

MUTUAL INFLUENCES OF INDONESIAN AND DUTCH PENTECOSTAL CHURCHES

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Abstract: The relationship between Pentecostal churches in the Netherlands and Indonesia has long taken place as one can see it happen since before the independence of Indonesia. But, what is going on in that relationship has hardly been discussed academically. As a result of a research on the theme, this article tries to fill the gap. The historical past is discussed in periodical frame. While revealing events and names of prominent people in the past, this article also touches the overriding theological thoughts. It shows that not only the Dutch instills influences into the Indonesian, but, the opposite is also true, the Indonesian brings changes to the Dutch Pentecostal churches.

Key Words : Pentecostalism, Charismaticism, Mennonite, Dutch, Indonesian

Abstrak: Hubungan antara gereja-gereja Pentakostal yang berada di Indonesia dan di Belanda sudah berlangsung lama, sejak sebelum kemerdekaan Republik ini. Tetapi apa saja yang terjadi dalam hubungan itu, belum pernah dikuak secara serius. Tulisan ini merupakan hasil riset mengenai hubungan tersebut. Dari penelitian tersebut kita tidak hanya belajar tentang sejarah masa lalu (yang dibagi dalam beberapa periode) namun juga fenomena yang terjadi dewasa ini. Sejarah memiliki pengaruh yang kuat hingga sekarang, termasuk dalam soal-soal mendasar seperti corak teologi. Studi ini juga menguak kenyataan bahwa tidak saja pihak Belanda yang menanamkan pengaruhnya di Indonesia, sebaliknya orang-orang Pentakostal Indonesia telah “menularkan” pengaruhnya ke orang-orang Pentakostal di Belanda.

Kata-kata kunci: Pentakosta, Karismatik, Mennonite, Belanda, Indonesia

1. Introduction

The focus of this paper is on the contribution of Dutch Pentecostal missionaries to the rise of Pentecostalism in Indonesia until its independence and the subsequent contribution of Indonesian Pentecostals immigrant to Pentecostalism in the Netherlands after the independence of Indonesia. It will include some recent developments in the dialogue with traditional churches.

The Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements have become a major stream within Christianity in Indonesia. Up to now no comprehensive and analytical study of the history of these movements has been published. A number of these groups have occasionally issued uncritical descriptions of their denominational history, with little theological and historical analysis. The attention the Pentecostals and Charismatics have received in the more academic works on Christianity in Indonesia is not in proportion to their significance. In all of these publications only little credit is given to the role the early Dutch Pentecostal Movement played.

A number of primary sources not properly used up to now indicate that the Dutch Pentecostal Movement had a strong influence on the emergence of Pentecostalism in Indonesia. A thorough research of all primary sources available is needed to ascertain the relations between the Pentecostal Movements in the Netherlands and Indonesia. This has to be complemented with a historical and sociological study of the colonial period and by field research including interviewing eye witnesses of the formative years of Pentecostalism.

After a short introduction to more general issues as definition and origins of Pentecostalism, this paper will present some of the main characters in the mutual influences of Dutch and Indonesian Pentecostalism.

1.1 Definition and Numbers

During the past century World Christianity nearly quadrupled, just like the world population. On a closer look major geographic changes in Christianity have taken place, sometime referred to as a shift from the North to the South. While the Christian presence in proportion to the

population decreased in Europe and to a lesser extent in North America, it showed a strong increase in South America, Africa and Asia. Statistics like those of the World Christian Database attribute the increase for a large part to the emergence of Pentecostal and Charismatic Christianity. With figures well above 600 million, this Charismatic Christianity now accounts for more than 25% of World Christianity.

Early Pentecostal writers such as Stanley H. Frodsham (1926), Donald Gee (1941) and Carl Brumback (1946) saw as the movement's most outstanding characteristic the teaching of the Spirit Baptism as an experience different from conversion, manifested by the speaking in tongues. This theological definition has two identification markers of Spirit baptism: it is different from conversion and it is manifested by tongues. The first of these issues is generally accepted among Pentecostals, while the second is more controversial, certainly outside North America. Walter J. Hollenweger therefore qualified the second marker by saying "usually, but not always, associated with speaking in tongues" (Hollenweger, 1972: xix).

In the first half of the previous century saw the emergence of what we now call "Classical" Pentecostalism. For the Classical Pentecostals the above definition was useful, and it remains so when Hollenweger's addition is taken into consideration. The second half of the previous century saw the rise of the Charismatic Renewal, sometime called "second wave", to which a "Neo-charismatic: or "third wave" category was later added. While the "second wave", when limited to the charismatic renewal movements within the mainline churches, is still an identifiable category, according to the editors of the *New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements (NIDPCM)* the "third wave" is a "catch-all category" that is nearly impossible to define:

[It] comprises 18,810 independent, indigenous, post-denominational denominations and groups that cannot be classified either as pentecostal or charismatic, but share a common emphasis on the Holy Spirit, spiritual gifts, Pentecostal-like experiences (not Pentecostal terminology), signs and wonders, and power encounters. In virtually every other way, however, they are as diverse as the world's cultures they represent (Burgess, 2001: xx).

The broadening of the categories implies a broadening of the definition. The earlier definition suited Classical Pentecostalism, but not so the Charismatic Renewal and much less so the Neo-charismatic. Therefore more inclusive definitions are suggested. In his *Introduction*

to *Pentecostalism* (2004), Allan Anderson has chosen to follow the lead of Robert Anderson, emphasizing experience and practice rather than the doctrine informing an appropriate definition, and suggests that it is “a movement concerned primarily with the *experience* of the working of the Holy Spirit and the *practice* of spiritual gifts” (Anderson, 2004: 14). Building upon this broad definition Allan Anderson in *Studying Global Pentecostalism* (2010) identifies four overlapping types: 1. Classical Pentecostals; 2. Older Church Charismatics; 3. Older Independent and Spirit Churches; 4. Neo-Pentecostals and Neo-Charismatics (Anderson, 2010). Although the debate will no doubt go on, for the present time, this taxonomy seems to be a promising way to address the whole range of Pentecostalism.

1.2 *Beginning Pentecostalism*

Scholars today prefer to speak of multiple origins of Pentecostalism. Reference is made to the role of revival movements in Wales (1904-1905), Pandita Ramabai’s Mukti Mission in India (1905-1907) and the Korean Pentecost (1903 and 1907-1908)(Anderson, 2004: 35-38). Nevertheless the Azusa Street Revival of 1906 has become an icon of the beginning of the worldwide Pentecostal Movement. The Mission emphasized the unity amongst Christians. In every issue of the periodical *The Apostolic Faith* the colophon stated:

The Apostolic Faith Movement stands for the restoration of the faith once delivered unto the saints – the old time religion, camp meetings, revivals, missions, street and prison works and Christian Unity everywhere.

We are not fighting men or churches, but seeking to displace dead forms and creeds or wild fanaticism with living practical Christianity. “Love, Faith, Unity” is our watchword, and “Victory through the Atoning Blood” our battle cry.

We see here both continuity as well as discontinuity. A connection is made with the faith handed over by tradition, but there is also a replacing of dead forms with a living practical Christianity. The overall theme is Love, Faith and Unity.

In the Azusa Street Revival everyone was equal in Christ, irrespective of ethnic background, social status or gender. Not only Whites and Blacks were visiting the meetings, but also many Hispanics, Asians

and Indians (Robeck, 2006). The Holy Spirit brought unity in the midst of diversity. Azusa Street is an example for any society where tolerance towards immigrants and ethnic minorities is decreasing.

1.3 The Netherlands 1907

A century ago The Netherlands was not at all the multicultural society of today. Immigration was small scaled, certainly non-Western immigration. When it comes to church life, the differences were huge. For Gerrit Polman (1868-1932), founder of the Dutch Pentecostal Movement, the unity among Christians was a main thrust (van der Laan, 1991). For him the Pentecostal message was a blessing of God's Spirit for all churches. In the first issue of his periodical *Spade Regen* (Latter Rain, April 1908) he wrote: "It is wonderful to see that God's children of different Churches or Societies and the Salvation Army are coming together, praying for the baptism in the Spirit. Where God's Spirit is poured out, all separations fall away and one unites at the feet of the Cross and one just looks at the Saviour of all men".

The international revival was seen in eschatological perspective. James 5:7-8, associating the latter rain with the second coming of the Lord, was quoted in full as the paper's subtitle.

The outpouring of the Holy Spirit with the speaking in tongues was a sign that Jesus was coming soon. In this period of the latter rain the gifts were restored in order to prepare the church as the bride for the eschatological wedding feast. As a preparation to the second advent the bride needed to be purified (sanctification of the believers); and the gospel needed to be preached to all nations (foreign mission).

2. Pentecostalism in Indonesia

2.1 Statistics

In the national census of 1930 (only once held during Dutch rule), two-third of the total population of 60,7 million lived on Java: Javanese (47%) on Central and East Java; Sundanese (15%) on West Java and Madurese (7%) on East Java and Madura.¹ The 1930 census only recorded religions of a very small part of the Indonesian population. According to the 2000 census 88% of the then nearly 206 million are Muslim, making Indonesia the country with the largest Muslim following in the world. The same census shows 18 million Christians, or 9% of the population.² The census

only allowed two categories for Christians: Catholics or Protestant. These figures are challenged by Barrett, Kurian and Johnson in their *World Christian Encyclopedia* (2001), who calculate the number of Christians for mid-2000 at nearly 28 million, making 13,1 % of a total population of 212 million (Barrett, 2001: 104). Mainly responsible for the difference is the category crypto-Christians in the latter publication. These are hidden Christians in areas of strong Muslim hostilities. From the 13,1% of Barrett, Kurian and Johnson, 4% are Catholic (8,44 million) and 4,5% (9,45 million) Pentecostal/Charismatic. Johnstone and Mandryk in *Operation World* (2001) calculate 16% Christians (34 million), 7% are Catholic and 5,1% (15 million) are Pentecostal/Charismatic (10,8 million)(Johnstone and Jason, 2001: 339). A more recent publication by Aritonang and Steenbrink speaks of 17 million Protestants among whom 6 million are Pentecostal, excluding the Charismatics in the mainline churches (Aritonang, 2008: 882).

2.2 Arrival of Pentecostal Missionaries in 1921

Up to now the arrival of two Pentecostal missionary couples from North America in 1921 is taken as the start of the Pentecostal Movement in Indonesia. Dirk and Stien van Klaveren and Cornelis and Mies Groesbeek, all from Dutch descent and former Salvation Army officers, with their children were sent by Bethel Temple, an independent Pentecostal church in Seattle, Washington, led by W.H. Offiler (1875-1957). More American missionaries coming through this church would follow a decade later. Van Klaveren and Groesbeek arrived on the island Bali in March 1921 and started evangelistic work. Afraid of resistance by the predominately Hindu Balinese, the Dutch Government summoned the missionaries to leave for Java (Sumual, tt: 51). No church being established on Bali, both couples moved to Java during 1922, where the Pentecostal Movement really took shape as from 1923.

Unnoticed by many publications up to now, Johann Thiessen (1869-1953) also arrived as Pentecostal missionary early 1921, simultaneously with Van Klaveren and Groesbeek. While Van Klaveren and Groesbeek worked on Bali, Thiessen already was active on Java. Thiessen was sent out by the Dutch Pentecostal movement as their first Pentecostal missionary for the Dutch East Indies. In the same year Anna Gnirrep was sent out, followed in 1922 by the couple William en Henriette Bernard and Minna Hansen. The next and last Dutch Pentecostal missionary to Indonesia in this period, Piet Klaver and his family, would come in 1929.

After Van Klaveren and Groesbeek moved to Java they cooperated with Thiessen and Bernard. Together they were the pioneers that introduced the Pentecostal message to the Dutch East Indies. Among those of Dutch descent that were won for the Pentecostal cause were F.G. van Gessel (1893-1958), D.H.W. Weenink van Loon (1877-1944), F. van Abkoude and M.A. Alt (1883-1962). Out of their initiatives large Indonesian Pentecostal churches developed. Especially, Thiessen, Van Gessel, Weenink van Loon and Alt, were to become leaders of major significance in the formative years. They belonged to the founding parents of what today still is the largest Pentecostal Church, the Gereja Pantekosta di Indonesia (GPdI), with 1,4 million affiliates in 2001. Due to a conflict in 1923/1924 Thiessen separated and subsequently was not given due credit or even ignored in the historical accounts that usually are told from the perspective of the American missionaries Van Klaveren and Groesbeek. As female leadership was considered unbiblical by many, the role of Margaretha Alt is often obscured. To balance the former, this paper will focus on Thiessen and Alt.

2.3 Contacts before 1920

Before the first Pentecostal missionaries went out to Indonesia, there had been some contacts between Pentecostals in the Netherlands and Dutch believers in Indonesia. Mrs. Polman was born in Wonosobo, Central Java, and had lived there 20 years. It is unknown whether she still kept in touch with friends over there. Certainly she must have been in contact with her sister Marie (4,5 years younger), also born on Java, when Marie for a period worked in Indonesia as officer of the Salvation Army, before she married the English Pentecostal widower William Bernard in 1914. Ten years later Marie and her husband would be Pentecostal missionaries on Java.

In April 1908 Polman started the publication of *Spade Regen*. In January 1909 he reported that out of the 3,000 copies hundreds were sent to Dutch speaking abroad, especially in South Africa, but also in Indonesia. In July 1911 he writes

We rejoice greatly, that also from our Dutch East Indies requests are coming for the *Spade Regen*. How we have prayed, and how we still do, that the Holy Spirit will also be poured out upon the missionaries in our colonies. Then many questions will be solved, like: What to do against the mighty stream of the Islam? Then financial needs and many other difficulties will be met. The Pentecostal blessing is the only divine way out (Nn., 1911: 4).

It seems these contacts with Polman led to the formation of an ecumenical prayer group with Pentecostal sympathies at Temanggung in 1911 around the reformed pastor Horstman, Weirs and Van Abkoude.³ Some of the later Dutch Pentecostal missionaries would cooperate with Horstman at Temanggung on Central Java, while the son of Horstman and Van Abkoude would become leaders in the Indonesian Pentecostal movement.

In September 1911 Piet Pilon left for Java as a medical missionary for the Salatiga Mission. For several years during his medical training in Amsterdam he attended Pentecostal meetings and received the Spirit Baptism (Nn. 1909: 25-26). He even made a trip to Alexander Boddy in Sunderland, the Anglican priest who led the early Pentecostal Movement in Britain. It seems that his contacts with the Pentecostals did not continue on Java. In 1915 he is known to have visited Margaretha Alt on Gambung Waluh, which was before Alt joined the Pentecostal movement.

In December 1918 Polman quotes from a letter of a ‘sister in the Lord’ from Makassar on Celebes. She has just read a more than 2 years old *Spade Regen* (July 1916) and longs for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit (Nn., 1918: 36). In September 1920 Polman published a request from friends in Indonesia to send Pentecostal missionaries to Java (Nn., 1909: 4; Nn., 1920: 90). Thiessen was the first to respond.

3. Johan Thiessen (1869-1953)

3.1 Mennonite period

Johann Thiessen was born on November 22, 1869 in Ukraine. It is claimed that his ancestors in the 17th century were Mennonites that had fled from Friesland (Netherlands) to Poland and from there to South Russia (Ukraine). Upon the invitation of Tsarina Catherina the Great, many Mennonites had settled there in the 18th century. At the age of 25 Johann Thiessen had a conversion experience (Thiessen, 1939: 2). He went to Switzerland for a theological training (Sankt Chrishona Seminary near Basel). In 1899 he became a candidate missionary for the Dutch Mennonite Mission Society ‘Doopsgezinde Zendings Vereniging’ (DZV). In Rotterdam he followed a two year medical study and learned the Batak language as well as Malay and Dutch. In 1902 he was sent out by the DZV to Pakantan on Sumatra. Just before his departure he embarrassed the DZV by letting himself being re-baptised by immersion in a Baptist Church in Berlin. On top of it he married a non-Mennonite lady, Anna Maria Vink, a niece of the well known reformed Professor A.H. de Hartog.

Once in Pakantan Thiessen extended the already existing mission station “with a church, schools, an orphanage, a hospital, a place where widows could live, and self constructed paved roads” (Hoekema, 2001: 89). After 10 years on the mission field Thiessen returned to the Netherlands. The Mennonite church historian Hoekema relates: “Thiessen apparently was a good organizer; unfortunately, his financial management was disastrous and he had to leave the DZV service in 1912. Certainly the DZV board also bears responsibility here” (Hoekema, 2001: 90). In 1914 Thiessen, who was a competent photographer, published a beautiful book with many self made photos about his mission work in Pakantan: *Pakantan: Een belangrijk gedeelte van Sumatra* (Apeldoorn: privately published, 1914).⁴

3.1 Intermediate period

For several years Thiessen lived at Apeldoorn where he was a key figure in the independent city mission ‘Maranatha’. This mission was later carried on by the reformed pastor J.H. Gunning JHz., who lived at Apeldoorn in 1916-1920.⁵ During these years Thiessen joined the Pentecostal Movement, probably through his contacts in Germany or Switzerland and was baptized with the Holy Spirit.⁶ The German Pentecostal leader Jonathan Paul had a great influence upon his life. He also established a good relation with Polman, whose ecumenical aspirations seemed to pay off during this time. Several reformed ministers showed sympathy for the Pentecostal movement: G.A. Wumkes, J.H. Gunning JHz. and A.H. den Hartog (whose niece had married Thiessen), but also someone of nobility like Dr. Frederik M. Baron van Asbeck (1889-1968). These contacts would prove advantageous for Thiessen. At Apeldoorn Thiessen may have met the missionary to Indonesia on furlough C.J. Hoekendijk, who lived there during 1916-1918 and was befriended with Gunning.⁷ Hoekendijk’s son Karel would 40 years later become a major figure in Dutch Pentecostalism, while his other son Hans would become Professor of Missions at Utrecht. In Indonesia Thiessen would for a short while cooperate with Hoekendijk at Bandung. At Polman’s home Thiessen met the above-mentioned Van Asbeck (1889-1969).⁸ They too would meet again in Indonesia. During 1919-1934 Van Asbeck worked in Indonesia for the Dutch government and as Professor in international and colonial law at the university in Batavia.

Thiessen made journeys to Eastern Europe.⁹ He was in Russia during the Revolution and imprisoned for some time. Mrs. Thiessen received her Spirit baptism in Amsterdam during 1920 (Nn., 1931: 180-184). That same year Thiessen participated in the founding of the Dutch Pentecostal Missionary Society and became its vice-president. The next year he left for Indonesia.

3.3 Introducing Pentecost in Evangelical circles on Java

Early 1921 Thiessen sailed to the Dutch Indies, this time as a Pentecostal missionary to Java. The October issue of *Spade Regen* reports that the Thiessen family and Anna Gnirrep had arrived safely and were preparing themselves for ministry. Anna Gnirrep would find work in a home for neglected children at Weltevreden on Java from 1921 till 1927.¹⁰ The reformed missionaries Hoekendijk, Wijers at Bandung and others had established the 'Bond voor Evangelistatie' (Union for Evangelization) in 1916, which purpose it was to reach the Dutch people in Indonesia with the gospel. Hoekendijk edited their periodical *Vredeboode* (Messenger of Peace) and became the Union's first missionary.¹¹ Wijers had opened a Christian hostel at Bandung and saw in Thiessen the right person to provide spiritual guidance to the souls seeking rest in this home. The enterprise failed and Thiessen for a while cooperated with Hoekendijk preaching all over Java. At the Whitsuntide Conference 1922 at Bandung Hoekendijk preached on the necessity of the baptism in het Holy Spirit and prayed for a Pentecostal revival. Polman enthusiastically commented: "We rejoice to hear that on Java there awakes a strong desire among God's children for the baptism of the Holy Spirit" (Polman, 1922: 78). Some readers in the Netherlands, like Gunning, concluded that Hoekendijk had joined the Pentecostals! (Nn., 1922, 371; Gunning, 1922: 301-02). The Free Evangelical periodical *Ons Orgaan* quickly explained that Gunning had made an unpleasant mistake (Winckel, 1922: 191). Missionaries on Java were warned against the Pentecostals based on negative reports from Germany. By this time our Van Asbeck had become chairman of the Union of Evangelization. In August 1922 Thiessen claimed he had been able to remove some of the prejudices:

Because of wrong messages and literature from the Netherlands one was reserved against the Pentecostals. . . Due to the many meetings I held in conferences, the opinion has changed. At present there is a cry in many small circles from Surabaya till Batavia: O God, give us a Spirit Baptism (Nn., 1922: 126-127).

One month later he is even more optimistic:

As I wrote earlier there was to be a conference in Semarang. I have been there with sister Gnrirrep and brother Asbek [sic.]. It was wonderful how prejudices were removed. The Lord gave mercy that His Word proved itself as a power. Missionaries fell on their knees and asked for a baptism in the Holy Spirit (Nn., 1922: 144).

Meanwhile other Dutch missionaries to the Dutch Indies had arrived. William Bernard (1866-1945) and Marie Henriette Blekkink (1882-1932) left for Java in August 1922 together with Miss Minna Hansen (1893-1939) from Denmark, who had stayed about a year with the Polmans in Amsterdam. They settled at Temanggung, where they would work under the flag of Horstman among Chinese and Muslims.¹² In the above quoted letter from Thiessen of September 30, 1922, we are also informed that Thiessen travelled to Temanggung, together with Gnrirrep, to welcome the Bernards and Minna Hansen. With Gnrirrep he also visited Margaretha Alt “and her 50 orphans and the Javanese assembly” at Gambung Waluh, “who had tired herself up to now in legalism, but now with all she is throws herself in the Pentecostal stream” (Nn., 1922: 144). The same letter also reports Thiessen and Gnrirrep visiting Van Klaveren at Surabaya. Obviously Thiessen is travelling around and extending his contacts outside of the Union for Evangelization.

In his diary Hoekendijk recalls another meeting in Surabaya. Hoekendijk and Thiessen both met Van Klaveren and Groesbeek who had recently come to Java and also Bernard. After the conversation the five men kneeled down for prayer: “Suddenly one started to pray in tongues, then another one and in the end all four. I had never been in contact with a Pentecostal assembly and I had never heard such a thing. (van den End, 1993: 174-75).” That same evening an open air meeting was held in the city garden with Thiessen preaching. Hoekendijk admitted: “I must honestly say, that seldom had I heard such a firm message,” yet he was suspicious about the tongue speaking and kept at a distance (van den End, 1993: 175).

While Hoekendijk became more and more doubtful, others from his circle, like D.H.W. Weenink van Loon, accepted the Pentecostal message or were sympathetic to it, like Baron van Asbeck. Baron van Asbeck was chairman of the Union of Evangelization and Weenink van Loon its treasurer. The rupture would come after meetings in Cepu in March 1923.

In a meeting led by Thiessen in Cepu people started to speak in tongues and received all kinds of visions. They were told to have received

the baptism in the Holy Spirit. The Union's board members, Weenink van Loon, wrote an enthusiastic report which was published in *de Vredeboode* without the knowledge of Hoekendijk. The article announced a new Pentecost for Java. Hoekendijk felt he had to act. At the annual general council of the Union on May 21, 1923, Hoekendijk's proposal was accepted to remove from their board all members in sympathy with the Pentecostal movement. This led to the resignation of their administrator Weenink van Loon, but also of the chairman Baron van Asbeck (Nn., 1923: 268-289; 12-13). Several articles by Hoekendijk repudiating the Pentecostal movement in *Vredeboode* followed (Nn., 1923: 282-283; 290-291; Nn., 1924: 308-309; 315-316). Thiessen's efforts to integrate the Pentecostal message in existing evangelical circles came to an end. Hereafter the Pentecostal movement would develop as a separate movement. In his diary Hoekendijk wrote: "The performance of this brother with his new message went through our Union like a storm... Thank God the storm also passed away, even if it did destroy a lot. (van den End, 1993: 176)."

3.4 Foundation of the Pentecostal Movement

When Van Klaveren en Groesbeek came from Bali to Java, they first cooperated with Thiessen. It seems they left Bali separately. Van Klaveren speaks of leaving Bali "after 14 months", indicating mid 1922, while Groesbeek dates his arrival on Java as December 27, 1922.¹³ After a short stay at Surabaya Van Klaveren would settle in Lawang, while Groesbeek first stayed at Cepu and thereafter settled in Surabaya. Thiessen only mentions Van Klaveren in his letter cited above dated September 30, 1922, at that time Van Klaveren was in Surabaya, while the Bernards were already at Temanggung. The above implies that the Bernards and Minna Hansen arrived on Java before Groesbeek.

At first Thiessen, Van Klaveren, Groesbeek and Bernard all worked together. The revival at Cepu on March 29, 1923, reported by Weenink van Loon in *De Vredeboode*, is usually identified as the beginning of the Pentecostal Movement in Indonesia. Also by Thiessen in the first issue of his periodical *Dit is Het* of July 1923.

A few days after their arrival on Java in December 1922 the couple Groesbeek was invited to do missionary work in Cepu. Here he met George van Gessel who worked for the Dutch Oil Company. In a meeting a young man was healed from a chronic kidney disease (Nn., 1923: 8). A small group of followers developed, mostly from Roman Catholic background.

When a number wanted to be baptized in water, Thiessen was called to come over from Bandung. On Good Friday, March 29, 1923, 15 people (8 of whom had been Roman Catholic) were baptized by immersion in a river by Thiessen and Groesbeek. That evening, while Thiessen led the Lord's Supper, the first received the Spirit Baptism accompanied by speaking in tongues and visions, more received the days following (Nn. 1923: 7). Weenink van Loon, who accompanied Thiessen, mentions a Menadonese girl, servant in the house of Van Gessel, who in tongues sang in correct English "Glory to Jesus".¹⁴ Very touching was that the servant girl knelt next to her master George van Gessel, who was praying for the Spirit Baptism, and laid her hands on his back. Weenink van Loon exclaimed:

Truly there is no partiality with God and with Him every difference of colour, race and rank disappears, it does not exist before His Holy Presence! Halleluja! Glory for Jesus! Ten souls received the Baptism in the Holy Spirit (van Loon: 1923).

These were quite remarkable words in a colonial context. Weenink van Loon stated these were the first on Java ever to be baptized in the Holy Spirit after Joël 2.¹⁵ No wonder his article in *Vredeboode* aroused controversy. Thiessen wrote in a similar way:

At last the first flames of fire have fallen on Dutch Indies, another era has begun, also here for these islands. The first ten children of God were baptized in water and in the Holy Spirit, accompanied by tongues and visions and revelations after God's Word, like God has started in all the world to prepare His Bridal Assembly for the coming Christ. . . What never happened in the Indies, happened on Easter 1923 (Nn., 1923: 33-45).

A few days later several in Surabaya received the Spirit Baptism and thereafter in Bandung (Nn., 1923: 63, 69). No longer under the umbrella of the Union for Evangelization, it was necessary to establish an organization recognized by the government. On June 19, 1923, the 'Vereeniging De Pinkstergemeente in Nederlandsch Indië' (PGNI - Association of the Pentecostal Assembly in Dutch Indies) was founded. Today the church is known as "Geredja Pantekosta di Indonesia" (GPDI). Thiessen and Weenink van Loon submitted a request to the government for incorporation, which was approved on June 4, 1924.

At Whitsuntide, July 1923, Thiessen convened the first Pentecostal conference on Java at Bandung. Van Klaveren, Groesbeek, Bernard and Gnirrep were present. At this point Thiessen had established a Pentecostal

assembly in Bandung, which formed the nucleus of the conference. On Sunday morning 42 people were baptized in water by Thiessen assisted by Bernard in a small village outside Bandung. It reminded Bernard of the “good old days at Sunderland” (Nn. 1923: 63). The same month saw the publication of the first Indonesian Pentecostal periodical *Dit is Het*. Thiessen is the editor with co-operation of Bernard, Groesbeek and Van Klaveren. The first issue carried testimonies of the latter three and one from Van Gessel, while Weenink van Loon explained his departure from the Union of Evangelization. In the standard text on page 2, the reader is informed that this work has nothing to do neither with the Union of Evangelization nor with the *Vredeboode*. The August 1923 issue of *Spade Regen*, reports the fire of God being fallen at Cepu, then at Surabaya and also at Bandung, but also speaks of resistance. In a letter dated September 1923, Mrs. Bernard-Blekkink gives a report of their first year as missionaries at Temanggung (van Abkoude, 1933).

3.5 Secession

Shortly hereafter the relation between Thiessen and the others ended. It seems there was a clash between Weenink van Loon and Thiessen, who both worked in Bandung. In a later letter ten years later Frans van Abkoude would blame Thiessen for the split, as he was becoming “proud and fanatical” (van Abkoude, 1933). Weenink van Loon and the others remained in the PGNI, while Thiessen sometime during the end of 1923 or beginning of 1924 founded a new group: “De Pinksterbeweging” (later to be called Gereja Gerakan Pentakosta). This is contrary to perhaps all historical descriptions that suggest Thiessen came in later and broke away in 1932.

While Thiessen kept control of his paper *Dit Is Het*, the PGNI in October 1924 started publication of *De Pinksterboode* with as appendix *De Pinksterboodschap*, edited by Mrs. M.H. Bernard-Blekkink (Nn., 1924: 125-126). No issues are found as yet. Due to illness of William Bernard, the family had to resign from the mission field in 1925, while Minna Hansen remained to carry on the work at Temanggung (Nn., 1925: 192, 127-128). The periodical *De Pinksterboode* was renamed *De Pinksterkracht* and from then onwards edited by F. van Abkoude. As from 1928 it would be edited by Margaretha Alt, who would rename it into *Gouden Schooven*. A good collection as from 1927 has been found. In July 1934 *Gouden Schooven* ceased to be the organ of PGNI. Subsequently it became the organ of “De Pinksterzending” founded by M.A. Alt in 1935. The PGNI started a new

periodical *Het Volle Evangelie* in 1935, edited by C.J.H. Theijs and with cooperation of F.G. van Gessel, H.E. Horstman, D. Weenink van Loon, H.N. Runkat and W.W. Patterson. Up to now only a few copies have been traced.

Although the Bernards remained in the PGNI and thus worked separately from Thiessen, Polman kept in contact with both parties. In December 1924 issue of *Spade Regen* Thiessen reports of continuing great blessings. Meetings are held daily. Chinese, Sundanese, Menadonese, Javanese and Ambonese are receiving the same blessing as the Europeans. At Cimahi 25 soldiers are baptized in water. The work is expanding to Batavia, Weltevreden, Mr. Cornelis, Cheribon and Buitenzorg.¹⁶ In December 1923 the first stone for a church building was laid in Bandung. Later another building three times its size was build (Thiessen: 1973). During 1924-1926 Thiessen was confronted with a lot of controversy. Complaints were issued against him by the psychiatrist Dr. E.A.G. van Loon, who felt Thiessen was dangerous for the public health. The police started an investigation. Negative reports appeared in the *Java Bode*. Thiessen was also fined for evangelizing in areas for which he had no license. In the end it settled down and Thiessen was granted the required freedom of travel.¹⁷ Three sons of Thiessen: John, Theo and Henk participated in the work of their father. John and Henk, went to the Elim Bible College in London and spent a considerable time in Holland during 1926 (Nn., 1926, 62; John and Thiessen, 1927:339-340). When in 1929 J. Thiessen visited Polman "old ties of friendship were renewed" (Nn., 1929: 107-108). The same year Piet Klaver from Amsterdam became attached to Thiessen's mission at Java until 1933.

The leadership in the Pentecostal circles had for a large part been in the hands of the Dutch and Indo Europeans. When during the World War II the Dutch were held in Japanese camps, the Indonesians took over leadership. In 1942 the PGNI changed its name to Gereja Pantekosta di Indonesia (GPDI). After independence more secessions took place. In 1952 Van Gessel left the GPDI and with H.L. Senduk started the Gereja Bethel Injil Sepenuh (GBIS). In 1954 Van Gessel separated again and started the Gereja Pantekosta Bethel (GPB).

After the World War II the son John Thiessen became heavily involved in politics when he openly supported Westerling, who did not accept the surrender of the Dutch Indies. In 1950 Thiessens name is even mentioned in the minutes of the Dutch government. In that year he accompanied Mrs. Westerling to the Netherlands which was reported in

the newspapers. In the end John settled in the U.S.A. where he joined the Assemblies of God. The other son Theo did not survive the war, while Henk moved to the Netherlands in 1958 and led the Dutch branch of 'De Pinksterbeweging' consisting of a few small gatherings. Johan Thiessen died at Bandung in 1953 leaving behind a flourishing denomination that still exists. After his death the name changed into Penggerakan Kristus and in 1960 it adopted the present name Gereja Gerakan Pentakosta.¹⁸

4. Margaretha A. Alt (1883-1962)

Margaretha Alt was born August 22, 1883, at The Hague, as the second child in a reformed family.¹⁹ Her mother died when she was four. Together with her older brother she was raised by her great parents. Around the age of 9 she once attended a meeting of the Salvation Army and was impressed by the female preaching. A few years later she wanted to become a missionary, then a singer and thereafter a writer. In 1903 she left for the Dutch Indies, where she would be trained as a nurse. She would never see her brother, father and great parents again.

4.1 From nurse to missionary

Upon arrival in Batavia she attracted malaria. This disease would hunt her for the rest of her life. She became apprentice nurse in a psychiatric clinic in Porong, near Lawang. In this period she got interested in Spiritism. An illness brought her closer to God. In July 1908 she dedicated her life to God, which gave her the rest and peace longed for. Her planned marriage with the love of her youth is cancelled, because her fiancée is not converted. She now feels that God calls her to remain single. The new convert, wanting to obey God above all, submits to the teachings of the Seventh Day Baptists conveyed to her by a colleague nurse. She was baptized in a river. Keeping the Sabbath is not easy as the Saturday was the busiest day in the clinic. She resigned and became a missionary nurse in the land colony for the poor Pangungsen at Taju run by a Sabbatarian lady, sister Marie Jansz. In the 4,5 year she worked here she learned the Javanese language. Due to illness she temporarily had to leave Taju in 1913 and was taken care of by the friendly Graafstal family in Temanggung. Mrs. Graafstal nursed a number of retarded children. Her brother owned a former coffee plant at Gambang Waluh; a desolate but lovely cool spot, some 30 kilometres outside of Temanggung on a hill, 1000 meter above sea level. The people of the five surrounding villages are animists. Islam has hardly reached the

area. When Alt visits the place it is as if she hears the voice of the Lord: “This will be your field of labour”. She felt the calling she once had at age 12, was now coming to fulfilment. In 1914 Alt settled there to bring the gospel to the villages. At the request of Mrs. Graafstal she took over the care of five retarded children. Accompanied by 3 Javanese girls and an adopted child of 4 years, with no finances and no sponsors she started an independent mission in a very remote area. Soon she opened a school where the people could learn to read and write for free. Every class is started with a short prayer session. The converted children are taught to keep the Sabbath. After some time there is a strong indigenous church. Every Javanese that wants to settle in Gambung Waluh receives a small piece of land on the condition that the whole family attends church weekly. What used to be a rough piece of land becomes a cultivated village. Due to a plague in 1918 hundreds of people in the area die. Some of the orphans are brought to the missionary. Alt takes 40 orphans into her home, all orphans and all inhabitants of the village survive. After the plague she also takes care of some neglected European children. In a dream Alt receives new light on the issue of the Sabbath. From then onwards the meetings are held on a Sunday. The departure from her legalistic Sabbath observance, as we shall see, seems to be related to her contacts with the Pentecostals, but this relation is not made in her autobiography.

4.2 Contact with Pentecostals

According to her diary already in 1912 Alt corresponded with Polman and read *Spade Regen*. She was longing for the Spirit Baptism. In 1918 she read the German periodical *Pfingstgrüsse* and books by pastor Jonathan Paul. In the home of the aged reformed pastor Horstman at Temanggung early 1920, she met the Dutch Pentecostal missionary Elize Scharren, who was on her way from China to the Netherlands. For the first time in her life she heard someone singing in tongues.

We already know that in September 1922 Thiessen (with Gnirrep) first visited Alt at Gambung Waluh. He described Alt as a strong Sabbatarian tired of the legalistic observance of their regulations. Alt had been cautious against Pentecostals because of articles in the periodical *Het Zoeklicht* concerning Kassel 1907. According to Thiessen “the veils of unnecessary martyrdom fell from her eyes” during that visit (Nn., 1923: 159-160). One month later, on October 28 1923, Thiessen and Bernard went to Gambung Waluh and baptized the following day 37 people in water. They all received a new self chosen name. At the Lord’s Supper in the evening there was

prayer for the Baptism in the Holy Spirit. Thiessen writes that the Spirit of liberty fell, and all started to pray aloud and praise God, something that never had happened before (Nn. 1923: 159-160). Thiessen mentions that Minna Hansen will possibly assist Alt. Hansen together with her later husband the Dutchman Frans Abell would indeed become important co-workers of Alt. It is remarkable that Alt in her autobiography does not mention the name Thiessen, nor his contribution, probably due to his alienation from the fellowship Alt would later be part of. Hereafter we have a gap in information of 2,5 years. Most likely Alt kept in contact with the Bernards and Minna Hansen at Temanggung and others.

4.3 *Joining the Pentecostals*

Her autobiography connects her joining the Pentecostals to the Pentecostal Conference at Surabaya she attended in July 1926. On the last day of the Conference, July 31, she received the Spirit Baptism. Her whole body was shaking and she heard herself singing in unknown languages. Repeatedly she was speaking the words ‘Santa Dios’ and ‘Kurios’. Only later she would learn the meaning of those words. In tongues she sang a beautiful song.

Back at Gambung Waluh there is first a prayer meeting with the 40 orphans. The next day the whole assembly is called together. All are ready to accept the new blessing. A large number receive the Spirit Baptism and speak in tongues. Many have visions. This is the start of a revival (Nn. 1923: 60-64; Alt, 1927: 15-16; Nn., 1927: 15-16, 30-31, 63-64). Small children have remarkable prophecies and visions. After most members have received the Spirit Baptism, the ministry of healing became more prominent.

Alt felt called by God to publish a periodical in Dutch. She would call it *Gouden Schooven* (Golden Sheaves). In a vision she saw a large songbook. This resulted in the publication of *Glorieklokken* (Bells of Glory), a song book that would grow larger over the years. Next to the many articles in the periodical and the songs, she also wrote novels, poems, devotional and more doctrinal literature.

In 1927 Alt became secretary of the PGNI and editor of its periodical *De Pinksterkracht*. Two years later she moved to Surabaya, taking along 30 Javanese children. The Pentecostal movement was spreading rapidly in these years. In September 1928 she changed the name of *Pinksterkracht*

into *Gouden Schooven* and also published an Indonesian version *Gandoem Mas*. At the same time the first edition of *Glorieklokken* appeared.

The malaria tormented her day and night with headache, pain in the back, dizziness and pressure on the brains. Since her Spirit Baptism she no longer took medicines. Her prayer for healing was not answered. Instead she was told: “My grace is sufficient for you” (2 Cor. 12:9). From time to time she visited her village in the mountains. Every time her coming is celebrated. There are always babies to be dedicated and marriages to be closed, because some villagers only want their ‘*ibu*’ (mother) to do it.

In February 1930 Alt and her more than 30 children moved to Waru, a village outside of Surabaya. Alt is now appointed by the Convent as travelling evangelist for all the Dutch Indies. She is also assigned to overlook the smaller assemblies. This gives her great freedom. In 1932 she moved to Kediri, East Java. In the four years she worked there she founded a new church. Hundreds are baptized. As the malaria keeps troubling her, she accepts an offer to start a church at Lawang, also East Java, where the climate is cooler. At the background there is a growing conflict with the denomination dealing with doctrinal issues and female leadership.

4.4 Difficulties within the PGNI

The PGNI was not very structured. In the second part of the 1920s the Bernards had left the mission field and the American missionaries were on furlough, while the movement was growing. Weenink van Loon and George van Gessel were the leading evangelists. A ‘Convent of Evangelist’ was formed; most likely an initiative of Van Gessel, who was pastoring a large church in Surabaya. The Convent should probably be seen as the spiritual leadership of the PGNI. It was Van Gessel who invited Alt to join the Convent.

In February 1927 the 8 assigned evangelists included two ladies (Alt and Hansen), one Chinese and one Indonesian. A few month later even a third female evangelist (Determeijer) was appointed (only included in the list for 3 months). As the work grew In August 1928 a new ordering was made resulting in only five main evangelists, including only one female en no indigenous evangelist. These were: Van Gessel, Weenink van Loon, Horstman, Van Abkoude and Alt. Others were made assistant evangelist. At the end of 1928 Van Klaveren returns to Indonesia. Groesbeek who had left in 1926 returns in 1930 together with two new missionaries from

Seattle and more to follow. With Van Klaveren and Groesbeek back the number of main evangelists raises accordingly. It seems that the influence of Seattle now becomes stronger, in particular in the areas of church government and doctrine. Alt's position as female evangelist is more and more challenged. Another issue regards the baptismal formula, which now must be "in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ". Although the use of this formula is not accompanied by a denial of the Trinity, Alt turns against the change especially when believers are re-baptized to comply with the new formula. Disagreements among the leaders in September 1932 leads to the termination of the Convent, although the PGNI chaired by Weenink van Loon is not dissolved. In the turmoil Weenink van Loon and Van Gessel become opponents, Alt sides with the first. It seems that Van Gessel and Horstman announced that *Gouden Schooven* was no longer the official organ of the PGNI (Alt, 1932: 18; Nn., 1932: 19-20). This was premature, but demonstrative of the conflict. According to Alt, Van Gessel and Horstman continued in their disapproval of the periodical and in June 1934 *Gouden Schooven* is no longer the official organ of the PGNI (Alt, 1934: 14). At a meeting for evangelists in July 1934 it was decided to divide the PGNI in two regions for Java: 1. West/Central and 2. East. Alt turned down the proposal to make *Gouden Schooven* the official organ for West Java (Alt, 1934: 7-8).

In July 1934 the number of named meeting places dropped from 140 to 38. Weenink van Loon, Van Klaveren, Van Abkoude and Horstman are still mentioned, but no longer Van Gessel and Groesbeek. In September 1934 the number of meeting places has gone down to 28. Further names dropped include Van Abkoude, Horstman and Van Klaveren. Hereafter it slowly grows again to 45 in February 1935 when the Pinksterzending is established. Weenink van Loon at Bandung is still listed, but he is not in the board. In April 1935 his name disappeared from the list. In October 1935 the number of meetings places has grown to 70.

4.5 *Pinksterzending (Gereja Utusan Pentekosta)*

In February 1935 the 'Pinksterzending' (Pentecostal Mission) is established at Lawang. The governmental approval would come in September 1935. Alt took with her the periodical and the song book that were very popular in the Dutch Indies as well as in the Netherlands. From everywhere on East Java she received invitations to bring the Pentecostal message. She led the work at Lawang until 1943. When the Japanese came she was imprisoned and sentenced to death. Awaiting her execution by beheading, her co-

worker Soemardi Stefanus just in time delivered her birth certificate. As she just turned 60 she was exempted from the death penalty. Her years in Japanese camps are recorded in her *Mijn Kampleven* (1948).

During the turbulent years preceding the establishment of the Pinksterzending some attempts were made by F. van Abkoude to join up with the British Assemblies of God (AG). Possibly Van Abkoude at this stage was acting on behalf of Alt, but her name does not appear. His first letter of application dates May 15, 1933.²⁰ After some correspondence and investigation Van Abkoude is informed by the Executive Presbytery on April 16, 1934, that his application for membership will be recommended to the General Presbytery Conference at Whitsuntide. It is unknown how this proceeded.

In March 1935 Howard Carter, chairman of the British AG, together with the American Lester Sumrall, visited the Dutch Indies. In their reports Van Abkoude is referred to as the Chairman or President of the Assemblies of God in Indonesia (Sumrall, 1935: 5). Carter and Sumrall also visit Alt and Van Gessel. In connection with this visit Alt informs the readers of *Gouden Schooven* that the Pinksterzending has applied for membership with the AG (Nn.: 1935). Although the proceedings with the British AG are still vague, it is certain that Alt and her Pinksterzending after the war joined the American AG.

The Assemblies of God in Indonesia (Gereja Sidang-sidang Jemaat Allah) was established after the war by some American missionaries that first had worked for Bethel Temple, Seattle: Short, Busby and Devin. Alt allowed her churches to decide themselves about whether or not to join the AG. Some chose to continue as the old denomination. In 1951 she surrendered leadership to her co-worker Stefanus, who would become the first indigenous chairman of the Assemblies of God Indonesia. Alt left for New Guinea in May 1951. At the age of 67, she started a new church at Manokwari. That same year her *Bijbelstudie voor zelfonderricht* appears, that would have several reprints. After ten years the political situation forced her to return to her home country. On October 21, 1961, after being away for 58 years, she is back in the Netherlands. She is widely known through her songbook, periodical and books. In the remaining five months of her life she preached all over the county and established a church in Arnhem. She died on March 22, 1962, without a sick bed. For decades her writings were reprinted, *Gouden Schooven* continued until 1988. Up to the seventies her song book *Glorieklokken* was the most popular song book in the Dutch Pentecostal assemblies. At the funeral her co-worker

Dik Groeneveld quoted from her diary the words that characterized her life, *Ancilla Domini*, a handmaiden of the Lord.

5. Indonesian Pentecostals in Holland

Between 1946 and 1958 some 290,000 immigrants came from the Dutch East Indies (Indonesia). They were of Dutch origin, of mixed Dutch-Indonesian origin (Indo's), Chinese or Moluccan and, from 1962 onwards, also Papuan from New Guinea. Except for the Moluccans, their integration in Dutch society went rather smoothly. Many were Protestants and became members of the Dutch Reformed Church, others joined the Roman Catholic Church. Among the migrants were also Pentecostal believers. Rather than joining the existing Pentecostal assemblies, these believers often preferred to form their own congregations.

Four national groups developed: Christian Fellowship The Pentecostal Movement (Christelijke Gemeenschap De Pinksterbeweging), Bethel Pentecostal Temple Fellowship Netherlands, Bethel Pentecostal Church Netherlands (Bethel Pinkster Kerk Nederland), Full Gospel Bethel Church (Volle Evangelie Bethel Kerk).

In addition to these denominations with services in Dutch, there are some Indonesian Pentecostal churches with bilingual services. One example is the Gereja Kristen Perjanjian Baru Air Hidup (Christian Church of the Living Water Covenant), founded by John Tan in 1991 with 400 members in two congregations (Amsterdam, Rotterdam). Another example is Gereja Utusan Kristus (Christ Ambassadors Church), founded in 1982 by Samuel Kusuma, with 400 members in three congregations (Amsterdam, Almere, Wormerveer). Altogether, there are about 50 Pentecostal Indonesian congregations totalling 6,000 members.

5.1 Christian Fellowship The Pentecostal Movement

Henk Thiessen, the son of Johan Thiessen, moved to the Netherlands in 1958 and founded the Christian Fellowship The Pentecostal Movement (Christelijke Gemeenschap De Pinksterbeweging). The mother-church in Indonesia (Gereja Gerakan Pentakosta) has since then been led by Indonesian²¹ believers. The Fellowship has three small assemblies with in total 300 members (The Hague, Apeldoorn and Arnhem). The small Fellowship has maintained contact with the old Pentecostal church at Mülheim, Germany.

5.2 Bethel Pentecostal Temple Fellowship Netherlands

C.J.H. Theijs, who had worked with Van Gessel in Indonesia, started home meetings in The Hague in 1952. Since 1956 he published the monthly *Het Volle Evangelie* (The Full Gospel), in which he propagated the tabernacle teachings. Around 1960 the Bethel Pentecostal Temple Netherlands was founded, later called Bethel Pentecostal Temple Fellowship Netherlands, or simply Bethel Temple. In 1963 Theijs moved to Seattle. When after a few months his deputy W.A. Hornung died, there was a vacuum in leadership. In this period C. Totaijs, coming from New Guinea, founded the Bethel Pentecostal Church Netherlands. Theijs returned after three years and regained leadership of the much reduced Bethel Temple. In 1980, three years before his death, Theijs moved to Spain. He was succeeded by G.B. van Kempen from Nijmegen. As from 1984 the Fellowship is led by David Kok from Alphen a/d Rijn.

Bethel Pentecostal Temple Fellowship has eight member-churches with a total of 500 members (2007). During the eighties official contacts with the Bethel Pentecostal Temple in Seattle were made, resulting in an affiliation. At the same time contacts are maintained with the Gereja Pantekosta di Indonesia, the large Pentecostal church in Indonesia.

5.3 Bethel Pentecostal Church Netherlands

Carel Totaijs, the son in law and successor of Van Gessel, moved from New Guinea to the Netherlands in 1961. In Amsterdam he became pastor of an already-existing Pentecostal assembly. In 1963 he founded the Bethel Pentecostal Church Netherlands (Bethel Pinksterkerk Nederland), which under his leadership developed into a firm, but closed and rather exclusive fellowship. Totaijs refined the tabernacle doctrine of Van Gessel and called it 'Bridal Doctrine'. Since 1977 the periodical *Bruidstijding* (Bride Tidings) has appeared. In order to propagate the bridal message abroad, Totaijs founded the Bride Tidings International (1983), with the result that the bridal message has also reached Ghana, Nigeria, Zambia and the Philippines. Totaijs died in 1998. There are 16 member-assemblies with in a total of 1,000 members (2007). The national board is formed by all assigned pastors and elders. A chairman is chosen for each meeting.

5.4 Full Gospel Bethel Church in the Netherlands

After a visit by H.L. Senduk to the Netherlands, some independent Indonesian assemblies united in 1975 as the Full Gospel Bethel Church in the Netherlands (Volle Evangelie Bethel Kerk Nederland). Following the example of the mother-church in Indonesia (Gereja Bethel Indonesia), the Full Gospel Bethel Church affiliated with the Church of God in 1982. For many years the fellowship was led by Dr. S.K. Thé from Zwijndrecht. At present Jan Lataster is the chairman. The fellowship has 10 member-churches with a total of 750 members (2007). There are departments for Sunday school, youth, women and education. Contrary to the other Bethel groups in the Netherlands, the Full Gospel Bethel Church does not teach the tabernacle doctrine and is more open to contacts with other Pentecostal groups.

6. Ecumenism

Pentecostal ecclesiology developed into the free church type, with much emphasis on the autonomy of the local assembly.²² There is resistance against the formation of a national body exercising power over the local. For practical purposes gradually national forms of cooperation have come up, preferably with a minimal measure of organization. Personal contact and collective worship are more important elements in these gatherings than business meetings. Even today the superlocal structures are rather relational than institutional.

Gradually dialogs with the mainline churches started. At first is reluctant and uneasy.

In 1991 the Dutch Pentecostals installed a committee for the dialog with the churches. The vision of a serving relation with the church, seemingly forgotten, received a second life. Between 1993 and 1995 meetings were held with the Reformed Churches. Since 1999 there is a still ongoing active bilateral dialog between Pentecostals and Roman Catholics. In September 2007 a celebration of 100 years of Pentecostalism in the Netherlands took place in the Olympic Stadium Amsterdam. Bas Plaisier, then general secretary of the Protestant Church Netherlands, surprised everyone with his words of reconciliation, asking forgiveness for the attitude of the Reformed Church in the past. A few months later Peter Sleebos, the President of the National Platform Pentecostals Movement, addressed the General Synod of the Protestant Church, asking forgiveness

for the unjust reactions from Pentecostal side (Sleeboos, 2010: 15-18). This led to an official dialogue between representatives of the Pentecostals and of the Protestant Church. Every three months we meet, mostly in a group of 12 persons, 6 from each side. We usually start with a short service in which we have singing, praying, Scripture reading and a homily. After a period of getting acquainted, we selected a number of themes for discussion. For one and half year we had a dialogue about water baptism and we now are discussing Spirit Baptism.

The Global Christian Forum has found a new way to involve Pentecostals and Evangelicals in the global ecumenical conversation. Effort was made to find an approach that would not set back those partners with little experience in ecumenism. Partners meet each other on basis of equality and mutual respect. Meetings with testimonies, Bible Study and prayer, made the Pentecostals feel at home, but were also warmly welcomed by other partners. The guiding purpose of the Forum is:

to create an open space wherein representatives from a broad range of Christian churches and inter-church organizations, which confess the triune God and Jesus Christ as perfect in His divinity and humanity, can gather to foster mutual respect, to explore and address together common challenges.²³

The World Pentecostal Fellowship joined Global Christian Forum at it first global gathering in Nairobi, Kenya in 2007. Dutch and Indonesian Pentecostals have also been part of the GCF activities since Nairobi 2007.

I counted five delegates from Indonesia on the participant list of Nairobi 2007. One Evangelical, Rev. Roland Octavianus (Indonesian Evangelical Fellowship), one Lutheran, Ephorus Dr. Bonar Napitupulu (Protestant Batak Christian Church), one Reformed, Rev. Dr. Henriette Hutabarat Lebang (Toraja Church) and two Pentecostals, Rev. Yesaya Tobing and Dr. Muljadi Suleiman (Indonesian Pentecostal Churches Fellowship).

A few weeks ago the second global gathering of Christian Global Forum was held in Manado, Indonesia, demonstrating the commitment of Indonesian churches, mainline and Pentecostal in this ecumenical endeavor. The theme in Manado was “Life together in Jesus Christ: Empowered by the Spirit”. In final plenary the Indonesian host churches established an Indonesian Christian Forum.

7. Conclusion

In their presentation of the gospel the early Pentecostal missionaries in Indonesia were confronted with restrictive government regulations and negative responses by existing missionary organisations and churches. They had to accommodate to people of various ethnic origin with different cultures, customs and faiths. All were in the context of colonial history.

This paper demonstrated the strong ties between the Dutch Pentecostals and the rise of Pentecostalism in Indonesia. More credit should be given to the formative roles in the early period of missionaries like Johan Thiessen en Margaretha Alt.

Under the Japanese occupation all Western missionaries were interned in camps. Later the Indo-Dutch, who were suspect because of their close ties to the Dutch, were interned as well. This meant that a complete new leadership had to take over in the churches. When the Dutch and Indo-Dutch leaders were released from the camps the old situation would not return. In the new Indonesian Republic the churches were under pressure to allow only for fully indigenous leadership. During the fifties tens of thousand of the Indo-Dutch moved to the Netherlands, among them many Pentecostals. They had a strong impact on the Dutch Pentecostal Movement resulting in a large number of Indonesian Pentecostal churches. It appears these Indonesian Pentecostals integrated very well into Dutch society, which might serve as a mirror for present day migrant churches.

In the early years Pentecostals were rejected as a sect. How different is the situation today. As we lose our reluctance and are in dialogue it appears that much of what separates us contain riches of insights and experiences with which we can be a blessing for one another.

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Catatan Akhir

1 http://www.kbri-bangkok.com/about_indonesia/land_and_people_02.html [24 July 2009]

2 Suryadinata, (2003: 104). This publication does not differentiate between Catholics and Protestants.

3 Wiyono (2005: 308). Wiyono refers to: “Api Tuhan di Indonesia: Sejarah Masuk dan Berkembangnya Gerakan Pentakosta di Indonesia”, *Tiberias* 11/6 (n.d.), 32-33.

4 In November 2008 the Mennonite church at Haarlem held an exposition ‘Back to Pakistan’ of these photos from Thiessen as well as those from the professional photographer Lukas Göbel who had visited the same area in 2008 together with Alle Hoekema.

5 Gunning (1941: 232-240). In August 1918 when Gunning opened the hall “Maranatha” at Apeldoorn, J. Thiessen participated in the service. Gunning stayed at Apeldoorn during 1916-1920. During 1917-1920 Gunning was not active as minister of a local parish in the Netherlands Reformed Church to be free to lead the independent mission Maranatha.

6 van den Brink (1964: 11; 1959: 712). The exact year of his connection with the Pentecostal movement is uncertain.

7 van den End (1993: 16-17). Gunning seems to date the arrival of Hoekendijk at Apeldoorn after Thiessen’s departure for Russia. Gunning (1941: 233).

8 Wumkes (1949: 434). When G.A. Wumkes visited Polman in June 1917 he met Thiessen and Van Asbeck there. This date falls in the period that Thiessen is supposed to be in Russia.

9 The first reference to Thiessen in *Spade Regen* is found in July 1918, where Thiessen is said to have returned to Apeldoorn after a two year stay in Russia. In 1918 Thiessen wanted to bring the Pentecostal gospel to the Ukraine and the Balkans in co-operation with Polman and issue a Pentecostal paper in the Dutch and German language. In the Ukraine lived 80.000 people of Dutch descend. nn. (1918: 28).

10 nn. (1927: 112). The home for neglected children was led by Mrs. Middelberg and was not connected to the Pentecostal movement.

11 Hoekendijk did not have an academic theological training and therefore was not fully recognized as minister in the Netherlands Reformed Church. He could administer the sacraments on the mission field, but not at home. When he returned to the Netherlands in 1925 he became pastor in the Fee Evangelical Church.

12 Bernard, an English businessman, had lost his first wife in 1912. Nn. (1912: 43). On 20 June 1914 he married Marie Blekkink, sister of Mrs. Polman, who had been raised in the Dutch Indies. Nn. (1922: 46).

13 Nn. (1923). In a special 75th anniversary edition the periodical *Pentecostal Power*, published by Bethel Pentecostal Temple in Seattle, speaks of one and a half years at Bali, which corresponds with other data. Daughter Corrie Groesbeek in an interview states: “our family stayed on Bali unit December 1922”. “Herinneringen van de eerste missionarissen” translated by Aart Smit from *Pentecotal Power* (1991).

14 van Loon (1923: 38-41). Quoted from the *Vrededeode* and dated April 4, 1923.

15 van Loon (1923). The writer refutes the claim of someone else that 29 believers in Bandung had already received the Spirit Baptism.

16 Nn. (1924: 143-144). Now they are named Menteng, Jatinegara, Cirebon and Bogor (red.).

17 Patoir (1926). H. Thiessen, Gouden jubileum.

18 Kusardy., ed. (1993: 28-29). In 1993 it had 180 congregations.

19 Many of the following details are derived from her autobiography: Alt (1971).

20 Correspondence present at the Donald Gee Centre.

21 'Indonesian' when used in the Netherlands often refers to the Indo's.

22 H. Zegwaart, "Visie op de Gemeente. Pinksteren en de leer aangaande Kerk". Inleiding 6^e dialoogdag pinkstergelovigen en katholieken, 29 november 2001 in Amersfoort (StuCom0080). Hocken (2002: 544-551).

23 <http://www.globalchristianforum.org/document/article3.php>

