Families lived in a room of about three by seven meters, sometimes nine people together.

At first the camp was still under civil administration. From April 1944 the Japanese army took over, under Captain Kenichi Sone. Cooking for yourself and church services were abolished. The food came from a central kitchen and quickly got worse. A boy who was in the camp as a child later described the starch porridge everyone knew, the roll call on the Laan Trivelli twice a day, and how his mother secretly made tea until the commander came by. Hunger edema, beriberi, dysentery and malaria claimed victims. There was hunger, and many women died. After the war Sone was sentenced to death for his cruelty and executed in December 1946.

When Caroline came to the camp, how long she was there and how she endured it, I do not know. In 1945 she was fifty-six. In Het Utrechts Archief, the archive in Utrecht, there are letters about her internment. I have not read those either. That is why I do not tell what she did in the camp, however much I would like to.

What I do know is that she survived. After the Japanese capitulation on September 2, 1945, help came from outside. By September 18 there were already twelve hundred patients in the camp hospital. And she kept going with the work she had begun in 1915.

Psalm 23 says: *Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil* (Psalm 23:4). In Tjideng that valley had a barbed-wire fence. Whether Caroline held on to those words may be in the letters I have not read.

At the mission's meeting table

After the war Caroline returned to the Netherlands. There she became one of the vice-chairs of the moderamen, the executive com-

mittee, of the Verenigde Nederlandse Zendingscorporaties (United Dutch Mission Corporations), the partnership of Dutch mission organizations. Her uncle had worked for such cooperation decades earlier.

From 1951 to 1962 she was vice-chair of the Raad voor de Zending (Mission Council) of the Dutch Reformed Church, the council that led that church's mission work. She was between sixty-one and seventy-three years old at the time.

In the year she began, her father died. J.H. Gunning Wzn. died on March 5, 1951, at the age of ninety-one. In 1923 he had become a special professor of education in Utrecht, and in 1931 he retired. His letters to her, as far as the archive has kept them, stop in 1938.

The woman who left in 1915 against the wishes of the mission leadership was now part of that leadership herself. Nowhere does it say that she remarked on it. The archive does keep small things from these years: ribbons, emblems and photos of conferences in Lunteren, running from about 1940 to 1982. The Repertorium lists as fields in which she was active: coordination of mission, education and training colleges, health care, and work by and for women and girls.

Why did she do this work, for a whole lifetime? In this chapter I wanted to let you hear her own words about her faith. I did not find them. What I do see is a life that, from her twenties into old age, took place within Christian organizations: a mission society, a Christian women's movement, the mission council of her church. She grew up with a father who held faith and care for poor people together. I do not dare say more. The rest is in her letters.

Not everyone left a testimony. Some people left a lifelong trail of work, and then we must learn to read it.

James wrote: *I will show you my faith by my works* (James 2:18). With Caroline Gunning that is almost the only road open. I have not found her words about her faith. Her work I have.

A letter about the Julianaschool

Among the papers from her later years in Het Utrechts Archief is a small correspondence that moves me. From 1950 to 1952 Caroline wrote with a woman who is called Mrs. Soeretna in the archive description. It was about the Julianaschool in Sukabumi. The same folder contains letters with Miss J.P. Zijderveld.

Indonesia was independent by then. Caroline lived in the Netherlands and was over sixty. She kept in touch with the town where she had once seen hundreds of children grow up. What they wrote to each other, I do not know. Only that the line did not break.

There are also letters with other women from the mission work: with Mrs. P. Hengkelare, from 1948 to 1977, and with Mrs. W.S.F. van Doorn-Snijders, from 1949 to 1954. In 1977 Caroline was eighty-eight. The line with Mrs. Hengkelare lasted twenty-nine years.

Caroline Henriëtte Constance Gunning died in 1988, in the year she would have turned ninety-nine. Where and on what day, I have not been able to find.

Perhaps you know people like that too. They never stood on a stage. Their name is on an inventory list, behind a number. In an archive in Utrecht there is a folder of letters about a school in Sukabumi, from the 1950s, with her name on it.

What is certain and what is told

Certain (official record and archive descriptions): born in Zwolle on July 31, 1889, as the daughter of J.H. Gunning and Cecilia van Eeghen; departure for the Indies in 1915 as a nurse, against the

wishes of the Dutch mission leadership; social work in Batavia until 1918, mainly for the Genootschap voor In- en Uitwendige Zending; sick leave 1919-1921; head of the girls' home in Soekaboemi from 1921; director of the Soekaboemi Opvoedings Gestichten from 1923 until the end of 1927; 346 pupils in 1927, nearly all Indo-European orphans and half-orphans; assignment from the Christen Jonge Vrouwen Federatie in 1928-1929 for an Indonesian branch of the YWCA; internment in Tjideng; vice-chair of the Mission Council from 1951 to 1962; correspondence about the Julianaschool in Sukabumi (1950-1952); died in 1988. Note: most of these points come from one source, the Huygens Repertorium, which is based on the archive inventory of the Mission Council. The inventory of the Nationaal Archief confirms the existence of letters and reports about the same periods.

From her father's biography: his faith and his work as a deacon; his views on education; his mother's descent from a Réveil family; the death of his wife during his studies in Jena.

From the archive descriptions: the letters of her father (1915-1938); the album of 1913 and the procession of 1910; the travel account about the Gede (1924); the papers about Soekaboemi (1926-1934); her articles about Sumatra (1934) and in the journal of Pro Juventute (1937-1938); the dismissal of her father as district school inspector in 1916-1917.

Unconfirmed: whether it was Cecilia van Eeghen who died shortly before 1900, and in exactly which year; why the mission leadership opposed her departure; the nature of her illness; what the first Indonesian YWCA branch looked like; when and for how long she was in Tjideng; whether she met her uncle in the Indies; date and place of her death. How things went in Tjideng comes from general sources about the camp and not from anything written about her.

Where the sources differ:

- *Her name.* Carolina Henriette Constantia in the birth record, Caroline Henriëtte Constantia in the Nationaal Archief, Caroline Henriëtte Constance in the Repertorium.
- *Her uncle's mission house.* Rotterdam (Repertorium) or Oegstgeest (Nationaal Archief).
- *Her father's dismissal.* The archive gives 1916-1917 as the years of a dismissal as district school inspector. Mackay's biography says only that he later stopped as inspector, without a year.
- *The camp.* Sone was sentenced to death on September 2, 1946, and executed on December 7, 1946 (English-language Wikipedia). Numbers and conditions in Tjideng differ per source.

Interpretation: her Christian motivation shows in her lifelong work within church and mission and in the family she grew up in. I have not found any statements of her own about her faith online. They are probably in her letters in the Nationaal Archief and Het Utrechts Archief.

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Riek Luinenburg-Pelle: the bride without a groom

On December 3, 1921, Hendrika Johanna Pelle was married in Eibergen, a village in the east of the Netherlands. She was twenty-six. Her groom, Otto Luinenburg, was not there. He was on the other side of the world, on Java. In the marriage record he is listed as a planter of twenty-two, born in Modjowarno, the son of a missionary.

According to the Luinenburg family archive, someone else stood in his place that day: Frans Demmenie, the man with whom Otto had grown up in Rotterdam. He had a power of attorney. This is called a marriage by proxy, literally a marriage "with the glove".

After that Riek, as everyone called her, traveled after her husband to the Dutch East Indies, today's Indonesia. Apart from one leave, she would live there the rest of her life. She had seven children and lost one. From 1928 she lived in Modjowarno in East Java, where her husband ran the administration of the mission hospital. In 1943, during the Japanese occupation, she was arrested and killed.

I must say one thing right away. Of Riek herself I have not found a single word: no letter, no diary, no testimony, no sermon. I searched in records, archives, magazines and the accounts of her family. What I did find are the words of the people around her. Of her husband on his deathbed. Of the minister who took in her children. Of a fellow minister who heard in Jember what was happening there. They tell her story. I do not fill the gaps.

It began in the Achterhoek, the rural east of the province of Gelderland.

A farmer's daughter from Eibergen

Hendrika Johanna Pelle was born in Eibergen on January 3, 1895. The next day her father registered the birth. His name was Hendrik Flores Pelle, he was forty-three years old and a farmer. Her mother, Hendrika Johanna Groters, had no occupation. The girl was given both of her mother's first names.

About her childhood, her school and her church, the sources are silent. What remains is a farmer's daughter in a village close to the German border.

A patient in Rekken

What we do know is that Riek became a nurse. Where she trained is not recorded. She worked in Rekken, a village close to Eibergen.

A few years before her marriage, a young man with poor health was admitted there. His name was Otto Luinenburg, and he came for examination and treatment, the family archive tells us. His own story began on the other side of the world.

His father, Siebolt Luinenburg, born in 1874 in Mirns in Friesland, had left for Java in 1898 with his wife Johanna Geertruida Berg as a missionary. On November 13, 1899, they had a son, Otto, in Mod-

jowarno. Three daughters followed later. In 1909 Otto went back to the Netherlands with his sister Dien. They grew up in Rotterdam with relatives: Frans Demmenie and Constantia Margaretha Berg.

In 1918 his mother died of the Spanish flu. By then Otto had trained in horticulture. In 1920 his father remarried, to Dina Maria Demmenie, and that year Otto traveled back to Java with him on the ship Prins der Nederlanden. There he served for a time in the KNIL, the colonial army of the Dutch East Indies, and took a course in bookkeeping.

The nurse from Rekken stayed behind in Eibergen. A year later they married, he on Java and she in the Achterhoek, with a power of attorney as a bridge. In the marriage record no occupation is given for Riek. Whether she had stopped nursing by then, we do not know.

Four days

How and when Riek traveled to Java is not in the sources I found. At that time Otto worked as a planter and later as an office clerk on a tea plantation near Bandoeng, in West Java.

The first thing the family archive tells about their life together is a sorrow. Riek caught malaria while she was pregnant. The baby was born and died four days later. No name or date is given. From the order of the children you can tell that it happened between 1922 and 1924.

Psalm 34 says: *The LORD is near to those who have a broken heart* (Psalm 34:18). What this loss did to Riek and Otto, the family archive does not tell. The child lived four days, and those days belong to this story too.

After that came two sons in Bandoeng: Siebolt Frans in 1924 and Johan Floris in 1926. In those years Otto also became administrator of

the Centrale Commissie voor Zendingsscholen (Central Committee for Mission Schools). The mission was coming ever closer. From July 1, 1927, to May 1, 1928, he was acting deputy director of the agricultural school in Klakah, in East Java.

On May 1, 1928, he became administrator of the mission hospital in Modjowarno. For Otto it was a return to the village where he was born. For Riek it was a new place, with a family of four.

A village that Javanese people cleared from the forest themselves

Modjowarno, now Mojowarno, lies near Jombang in East Java. It was not founded by the Dutch. According to The Jakarta Post, it began with Ditotruno, a follower of the Javanese prince Diponegoro. With fifty-five people he cleared a piece of forest. He was baptized, received the baptismal name Abisai, and built a village. Coenraad Laurens Coolen also played a part, a Christian of Russian and Javanese descent who had been a forest overseer, and who resigned in 1827 to clear forest together with Ditotruno.

The missionary Jelle Eeltjes Jellesma started a school there to train Javanese evangelists. Paulus Tosari became the first minister from the local community to be officially ordained there. In 1871 Tosari asked the Dutch authorities for permission to build a large church. The Christians of the village sold their rice fields for it, good for some six thousand guilders. Money also came from the governor-general, a church bell was donated by a fund, and an organ came from the Protestant congregation in Soerabaja. In 1879 the first stone was laid. In 1881 the church opened.

The building looks Dutch, with narrow tall windows and a bell tower. Inside, next to the pulpit, stands a gamelan, the Javanese percussion orchestra, and on the facade are Bible texts in Javanese.

Whoever came in during the 1930s saw two worlds side by side: a Dutch building and Javanese music and texts.

Next to that church a hospital grew. Indonesian historians who studied its history from 1894 to 1942 write that it brought Western medicine alongside the traditional healers and that paramedical staff were trained there. From 1896 to 1933 the mission doctor Hubertus Bervoets worked there. In the years Riek lived there, among others Dr. W.J.L. Dake, who was a mission doctor from 1916 to 1943, and the nurse Egbertje Brouwer worked there; Brouwer stayed from 1928 to 1954.

It was also a hospital in a colony, in a country ruled by the Netherlands. The doctors and leaders that the directory of mission workers names for Modjowarno were Dutch.

Around 1935, a baptism service

What did Riek do in Modjowarno? I had hoped to find out. On the list of the reburial in 1949, her name is followed by: nurse. But no source I read says that she worked in the hospital in Modjowarno. It may be so. It may also be that her hands were full with a family that kept growing. Three children were born in Modjowarno: a son in 1930, a daughter in 1932 and another son in 1933.

And there is a photo. It was taken around 1935 at a baptism service of the church in Modjowarno. Dr. J. Lodder is in it with his two little daughters. Otto is holding the youngest son in his arms. Riek stands beside him, with her little daughter, who can already stand on her own.

It is the only image I have of her. A mother of forty at a baptism service in a Javanese church, with a child at her hand. The photo says nothing more. Who was baptized that day is not recorded.

Leave, and two boys who stayed behind

In May 1936 Riek left with the children for leave in the Netherlands. Otto came in October. During that time he did promotional work for the mission and wrote a book, *Onze Zendingsvelden* (Our Mission Fields), with drawings by the former missionary Albert de Neef.

On August 13, 1937, their youngest son was born in Voorschoten.

In June 1938 the family went back to Java, but not all of them. Siebolt and Johan, then about fourteen and twelve, stayed behind in the Netherlands to continue their education. They went to a boys' boarding school in Utrecht. Riek took four children back with her. As far as is known, she never saw her two eldest sons again.

Have you ever waved goodbye to a child, knowing it would be years before you saw them again? Riek did it in 1938. No one could know then that it was for good.

July 22, 2602

At the beginning of March 1942 the Dutch army on Java surrendered to Japan. The occupier began to lock up Europeans in camps. On April 2, 1942, missionaries gathered in Malang. They decided to refrain from resistance, writes Marleen van den Berg in her research on Rev. H.A.C. Hildering, one of the ministers who stayed on in East Java. Hildering kept to it.

Otto stayed in Modjowarno at first. He was among the last group of European men who were still free.

On July 22, 1942, he was taken away. That same day Hildering and Dr. Dake wrote a letter. The Japanese used their own calendar, and so the letter is dated: July 22, 2602. They pointed out that Otto was the administrator of the hospital and secretary of the mission con-

ference, and that his internment would seriously harm the mission work. It did not help.

Otto went to Kesilir, a camp on the south coast of East Java, almost at the eastern tip of the island. The Japanese army command wanted to make it a large farming colony, according to the documentation on the civilian camps a settlement for seventy thousand people. The site covered forty square kilometers and was fenced entirely with barbed wire. There were homemade shelters and barracks. Some three thousand men worked there for fifteen months and grew corn, soybeans, green peas and other vegetables. The project failed, for lack of farming knowledge and tools. Transports came from Solo, Malang, Soerabaja and Semarang, and among the men from Semarang were missionaries, including the Brothers of Maastricht. In all, eighty-two people died.

Riek stayed behind with the four children. What she did in those months is not recorded anywhere.

A map with two names

Here the story becomes difficult, and I want to be careful.

The family later suspected that Otto had been involved in the resistance even before his internment. It was never talked about at home. The article on Gaasterland in WO2 shows a map of Java with twenty-two sections of the underground resistance. Near Bondowoso there is a guerrilla group with two names: Luinenburg and Sister Klusman. Where that map comes from is not stated.

Sister Klusman was Leonora Henriëtte Klusman, born in Semarang on March 2, 1901. She was a nurse. In the article she is also called mission sister Noortje Klusman. The Netherlands recognized her later: by Royal Decree of December 21, 1949, she was posthumously

awarded the Verzetsster Oost-Azië 1942-1945 (Resistance Star East Asia 1942-1945).

In Kesilir a resistance group was betrayed, the family archive says. According to the camp documentation, in April 1943 thirty-eight men from Kesilir were transferred to the Kempeitai in Bondowoso. The Kempeitai was the Japanese military police, feared for its interrogations. Next to those men the list says: later executed.

Hildering wrote about it himself. In a letter to the mission board of November 20, 1947, he named three missionaries who had been murdered by the Kempeitai. The Luinenburg couple and Sister Klusman had not kept to the decision of abstention, he wrote, "which cost them their lives". Their resistance had also endangered the mission post of Modjowarno. It is the judgment of a colleague, five years after the facts, written by a man who had himself gone through the war in prison and camp. About the choice they made, I pass no judgment. What Riek herself knew or did, I cannot establish. No trial is known, no sentence, no statement from her. What is certain is what happened to them afterward.

Sunday, April 4, 1943

The Kempeitai interrogated and tortured Otto. He died on Sunday, April 4, 1943, in the hospital in Bondowoso.

The family archive keeps what happened shortly before his death. A Javanese male nurse heard him say something, in Javanese. He would soon be in the house of his Father, Otto said. The nurse alerted an Ambonese minister. The names of those two men have not been preserved. Thanks to them, Otto's last words were passed on.

They sound like the words of Jesus on the night before His suffering: *In My Father's house are many mansions* (John 14:2). Otto spoke them in Javanese, the language of the village where he was born.

After his burial the Kempeitai took his body out of the grave. Where they brought him has never become known.

Whether Riek knew that her husband was dying is not recorded anywhere. Shortly afterward she was a prisoner herself.

Jember

According to the family archive, Riek and Leonora Klusman were arrested on April 8, 1943. At the end of April eighty-six people in the region were picked up and taken to the Kempeitai in Jember, among them forty men from Kesilir and the two nurses. The suspicion was sabotage, in connection with an Allied landing on Java that the Japanese were expecting.

After the war, witnesses said that the two women were first held in the police station on the Djalan Sekolahan in Jember. On May 13, 1943, they were moved to the Birnie camp. According to the article on Gaasterland in WO2, the Kempeitai interrogated people in a house by a tobacco shed that belonged to the Birnie family, and you could hear the screams of tortured people there.

Rev. Siebold van der Linden, born in 1902 in Makkum, was imprisoned in Jember in those same weeks. After the war he gave information about the arrest of Otto, Riek and Noortje Klusman. "In Birnie too I heard of the mistreatment," he stated. What happened to Riek herself in those weeks, we do not know. I write no more about it than that.

The four children at home were taken in by the family of Rev. Hildering, the minister who in July 1942 had still pleaded for her husband.

Three dates on a grave

Riek was killed. On how and when, the sources disagree.

According to the family archive, she and Leonora Klusman were beheaded on May 23, 1943, together with dozens of men from Kesilir, in the djati forests near Banjoewangi, now Banyuwangi, at the eastern tip of Java. Djati is teak.

The first grave marker said something else: executed at Tasnan, July 1943. Later the date on her grave was changed to May 23, 1943. For Leonora Klusman, the registration of the Oorlogsgravenstichting (the Dutch War Graves Foundation), as taken over by TracesOfWar, gives yet another date: June 6, 1943, at Tasnan.

So three dates, and two place names. What still stands is this: in the spring of 1943 in East Java, two nurses were killed by the Japanese occupier together with dozens of men, with no known trial. Riek was forty-eight.

Four Luinenburg orphans

The war lasted more than two more years. Hildering himself was arrested on September 4, 1943, with other ministers from Soerabaja and put in the Bubutan prison. At the beginning of 1944 he went to the Tjikoedapateuh camp in Bandoeng. His wife and five children went to the Lamparsari camp in Semarang. In the camps he led forbidden Christian gatherings, writes Van den Berg.

How the four Luinenburg children fared in those years, no source I could open tells. In November 1945 they were in the Irene camp in Singapore.

On November 21 or 22, 1945, Hildering sent a telegram to the mission office. The message was in English: “Family complete with four orphans Luinenburg”, and it went on with another family and

with the news that they were safe in the Irene camp in Singapore. It ended with a request to inform the family.

A complete family, with four orphans added. In a few words a minister said what his family had carried since 1943. The Luinenburg children were then about fifteen, thirteen, twelve and eight.

James wrote: *Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble* (James 1:27). The Hildering family did more than visit. They took in four children and brought them through the war.

In the Netherlands were their brothers Siebolt and Johan.

I searched for what Riek herself believed. I did not find it. Her words have been lost. What remains are her deeds, as far as they are known. She married a missionary's son without him being able to be there. She followed him to Java, buried a child there and raised six. She left two behind in the Netherlands to go back to Modjowarno herself. Perhaps that already says something. What she prayed in the cell in Jember, if she prayed, only God knows.

Antjol, October 15, 1949

Six years after her death, Riek was buried again. On October 15, 1949, she was given a grave with military honors at the Ereveld Antjol, the Dutch war cemetery in Jakarta, then still Batavia. Leonora Klusman was also buried there that day. On the list of that reburial, Riek's name is followed by the occupation with which the story in Rekken began: nurse.

Antjol lies on the coast of Jakarta. There stands a grave with a date that was later changed, for a woman from Eibergen who married by proxy in 1921 and in 1943 did not come home.

What is certain and what is told

Certain (records and several independent sources): born in Eibergen on January 3, 1895, as the daughter of Hendrik Flores Pelle (farmer) and Hendrika Johanna Groters (birth record); married in Eibergen on December 3, 1921, to Otto Luinenburg, born in Modjowarno, son of the missionary Siebolt Luinenburg (marriage record, in which the bride is listed without an occupation); the history of the Christian village of Modjowarno, its church and its hospital; the doctors and nurses who worked there; the Kesilir camp and the transfer of thirty-eight men to the Kempeitai in Bondowoso in April 1943, with the note that they were later executed; the missionaries' decision of Malang of April 2, 1942, to refrain from resistance; the internment of Hildering from September 4, 1943; Hildering's telegram of November 1945 and his letter of November 20, 1947 (both in the archive of the Raad voor de Zending); the death of Leonora Klusman in 1943, her posthumous decoration and her grave at Antjol (section II, grave 54).

Only from the Luinenburg family archive (via Gaasterland in WO2): Riek's work as a nurse in Rekken and meeting Otto there; the marriage by proxy and Frans Demmenie as proxy; the first child who lived four days and the malaria; the years and places of birth of the six other children; the leave from 1936 to 1938 and the boarding school years of the two eldest sons; the photo of around 1935; Otto's internment on July 22, 1942, and the letter from Hildering and Dake; the betrayed resistance group; Otto's death on April 4, 1943, his last words and the removal of his body; Riek's arrest on April 8, 1943, her imprisonment in Jember and the Birnie camp and the statement of Rev. Van der Linden; the execution on May 23, 1943, near Banjoewangi; the care of the four youngest children by the Hildering family; the reburial on October 15, 1949. I

leave out the names of the four youngest children, because I do not know whether they are still alive. They are in the family archive.

Unconfirmed: whether Riek was a boatman's daughter (the article on Gaasterland in WO2 says so, the birth record calls her father a farmer); whether she worked as a nurse in the hospital in Modjowarno; whether Otto and Riek really belonged to the resistance (the resistance map gives no source; Hildering's judgment in 1947 is that of one colleague); the story about the screams from the Birnie house (the article on Gaasterland in WO2 says so; whether Van der Linden himself was in the Birnie camp, the article does not say); whether Riek received a decoration (I could not open the page of the Oorlogsgravenstichting).

Disputed: the date of Riek's arrest (April 8, 1943; according to the same article also the end of April, when eighty-six people were arrested); the date and place of her death (May 23, 1943, near Banjoewangi; July 1943 at Tasnan on the first grave marker; June 6, 1943 for Klusman in the register); the number of men who died with them (the family archive says forty; the camp documentation names thirty-eight who went to Bondowoso, and thirty-eight men with two women makes forty, but that addition is my own); the date of the telegram (November 21, 1945 in Van den Berg's research, November 22 in the article on Gaasterland in WO2); the text of the telegram also differs: the research adds a Kooistra family, except for one member, and writes "save" for "safe".

Interpretation: no sources in her own words have been found about Riek's own faith and her involvement in the mission work. Anyone who wants to know more can search the archive of the Raad voor de Zending (Mission Council) in Het Utrechts Archief, the Luinenburg family archive and the Oorlogsgravenstichting.

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Truus Lemmens: mama on Kashmir Road

On Saturday evening, December 11, 2004, a new building was opened in Karachi. It stood on Kashmir Road, next to an old house that had become too small. Almost a hundred and fifty people lived in that old house: children and adults with an intellectual or physical disability, many of them once left behind by their families. Now they were given spacious, bright rooms, many bathrooms and a large garden, spread over three floors.

The Pakistani newspaper Dawn wrote a report about it. The residents sang and danced for the guests. One of the young women danced to a folk song from Balochistan and received long applause. The building was opened by a Dutchman: Paul Litjens, a former international player of the Dutch hockey team. At its hundredth anniversary, in 1998, the Koninklijke Nederlandse Hockey Bond (the Royal Dutch Hockey Association) had decided to raise money for this wing. That year Litjens made a documentary for Dutch television to help finance it. Land and building together cost about half a million euros.

There was also a man from a Dutch foundation with a striking name: Stichting Thuisfront Zuster Lemmens (Sister Lemmens Home Front

Foundation). His name was Harry Buitink. He told the newspaper about the woman his foundation was named after. She had started this work at an age when most people retire, he said. And she had always trusted that God would help. He also pointed out that Dutch hockey teams had been coming to Karachi for years and visited the home regularly.

That woman was no longer there herself. She had died four years earlier. In Karachi she was called Sister Gertrude. The residents called her mama. In Venray, a town in the southern province of Limburg where she was born in 1914, her name was Gertruda Lemmens, and she was called Truus.

The new building had been her dream, her successor said that evening. She would have been very happy with it. The home itself had started in 1969 with a few rooms on the ground floor.

Record 114

The birth record is still in the municipal archive of Venray. On July 3, 1914, Renier Lemmens registered the birth of a daughter, two days earlier, on July 1. She was given the names Gertruda Maria Johanna. Her mother's name was Lamberdina Poels. Two men signed as witnesses. It is record number 114 in the register of that year.

Her parents were both born in Venray and married there on April 11, 1902. Renier was twenty-seven, Lamberdina twenty-three. It was a Catholic family, and a large one. In those years Venray was a Catholic village in North Limburg, with a college of the minderbroeders. That is what the Franciscans are called in the Netherlands: an order of men who live after the example of Francis of Assisi, in poverty and service. Her older brother went to school at that college.

Gertruda was called Truus. How she grew up, what she learned and what work she did before she was twenty-five, I do not know. I have found no source about it. There is a gap of twenty-five years in her life story. It begins, as far as we can follow it, with her brother.

"Like a father"

Her brother was ten years older. He was born in Venray on May 24, 1904. On September 7, 1922, he joined the minderbroeders in Wijchen, where he received the name Salesius. In March 1929 he was ordained a priest in Oostrum. After that he worked in Woerden, and from August 1931 as a chaplain, an assistant priest in a parish, at the Franciscan church on the Laanderstraat in Heerlen.

In Heerlen Salesius worked with young laborers. He became chairman of the section Jonge Werklieden (Young Workers), taught religion classes and wrote a column in Dagblad De Limburger. In March 1934 he became spiritual adviser of the St. Clemens Technici Vereniging. Limburg newspapers followed his career, and through those reports it can be traced in broad outline. At his farewell in 1935, the leader of the Jonge Wacht (Young Guard) is said to have told him that he had been like a father to the boys.

Such a man left in 1935 for the other side of the world.

Under the protection of the Mother

In the spring of 1935 Salesius left for the mission. On June 7 of that year he arrived in Karachi. The city then lay in British India, in the province of Sind. Only in 1947 would Karachi become part of the new state of Pakistan.

Things moved fast for him. On March 31, 1936, he became head of the Catholic mission in Sind. In 1938 Rome made him prefect apostolic of Sind and Balochistan: the spiritual leader of a mission

area that is not yet a diocese. His coat of arms showed Our Lady of Oostrum and the desert of Sind with a camel. His motto was *Sub Matris tutela*, under the protection of the Mother. He helped set up schools in Karachi and Quetta and a hospital in Nawabshah.

His most lasting work he did together with a woman from Goa. Sister Bridget Sequeira, born in 1905 in Bushehr in Persia, now Iran, with family roots in Saligao in what was then Portuguese India, started a new congregation of sisters with him in Karachi on August 10, 1937: the Franciscan Missionaries of Christ the King. Rome had asked mission areas to found their own congregations. A congregation is a community of women or men who live together under vows and share a common task. This one was special, because it was made up of Indian women, and not of European sisters who came from far away. It is the only Roman Catholic community of this kind that arose in what is now Pakistan.

October 1939

In October 1939 Truus traveled to Karachi. She was twenty-five. She went to visit her brother and stayed about a month. That is how the English-language accounts of her life tell it.

During that month she went along on the rounds that Salesius made through the poor neighborhoods of the city. What she saw there never let her go. According to those accounts, it was mainly about children with an intellectual disability. Sometimes they were chained up like dogs, or had to live outside on the veranda, as if they did not belong to the family. They were not allowed to sit on the furniture in the house.

No diary or letter of hers has been published. Later sources do describe the same picture. A Pakistani newspaper wrote in 2012 about children who came to the home after being found chained up at

home. And her later fellow sister Ruth Lewis told of children on the street, in chains, who were pelted with stones by other children. So the problem was real, and it lasted a long time.

Have you ever seen something you could not forget afterward? Most people put it aside after a while. Truus did not.

Of Jesus it is written: *But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them* (Matthew 9:36). With Truus it also began with seeing, on the rounds through the poor neighborhoods. Thirty years later it became a house.

An engagement that was called off

She first went back to the Netherlands. According to the English-language accounts, she was engaged to a professor, whose name is never mentioned. She broke off the engagement. Then she went to Karachi again, to stay.

There is also a story that the professor followed her to Karachi to persuade her to come back. She is said to have refused. This appears only in the English-language encyclopedia. I tell it because it belongs to her story. Whether it happened, I do not know.

The war had begun in September 1939, and travel became difficult. How she got back and when, the sources do not tell.

A white sari with three red lines

Truus became a sister in the young congregation that her brother had founded with Bridget Sequeira. So a Dutch woman joined a community of Indian sisters. In Karachi she became Sister Gertrude.

The sisters of this congregation wore a white sari with three red lines along the edge. According to the congregation, they stand for

the three vows a sister makes: chastity, poverty and obedience. The sari was chosen because it is a garment that women wear across the whole subcontinent.

I find it a beautiful picture. A girl from Venray in a community that wore the clothing of the country, among women from Goa and Sind. She did not decide what that community looked like. She joined it.

In which year she made her vows, I have not been able to find.

March 21, 1942

On March 21, 1942, Salesius went swimming in the harbor of Karachi. He drowned. He was thirty-seven.

The Netherlands was occupied by Germany at the time. On May 1, 1942, the news of his death appeared in the Nieuwe Venlosche Courant. In the parish church of Onze Lieve Vrouw (Our Lady) in Venray, a requiem was held for him, a funeral mass for the deceased. The Limburger Koerier reported on May 9 that a solemn memorial service was also held in Oostrum.

The English-language accounts about Truus say that he drowned during an outing with disabled children. The life story of Salesius himself, which draws on the Limburg newspapers, says only that he drowned while swimming in the harbor.

Truus was in Karachi at that moment. She was twenty-seven, far from home, in a country at war. Her brother, the man through whom she had come here, was gone. She stayed.

Lessons in the morning, the neighborhoods in the afternoon

Little is known about the years that followed. According to the English-language accounts, in the mornings she taught English at the Christ the King School in Khudadad Colony, a district of

Karachi. In the afternoons she went into the slums for social work. One of those accounts also calls her a midwife. That would fit with what her congregation did: on May 14, 1943, it took over the management of a maternity clinic in Karachi, the Seth Mulchand Municipal Maternity Home, which became St Clare's Hospital. The sisters ran it until April 18, 1979. Whether Truus herself worked there is not recorded anywhere.

She learned Urdu, the language of the people around her. A missionary who learns the language deals with people differently from one who always needs an interpreter.

According to the English-language encyclopedia, there was hardly any contact with home during the war. In 1947 British India was partitioned. Karachi became the first capital of Pakistan, a country with a large Muslim majority. Truus stayed in that new state, as a Catholic sister among Muslims. The same encyclopedia says that she did not go back to the Netherlands for the first time until 1957, eighteen years after she left.

February 17, 1969

In 1969 Truus was fifty-four. The archbishop of Karachi, Joseph Cordeiro, had bought a property on Kashmir Road, a single-story house. He wanted to start an English-language school there. This is how the accounts tell it: Sister Gertrude asked him if she could use it for children with an intellectual disability. He gave in.

On February 17, 1969, the house opened. She called it Dar-ul-Sukun: House of Peace. At first eight children lived there, The Express Tribune later wrote.

Two sisters of her congregation helped her from the beginning: Ruth Lewis and Margaret D'Costa. Ruth was a Pakistani woman of about twenty-three. She walked through the streets of Karachi

and saw what Truus had seen in 1939: children with a disability, chained up, and other children and adults throwing stones at them. There had to be places, she thought, where such children were well cared for. Starting a home seemed impossible without the money of large international congregations.

According to Vatican News, after Ruth's death, Ruth confided her dream to Truus, and the two sisters made that dream come true together. Ruth herself later called Truus the inspiration and the reason she gave her life to these children. So the home has had two mothers, one Dutch and one Pakistani.

Harry Buitink later put it this way: she began this at an age when others stop. I sometimes think about that. You may think you are too late for something new. Truus was fifty-four, and the greatest work of her life had yet to begin.

Children at the gate

The home grew quickly. Whoever needed help came in. According to the accounts, these soon included orphans, old people without shelter, people with a physical disability and babies with a deformity.

In 2012 The Express Tribune described how the children came there. Some were left at the gate. Others were found in a hospital bed, where no one came for them anymore. And some were found at home, chained up. The newspaper wrote that they were punished for the crime of not being born normal.

Psalm 27 says: *When my father and my mother forsake me, then the LORD will take care of me* (Psalm 27:10). For the children at the gate, that being taken care of got an address on Kashmir Road.

The same newspaper let a woman visitor speak. She came to bring toys and clothes and called her first impression "downright frightening": women and children, many of them physically deformed, walked around freely and came toward her. When she stayed longer, she saw something else. The washrooms were pink and clean. The children wore clean clothes, were washed regularly and were given talcum powder. A woman in a wheelchair asked if she could give her a hug. She said the visitor looked like a doll.

A staff member told Dawn in 2007 how a morning begins. The women are washed first and have breakfast at half past seven. Some girls help the others. The home's office manager said that families often forgot their children after bringing them. Some gave a false address or a wrong phone number, so that no one could reach them. The building on Kashmir Road then had three floors with bright rooms, recreation rooms and rooms for physiotherapy and electrotherapy. Fifty-three people worked there, five of them sisters.

More homes came for the children. According to the accounts, orphan boys got their own house, Dugout, and for the elderly and homeless there came a house called Peace Haven. Janiville became a home for children from broken families, and later there was a branch in Lahore for people with a physical disability. In 2007 Dawn counted four branches in Karachi.

Most of the residents were Muslim. In the beginning the provincial government of Sindh contributed, a priest who later worked there said. The rest came from donations.

"Mama"

Some of those donations came from the Netherlands. According to the English-language encyclopedia, Truus traveled to the Nether-

lands in 1970. She appeared on television and made appeals in the newspapers. The Dutch airline KLM also began to support the home. This story comes from English-language sources. I have not been able to see the Dutch newspaper reports from 1970, although you would expect them in a newspaper archive.

What is certain is that a foundation arose in the Netherlands that bore her name: Stichting Thuisfront Zuster Lemmens. In mission circles a thuisfront, a home front, is the group of people at home who pray, raise money and keep in touch with a missionary far away. Dutch volunteers also came to Karachi themselves, sometimes for months, Ruth Lewis said.

In the home itself Truus had a simpler name. The residents called her mama. Dawn wrote this in 2004, and a Pakistani life sketch says the same. According to the encyclopedia, her colleagues described her as loving, warm and with a sense of humor.

In the press and on the internet she was also given bigger names. She was called the "Mother Teresa of Pakistan", and the "Angel of Karachi". Those are nicknames from the press and from websites. The first nickname also belongs to someone else: in 2020 Vatican News gave the same title to Ruth Lewis. Perhaps that says something. What the one began, the other carried on.

A star on March 23, 1989

March 23 is Pakistan Day, a national holiday. On that day in 1989, Sister Gertrude received the Sitara-i-Quaid-i-Azam, the Star of the Great Leader, named after the founder of Pakistan. It is one of the highest honors the country gives to foreigners. She received it for her work in Dar-ul-Sukun and for the homes that grew out of it.

The Catholic news agency UCA News carried the report in April 1989, under the headline that a German and a Dutch sister had re-

ceived an award. I could not open that article myself. I know its content from sources that refer to it. According to the English-language encyclopedia, President Ghulam Ishaq Khan and Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto were present at the ceremony.

A Pakistani life sketch also mentions an award from the Dutch queen in 1975, without saying which one.

October 2000

Truus Lemmens died in October 2000 in Karachi. She was eighty-six. She had lived in the city for about sixty years and worked for more than thirty years in the home on Kashmir Road.

UCA News carried the report on October 31, under a headline calling her a missionary sister who was the first to work with special children. According to the English-language encyclopedia, she was buried on November 1, All Saints' Day.

Ruth Lewis took over the leadership and stayed another twenty years. Under her the new wing was built, with Dutch money, and the home grew into the largest institution of its kind in Karachi. A home for the elderly was added, a home for girls who could no longer stay at their own homes, and at the end of 2007 a home for orphaned and homeless boys in Quetta.

A corner behind a curtain

Ruth did not sleep in a room of her own, a priest said later, who as a seminarian had worked in the home for a year. She had a corner behind a curtain next to the children's beds, because at night they might need her. She changed diapers herself and cleaned rooms herself, and expected the seminarians to do the same. That was how she set the example, he said.

In June 2020, twenty-one children in the home got COVID-19. The paid staff refused to care for them. Ruth did not send the children to hospitals. She did it herself. "My life is for them," she said, according to that priest. She was infected. On July 8 she was admitted to the hospital on a ventilator, and on July 20, 2020, she died.

After her death Pakistan gave her the Sitara-i-Imtiaz posthumously. On March 23, 2021, a woman who had been taken in at the home as a child and now works there received the award. She said that Ruth was the mother of all the children of Dar-ul-Sukun.

Jesus said: *inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me* (Matthew 25:40). In this home the least were children forgotten by their own families. Truus began the work, and Ruth stayed with it until her death.

A few rooms on the ground floor

I know less about Truus Lemmens than I would like. There is no biography of her. As far as I know, she wrote no book. I have hardly come across her in Dutch newspapers and archives, except in two records and in the name of a foundation. Her story has been kept mainly in Karachi, by the people she took in and by the woman who took over her work.

Perhaps that suits her. She went as a visitor to a city on the other side of the world, and she stayed. She joined the women of the country, learned their language and took a building that was meant for a school. There she made a home for children who were welcome nowhere else.

In Karachi another house still bears her name: Lemmens House, for girls from broken families. According to Global Sisters Report, fifty live there.

On that Saturday evening in December 2004 she was not there. Her children were. They danced in a building she had dreamed of, next to the old house with a few rooms on the ground floor, where they had called her mama.

What is certain and what is told

Certain (records and several independent sources): born in Venray on July 1, 1914, as Gertruda Maria Johanna Lemmens, daughter of Renier Lemmens and Lamberdina Poels (birth record; the date July 14 on some websites is incorrect); her parents' marriage in 1902; her brother Salesius Lemmens, Franciscan, in Karachi from 1935, prefect apostolic, co-founder of the Franciscan Missionaries of Christ the King (August 1937), drowned in the harbor of Karachi on March 21, 1942; her membership of that congregation; the founding of Dar-ul-Sukun in 1969 (February 17) with Ruth Lewis there from the beginning; the foundlings and chained children who were taken in there; the nickname "mama" among the residents; the opening of the new building on December 11, 2004, with support from the KNHB and Stichting Thuisfront Zuster Lemmens (Dawn); the Sitara-i-Quaid-i-Azam on March 23, 1989 (via sources that refer to UCA News); her death in October 2000 in Karachi, aged 86; her succession by Ruth Lewis and Ruth's death in 2020.

Only from own testimony or circle: what she saw in the poor neighborhoods in 1939; that Ruth Lewis told her the dream of the home (according to Vatican News); Ruth's words about Truus as her inspiration; Buitink's words about her trust in God's help; the meaning of the three red lines on the sari (according to the congregation); Ruth's words during the COVID period, as a priest retold them.

Unconfirmed (a single, often derived source): the name Truus; that her father was the manager of a factory; the engagement to a professor and his trip to Karachi; that her brother drowned during

an outing with disabled children; her work as a teacher and midwife; her first trip home in 1957; the trip to the Netherlands in 1970 with TV appearances and support from KLM; the names of the separate homes; the award from the queen in 1975; the presence of Ghulam Ishaq Khan and Benazir Bhutto in 1989; the burial on November 1, 2000; the farewell words of the leader of the Jonge Wacht in 1935 (English-language Wikipedia, based on a newspaper report I could not see); the details of Salesius's training, ordination and career in the Netherlands (also via that Wikipedia page with newspaper references; I have not opened the newspapers themselves); the coat of arms and motto of Salesius; that Bridget Sequeira was born in Bushehr and that her congregation is the only Roman Catholic community to have arisen in what is now Pakistan (a message on the Goanet list; The Goan says only that she came from Saligao).

Disputed: the date of her death (October 27 or 30, 2000); the year of her first arrival (the encyclopedia gives both 1939 and, indirectly, 1936); the year she joined the congregation (Goanet says 1939, I could not check it); the property on Kashmir Road (a purchased property meant for a school according to the English-language accounts, a small donated house according to The Express Tribune); the support for the new building (Dawn names the Dutch hockey association, The Express Tribune the Australian hockey association); the age of Ruth Lewis at her death and her year of birth (1946 according to two sources); Salesius's name, which The Goan gives as Stanislaus, and the name of Ruth Lewis, which Dawn writes as Ruth Louis; the funeral of Salesius (a requiem in Venray according to the life story, a memorial service in Oostrum according to a newspaper of May 9, 1942); that the sisters, according to Fides, were already caring for children with disabilities in Karachi in 1959, which does not fit the founding date of 1969 and is confirmed by no other source.

Interpretation: the nicknames "Mother Teresa of Pakistan" and "Angel of Karachi" come from the press and from websites. The first has also been given to Ruth Lewis. I leave out the names of residents, because they are still alive.

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Afterword

Eight lives, from Rotterdam around 1606 to Karachi in 2000. A minister who went back to the camp of Koxinga. A bishop between church and plantation. A scholar who first went to listen. A young missionary who stayed in Bori'. An orphan boy from Amsterdam who was read all over the world. A woman who went to Soekaboemi against their wishes. A bride without a groom. A sister whom children in Karachi called mama.

They differ enormously, just like the eight in the first volume. What they share is that they said yes without knowing where that yes would take them.

While writing this volume I ran into limits more often than in the first. Letters lie in archives I could not open. About some of them no biography has ever been written. Dates contradict each other. I have left those gaps open instead of talking them shut. Perhaps that is a lesson too. Most of what these people did was written down by no one. It happened in a classroom, at a sickbed or in a house with a few rooms on the ground floor.

Many stories still lie in archives and church chests. Letters of Caroline Gunning in The Hague and Utrecht. The Luinenburg family

archive. The personal record cards of missionaries in Het Utrechts Archief. Whoever searches will find more than I could tell here.

Then I said, "Here am I! Send me." (Isaiah 6:8)