

(Dutch) Christian Missionary and the Response of Bantenese Society: 1855-1945

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Abstract

This study tries to explore the Christian missionary in Banten with special reference to two Dutch Missionary Agencies, *Genootschap voor In- en Uitwendige Zending* (GIUZ) and *Nederlandsche Zending Vereeniging* (NZV), by answering four following questions (a) How was the encounter of European Missionaries with Bantenese in the sixteenth and seventeenth century? (b) How was the first Bantenese Christian Community established in 1855-1856 in Cikoja Lebak Banten? (c) Which methods used by *Zendelingen* to invite Bantenese towards Christianity; and (d) How was the response of Bantenese people towards Christian Missionary in 1855-1945?

The study of missionary archives housed in Land Protestant Kerk in Utrecht, official magazines of NZV 1861-1925, diaries of the missionary activists, ethnographic documentation as well as delving to the published literatures dealing with this issue convey us indispensable information that (1) during the Sultanate period (1527-1811), European missionary activity was not devoted to the Bantenese, since the trade interest of the Europeans was put into priority over the theological one; (2) The establishment of the first Indigenous Christian Community in Cikoja Lebak in 1855-1856 was associated with the land clearing for cash crop by its landlord, Reesinck along with his foreman (*mandor*), Adolf Mühlnickel (1822-1897), who is concerned with conveying Christianity for his indigenous land assistants; (3) *tembang*, *ngelmu*, *colportage*, and mobile medical service are among the methods used by missionary activists in Banten; finally, the Bantenese consistently showed harsh and hostile opposition toward Christian missionary shown in a form of excommunicating the members of Christian community, burning religious school and church and even poisoning a Dutch missionary activist.

Key Words: Christian Missionary, Banten, Response

Introduction

According to Ricklefs, the attempt at propagating the teaching of Christianity among the archipelagic people had already been initiated since the arrival of the Portuguese in the beginning of the sixteenth century. The intensive effort of the Portuguese had succeeded to render several prominent figures and local population in the Maluku Islands to convert to Christianity (Ricklefs, 2007: 28; Ali, 2021a: 63). Although the same effort was continued by French missionaries, who were supported financially by *Compagnie Royale Française des Indes* (RCFI) especially after the half of seventeenth century, the result was deplorable. However, the propagation of Christianity by European missionaries was not devoted to the Bantenese, the European Companies (EIC, RCFI, VOC) took a pragmatic way by emphasizing the trade interest over theological mission.

The establishment of the first Bantenese Christian community took a place in the mid of nineteenth century. Although it was associated with a land clearing of Cikoja for cash crop by a Dutch Landlord, Reesinck along with his European assistant, Adolf Mühlnickel serving as a *mandor* (foreman), who

was concerned with conveying Christianity towards his local assistants. Adolf Mühlnickel was later recruited by GIUZ, which offered financial support for his missionary activity and gave religious education and training for his new converts in its seminary in Batavia. GIUZ supported not only the missionary activity in Cikoja Lebak but also that of Tangerang and Centre Java.

The 'success' of missionary activists in inviting Bantenese into Christianity could not be separated from the methods they applied during their religious services. Specific characteristic of the people need specific cultural approaches. Being trained in Sundanese and well-equipped with cultural knowledge of the indigenous people, missionary activists make use of *tembang* and *ngelmu* in approaching the prospective converts. *Colportage* along with mobile medical service were other methods frequently used by missionary activists in Banten. The response of the Bantenese Society towards missionary, in general are hostile and harsh. In regard with the long time span of 'the project of the Christianization' 1855-1945 and the abundant cost spent by Missionary agencies, the project could be regarded as the failure.

In an attempt to discussing the topic mentioned above more elaborately, this study tries to answer four following questions: (a) How was the encounter of European Missionaries with Bantenese in the sixteenth and seventeenth century? (b) How was the first Bantenese Christian Community established in 1855-1856 in Cikoja Lebak Banten? (c) Which methods used by *Zendelingen* to invite Bantenese towards Christianity; and (d) How was the response of Bantenese people towards Christian Missionary in 1854-1945?

Portuguese Missionaries

The encounter of Banten people with Europeans dated back as early as the 1522, when the Portuguese captain of Malacca, Jorge de Albuquerque, sent his envoy, Henrique Leme, on August 21, 1522, to the Hindu King of Sunda in Banten for the Portuguese military support at the expense of Banten pepper. Both parties agreed to sign the treaty which stipulated that the King of Sunda (*el rey de umda*) authorized the Portuguese to build a fort in his territory (*em sua terra*). As compensation, the King of Sunda would give a thousand bales of pepper to the Portuguese every year, starting at the time of building the fort. The treaty was short-lived due to the occupation of Islamic power from Demak Central Java, which successfully strengthened its grip of the whole coastal area of Banten in mid of 1527 (do Couto 1778: IV, parte I, 168-172; Guillot, 2008: 31-61).

Even though the Portuguese were viewed by Banten as enemies in religious matters because they raised concerns about spreading Catholic missionary to Java along with the Spanish, who controlled most of the Philippines by reconquest, but in the 25 years of his reign, Hasanuddin and the previous ruler of Banten, Sunan Gunung Djati (1526-1546), and after him, Maulana Yusuf (1570-1580), Portugal was considered a strategic trading partner who entered into trade agreements with Banten Muslim rulers in the sixteenth century.

A study of primary European sources, especially the letters of the 16th-century Portuguese Catholic missionaries (*Documentação para a História das Missões do Padroado Português do Oriente*) and the records of the scribes of the Portuguese Vice-King in Goa, traders, and several books of 16th-century Portuguese historians, provide important information that the trade relations between the Portuguese and Banten very intensive and can even be said to be the closest compared to any political entity in the archipelago. So that Sunan Gunung Djati and his son Hasanuddin succeeded in building the capital area because of their success in pepper trading with the nation that had controlled Malacca since 1511. Many Portuguese people live in Banten. They build a fort for their

residence and even managed pepper plantations in the territory of the Sultanate of Banten. Catholic priests came intensively to provide spiritual services there.

The intensive arrival of the Portuguese Catholic missionaries to Banten to give spiritual guidance to their fellow citizens in the sixteenth century can be associated with the fact that many Portuguese stay in Banten. This was corroborated by a letter (dated January 5, 1562) of a Portuguese Catholic priest in Malacca, Manuel Alvares, who informed his Friends in Coimbra (Portugal) that the king of Banten, Maulana Hasanuddin, in 1560 had signed a trade agreement with the Portuguese Captain in Malacca, acting on behalf of the King of Portugal and that the Portuguese fort was the residence of the bustling Portuguese there. (*'Estevemos aqui, nesta Sunda, alguns dias, que he o reino aonde os portugueses tratão, ainda que não tem aqui Fortaleza. Estava ... aqui muita soma de portugueses, e bem luxida gente, dos quaes recebecharidahes. preguei duas vezes e confessei a muitos, de que mostravão consolarem-se muito e davão graças a Nosso Senhor, por me aver trazido por aly, para tamanho seu bem...'* (De Sa, 1955:II, 424)

French Factory in Banten as 'a Centre of Catholic Missionaries'

The establishment of an English lodgment in Banten in 1602 added the number of Europeans who resided in Banten. However, there is no historical evidence which can be reliably referred to delineate English missionary activities in Banten. As far as the primary historical sources are concerned, Christian missionary activities were consistently upheld by French lodgment in Banten in 1671, when F. Caron along with four celebrated French merchants: Antoine Viricel, Pilavoine, Calmel, and M. de Guilhen and a Catholic priest, Simon, arrived in July 1671 to sign the trade treaty with the ruler of Banten (Guillot, 2008: 296-7; Ali, 2021a: 54).

How close the commercial relation between Banten and French was reflected by the fact that the ruler of Banten gave his written consent to French not only to send the priest and establish a church, but also that a house of de Guilhen became temporary lodgment for any priests visiting Banten (Guillot, 2008: 301; Ali, 2021: 55). How convenient the house was described by Duchesne in his letter of 15th of June 1680 to MEP as follows: '...a beautiful house, which could accommodate three to four persons, with large garden, more spacious than that of Lord's house in Paris... well maintained by De Guilhen, around it is a fish tomb' (Guillot, 2008: 319; Ali, 2021a: 55)

Current study of letters of De Guilhen, an activist of Missions Étrangère de Paris (MEP) and the head of French factory in Banten in 1671-1682 stipulates that there was a close association between MEP and Compagnie Royale Française des Indes (RCFI). Concisely speaking, French Catholic missionary was supported financially by RCFI, especially in Surat, Tochinina, Tonkin, Siam, Formosa Island and Banten (Ali, 2021a: 53)

Such close association was well reflected by the fact that French factory in Banten cordially accommodated priests of different nationalities, who visited Banten. On April 1672, Cardinal *in partibus* of Heliopolis, Monsinyor Pallu, along with two French missionaries, Gayme and Forget, visited Banten where he resided until June 1674. Pallu was reported to have brought along with him a set of liturgical equipment such as three bells, five packs, two giant trunks (Guillot, 2008: 309; Ali, 2021a: 57)

On October 1672, a Portuguese priest of Franciscan order, Antonio de Jesu Fernandes visited Banten. Another Portuguese priest of Dominican order visited Banten on his way back to Cochinchina. Francisco d'Araujes, of Franciscan order likewise resided in the French Factory in Banten before leaving to Jepara and Timor Island (Guillot, 2008: 309; Ali, 2021a: 57, n. 95).

The frequent visits of Catholic priests to Banten also reflected the fact that there were many people there, who were in need of their liturgical guidance. In his letter dated 9 October 1672 and 25 March 1673, a French priest residing in Banten, Gayme, reported that there were many Catholic merchants from Benggala, living in Banten (Guillot, 2008: 308; Ali, 2021a: 59).

The Arrival of Spanish Priests from Manila

The trade relations between Manila and Banten were felt beyond economics and commerce. They also impacted on the social lives of the people of Banten. The trade relations allowed people to travel leisurely between countries. Two Spanish Catholic priests from Manila, Joan de Ax Jonas and Dionisio Morales were among those who used these relations for cordial theological visits to Catholic priests in Banten. The purpose of their trip to Banten was to visit De Guilhem, head of the chief trade mission of a French factory in Banten. De Guilhem was described as very friendly and generous to priests visiting Banten or Batavia.

They arrived in Banten in March 1681. They sent a letter dated 28 February 1681 to the Governor General, Ryckloff van Goens, in Batavia informing him of their profession, the reason for their detention in and expulsion from China and that they had come on board of a VOC ship returning to Batavia. They were severely ill and their only possessions were the clothes they were wearing. They visited Banten for medical treatment offered by their colleagues who stayed there. They were free to buy clothes and any other things they needed. Their reason for choosing Banten over Batavia, was because they knew colleagues there. (Ali, 2021b)

Another reason reported by the VOC was their ability to use their currency and staying in Banten would be more affordable than living in Batavia. (Ali, 2021b) They were warmly welcomed by the chief of the French factory in Banten. This was clearly mentioned in the VOC records: *'...en reets van den schipper van 't Frans schip en van de capteyn van de Franse logie oorlof bekomen om ons nae haer boordt te begeven, maar wanneer we ten huysse van de Franschen optraden om ons geldt tegen silver te verwisselen om op Bantam daaraf te eeten...'* (Ali, 2021b)

Having spent more than a year in Banten, they requested the Governor General of the VOC, Ryckloff van Goens, to be allowed to stay in Batavia for a while. After spending a couple of weeks in Batavia, the two Spanish priests asked the Governor General of the VOC in Batavia to allow them to board the "Siam Thailand", a VOC owned ship departing to Manila (Ali, 2021b).

This is well documented in a letter sent by Joan de Ax Jonas to the Governor General of the VOC in Batavia. In the letter, written in Portuguese, dated 5 May 1682, he told the Governor General that he was a Catholic priest and member of the Dominican Order of Manila, who travelled to Banten from Tonquin. He urgently needed to return to Manila but there was no ship in the upcoming months, which would depart directly to Manila. He therefore asked the Governor General's permission to board the VOC-owned ship which would depart to Siam, from where he would continue his journey to Manila. (Ali, 2021b)

The Failure of Missionary

In his letter dated 9 October 1672 and 25 March 1673, a French priest residing in Banten, Gayme, complained to MEP that it is incredibly difficult and impossible to let Bantenese get converted to Christianity due to the fact that they are the pious followers of Islam (Guillot, 2008: 308; Ali, 2021a: 59)

Banten was not an object of Missionary of VOC

The understanding of European missionaries of the strict loyalty of Bantenese to Islam seem to be upheld as well by the Dutch East Indies (VOC) high officials. The most upheld interest of VOC. Robide van der Aa maintains that the most upheld target of VOC is profited trade. Missionary activity was secondary and would not be engaged unless it sever trade relation with Banten (*de Compagnie heeft getoond onverschillig te zijn voor den godsdienstigen toestand van het Bantamsche volk; en d' vrees, dat invoering van het Christendom schade zou doen aan het winstgevend pepermonopolie, ,weerhield haar van ook zelft maar een flau poging daartoe te doen*) (Coolsma, 1892: 10).

According to the Nederland Zending Vereeniging (NZV) that VOC keeps himself away of missionary activities onto Bantenese people was well reflected in an official letter of Governor General Rijklof van Goens dated 31 January 1679: “*Het allernodigste tot herstelling van UEd. Staet is bet destrueren en de uitroeyen van Bantam, welke sake, door Godes segen verrigt en Bantam verdelgd synde, sal alles welgaen ...Bantam moet vernedert, jae verdelcht worden, of de Compagny gaet verloren; boopende noch soo Lange to leven, dat ick UEd. Staet dien schapen, fenynigen doom noch helpe uitroeyen ende vernieti gen, waertoe God de Heere Synen segen Believe to verleenen.*” (Coolsma, 1892: 11; *Orgaan der NZV*, no. 6, June 1892; Ali, 2021a: 65-66)

Helena (Sangka) van Bantam: the First Convert to Christianity among the Bantenese

Among the Bantenese there was a woman, a member of royal family who converted to Christianity out of her being married to an officer of VOC in Batavia. Sangka, or referred to in Dutch missionary sources of 19th century as Helena van Bantam, moved to Batavia avoiding the jurisdiction of Banten Sultanate, which then required VOC to deport her back to Banten (Bantam, 1896: 12; Ali, 2021: 68). Instead of protecting her, VOC, according the sources, fulfilled the royal Bantenese protest by sending her back to Banten in regard with the article no 6, of the treaty of 1684. Being indifferent with her protest, the ruler of Banten was reported to have executed her in 1704. This practice was criticized by Dutch missionary activists, as well reflected in their deploring statements: ‘*[Het] is de peper, die hier de "edele" Compagnie zoo onedel heeft doen handelen*’ (Coolsma, 1892: 13; Ali, 2021a: 69).

Two Dutch Missionary Agencies

GIUZ

There were two Dutch missionary agencies operating in Banten between 1854-1942: *Genootschap voor In- en Uitwendige Zending* (abbrv. GIUZ) and *Nederlandsche Zending Vereeniging* (abbrv. NZV). GIUZ was established in 1851 by F.L. Anthing, a prominent lawyer in Semarang, who aspired to devote his life for missionary activities. He maintains that “*de volken van den Oost-Indischen Archipel niet in hun geheel tot Christus zullen kunnen worden gebracht dan door de arbeiders uit die volken zelve*”. In running the missionary program, he was supported by co-founders of GIUZ: Izaak Esser (resident of Timor), Keuchenius (resident of Tegal), and E.W. King, an officer of high echelon in a Trade Directorate in Jakarta (Kraemer, 1933: 4-5).

In 1561, he moved to Jakarta, where he was appointed as a deputy of the Supreme Court. In 1867 he was appointed as the director of GIUZ. In 15 May 1869, Anthing established a seminary in his own house in Jatinegara, East of Jakarta, where he trained 15 people to be prospective missionary activists, religious teachers and assistants to priests. Three of his disciples: Sarioen, Minggu and Petrus hail from the earliest petite Christian indigenous community of Cikoja, a south east Serang Banten. In 1870, he proposed retirement to the Dutch Government in order that he was able to devote his life fully to missionary activities (Anthing, 1881: 52; ONZV, 1892: 39).

Up to 1877, he was reported to have baptized 750 people, 75 among which are Chinese, living in Jakarta and Banten, 650 are of the indigenous people, a family of Badui tribe, and a religious Muslim scholar with his family and 10 disciples. Due to his success in his Christian missionary, the establishment of several Christian communities in Jakarta, West Java (Bandung, Cianjur, Sukabumi, and Sumedang) and Banten (Tangerang and Lebak) was associated with his effort. In his appreciation to Anthing's effort, a leading Dutch Christian missionary and theologian, A.J. Kraemer states that without Anthing's effort in training the indigenous people for the indigenous priests there would never exist so called Sundanese Christians (Bliek, 1938: 34).

When NZV sent his first evangelist to Tangerang, L. Tiemersma in 1889, there had been some Christian communities which had been established by GIUZ: Tanah Tinggi (79 persons), Serpong (25 persons), Cilongok (8 persons), Cikoja (30 persons) and Kresek (ONZV, 1889: 96, 144). Ethnically speaking, the members of GIUZ-affiliated churches in Tangerang, with the exception of Cikoja are mostly Chinese (ONZV, 1897:59). However, with this in mind, GIUZ can be regarded to have pioneered the attempt of conveying Christianity in Banten prior to NZV.

Adolf Mühlnickel (1854-1859) and the First Indigenous Christian Community in Cikoja Banten
Among European missionary activists who were affiliated to GIUZ, the most notable one was Adolf Mühlnickel, who was born in Gross Peterwitz Germany on 12 January 1822. He was regarded in the missionary sources as the first missionary activist who has succeeded in converting several Bantenese people and established a group of a community with new belief. NZV, for instance, regards this community as the oldest Christian community in West Java (Van den End, 1999: 46).



Source: Na Vijftig Jaren

The story starts with his being appointed as a foreman of agricultural land owned by the landlord Reensink in south east Serang Banten. With the financial support of Reensink, Adolf Mühlnickel

built a church, where he led a liturgical praying as well as gave a catechism teaching to the children of Cikoja village (ONZV, 1890: 92).

Four of his disciples continued their religious studies in Anthing's seminary in Jatinegara. Zending sources delineate their name in detail along with their temporal occupation in the seminary. Sarma (1855), Kaaeran (1855), Minggu (1858), Soleman Djalimoen (1859) and Arjan (1865) are the first wave of the members of Cikoja Christian community, who continued their religious study in Anthing seminary. Then follows two other disciples: Sarioen (1870) and Jimoen (1870) (ONZV, 1914: 64). The numbers of Cikoja Christian community by the end of nineteenth century has increased into more than 47 persons (ONZV, 1899: 257; ONZV, 1890: 104; 1894: 62).

Mühlnickel's religious service in Cikoja ended up in 1859, when he moved to Batavia, where he devoted his time for assisting F.L. Anthing to run GIUZ. Since 1871, Anthing's disciple, Kyai Ibrahim Tunggul Wulung of Mojowarno Jepara, well known as 'Apollos Jawa' was reported to have replaced Mühlnickel's role there (Hoekema, 1980: 3-23). After a couple of years, Tunggul Wulung came back to Jepara, where he conveyed Christian teaching to several hundreds of his disciples. After 1880s, Wulung's role was replaced by Sondjat, a son of the first disciple of Mühlnickel, Sarma, who converted to Christianity in 1854. Sondjat served as 'local priest' until his death in 1923. Sondjat's role was succeeded by his daughter, Esther, until the church was burned during Indonesian Independence on 17th of August 1945. The community of Cikoja ended up with the exodus of the last generation of its members to Jakarta and West Java (Van den End, 2006: 247-9; Ali, 2021a: 160)

NZV

NZV, established on 2 December 1838 in Rotterdam, chose Banten, West Java and South Celebes as their area of missionary activities. This organization recruited candidates of *zendelingen* who will be trained for five years. Since 1909, the period of training was lengthened to six years (Van den End, 2006: 298, n.4). This organization provided the *zendelingen* with monthly salary, bore the cost of renting a house, household equipment etc. (Ali, 2021a: 76).

Banten was one of the most important destination of NZV missionary. In an official meeting of 20 July 1891 in Jakarta, a NZV-affiliated's priest, Ds. F. Lion Cachet was reported to express his proposal to send twenty missionary activists to Banten. Accordingly, Coolsma confirms that "*Ds. F. Lion Cachet sprak zelfs den wensch uit, dat er niet twee maar twintig zendelingen naar Bantam mochten gaan!*" (Coolsma, 1910: 5; Ali, 2021a: 77).

L. Tiemersma (1889-1899, 1902-1909), Anthonie Adriaan Pennings (1894-1902), O. van der Brug (1909-1926) are among Dutch *zendelingen* who were posted in Banten by NZV. During their religious tenure, they were assisted by local missionary assistants, mostly hailing from Cikoja, Tangerang and Leuwi Dahu.

A.A. Pennings, the Founder of the First Christian Community in Lebak Rangkasbitung (1894-1902)

The most notable missionary *zendelingen* affiliated to NZV was A.A. Penning, who had dedicated his religious service in Leuwidamar and Rangkasbitung for nine years 1894-1902. A.A. Pennings was born in Niuwer Amstel Amsterdam on 6th November 1870. He came to Lebak on 11th of December 1893 as an official *zending* of NZV. He began his religious service in Leuwidamar Lebak, ca 40 KM south of Rangkasbitung in 1894. He established a church, clinic and a school (see picture 1)



Picture 1: House and a clinic of A.A. Pennings in Lebak Banten

Due to the growth of the population of Rangkasbitung, especially thanks to the establishment of railway from Batavia, Pennings built a first church in Rangkasbitung in 1900s (ONZV, April 1924: 67).

Notable Characteristics of Zending Methods in Banten

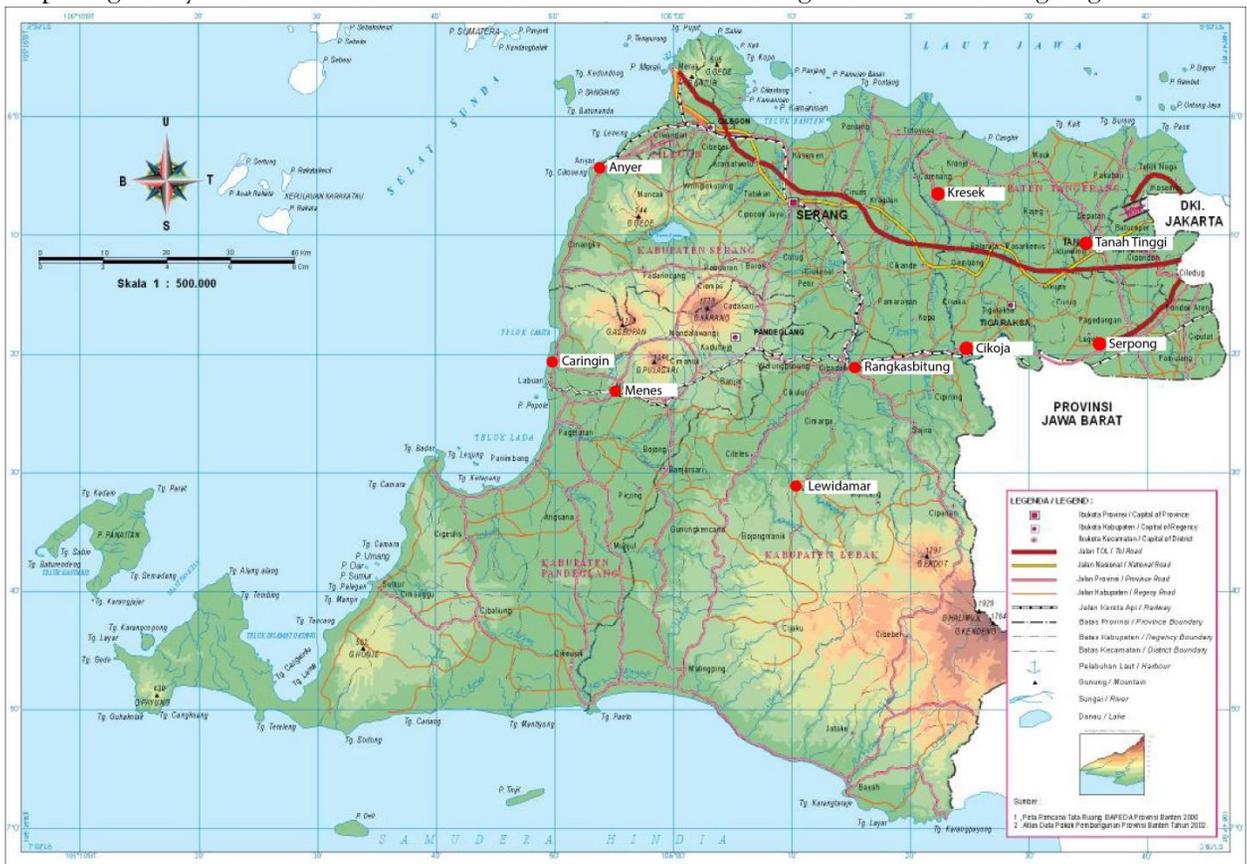
There are a number of methods that Anthing's disciples made use of in propagating Christian teaching to Bantenese people:

(1) Propagating Christian teaching by a means of *tembang* (recitation of traditional poem, derived from biblical teaching with intermittently supplicated local proverb and analogies (ONZV, 1892: 43). Chanting religious teaching in Sundanese (*kidung serani*)

(2) *Ngelmu*. Reciting *elmu* (traditional formulae for martial or invulnerability purpose), *rapal* or *mantera* (traditional Javanese or sundanese litany) is made use of by missionary assistants when propagating to the indigenious people. Soejana (1986: 10), for instance, points to *rapal*, frequently taught by Tunggul Wulung's disciple from Mojowarno, Kiai Sadrach as follows: '*Bojo Allah, Putro Allah, Roh Suci Allah, telu-telune dadi siji; lemah sangar, kayu angker, lepas racun dadi towo, yo towo kersaning Allah.*' (Soejana mengartikannya: God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit, All the three are the One; a haunted place, a venom of venomous animal, become ineffective out of God's power). This litany was recited by one who will travel, undertake an important job, cut a haunted tree, etc.

This *rapal* is also conveyed by an assistant missionary in Cigelam Sukabumi, Kiai Bujang, who succeeded in inviting people to come to his house to be taught with 'elmu serani'. the popularity of Kiai Bujang, according to Bliet (1938: 14-5) drew the curiosity of a head of local district (*wedana*). Having been led to know by reading books of Christian teachings in the house of Kiai Bujang, he shouted: 'these reading materials contain Christian religious teachings, which are appropriate only for the Netherlanders and not for us.'

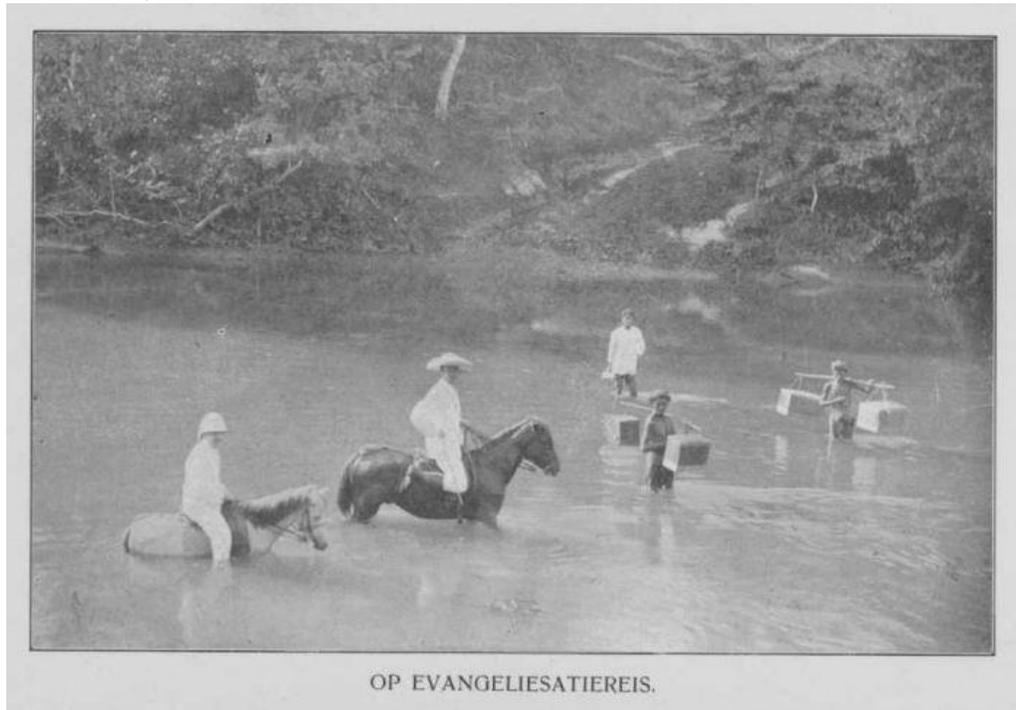
3. *Colportage*, distribution of published literatures on Christianity. NZV missionary activist, posted in Tangerang, L. Tiemersma. did colportage to a number of villages in Tangerang: Buniayu, Balaraja, Kresek, Cikande, Tigaraksa, Daru, Curug, Parung Panjang, Cicangkul, Serpong, Cipondoh, Kramat, Panilian, Pakuaji and Tanah Tinggi (ONZV, 1908:4). Being different from L. Tiemersma, A.A. Pennings, NZV zendeling who stay in Lebak was given permission by Resident of Banten to do colportage only limited areas in south of Lebak (Leuwidamar, and south of Pandeglang. voted his religious service in Pandeglang and Rangkasbitung was A.A. Pennings. He got a letter of permission from the Residen. He actually proposed to the resident of Banten that he get permitted to do colportage in Serang, Cilegon, Menes, Cikande and Anyer. His proposal was refuted. He got permitted to do colportage only in the district of Leuwidamar Lebak and Caringin south of Pandeglang.



Map of Banten

Religious books which were mostly distributed by L. Tiemersma and A.A. Pennings are Bible in Sundanese, Malay and Chinese and any other biblical literatures and religious reading materials. In doing so, both of zendelingen were assisted by two European assistants, Hurst Boram and Eldrige, affiliated to British and Foreign Bible Society (ONZV, 1905: 46) Lucas and Johannes bible translated into Sundanese and written in Arabic were among the biblical literatures distributed by A.A. Pennings and Eldridge in Lebak Regency: Kalang-Balang, Malingping, Muncang, Sajira and Rangkasbitung (ONZV, 1896: 43) When arriving in a market in one of districts mentioned above, many people gathered to listen Penning's narration and biblical account. However, no one bought even single book. Illiteracy, poverty, and being scared of verbal persecution of local muslim religious scholars were among the

caused mentioned by Pennings in his own diary. However, having wandered in those district for a couple of days, they both sold only two copies of the bible in Sajira and Muncang markets (ONZV, 1896: 43).



4. Mobile medical service. Diary and letters, written by a zendeling in Lebak, A.A. Pennings elaborately narrate how he, assisted by his local assistant, such as Laban Djalimoen, wandered from one village into the others in South of Lebak to offer medical service to the indigenous people. The conversion of two members of Lebak Christian community, Narijah along with her son, Lajar, was associated with this method.

Reaction and Response of the Banteneese to Missionary

As the Sultanate adopted the free market which complied with the laws of supply and demands, European, Armenian, Indian, Chinese, Persian, Arabs and merchants of any nations come to Banten to buy pepper. As far as their religious observation is concerned, Sultans gave them freedom to observe their beliefs and conviction as long as they did not invite people to convert to their belief. Portuguese missionaries come to Banten since the first half of 16th century. Portuguese Missionary archives mentions frequent visit of the Portuguese missionaries to Banten, since there were a lot of Portuguese living there.

French missionary archive and VOC daily records of the seventeenth century delineated that French factory in Banten accommodated the missionary activists, either from French or Spain, Portuguese and any other nations. However, due to the fact that Banteneese people showed hostile attitude toward missionary, there was no single Banteneese reported to have converted to Christianity in the sixteenth and seventeenth century.

The hostile opposition of bantenesere toward Christianity in the eighteenth century was well reflected in the execution of Sangka, a member of royal family, who converted to Christianity and

therefore she was executed in 1704 by Sultan of Banten. A hostile opposition of Bantenese in the nineteenth and the beginning of twentieth century toward missionary activities was reflected in three following notable patterns:

- 1) Frightening those who were befriended with missionary activists with following words: 'Those (Bantenese or Sundanese who were befriended with missionary activists, their names will be registered by the missionarists into the lists of people who will be sent as millitias to Aceh, to wage war against the Acehnese or be sent to The Netherlands' (Soejana, 1986: 16).
- 2) The Christian community was excluded and got isolated. This was well reflected by a number of following facts. The exodus of Christian community in Cikoja, Lebak and Tangerang to 'Farmer Christian colonies' in Cideres (1882), Pangharepan (1886), Palalangan (1902) and Rawa Selang (1902). Specifically speaking, in 1930 Cikoja Christian community get harsh enmity from the surrounding Muslim communities. This forced them to move to indigenouse Christian communities in Jakarta and West Java. In 1945, a church and a religious school and along with the house of a church elder were burnt. and Leuwidamar (ASZC 115-39-9).
- 3) The most extreme hostile attitude of Bantenese toward missionary activity was poisoning a missionary activist, A.A. Penning, who had dedicated his religious service in Leuwidamar and Rangkasbitung for ten years 1894-1992, was dead on 8th of July 1902. NZV headquarter in the Netherlands received the information of his death via telegram on 7 PM 11th of July 1902 (ONZV, 1902: 45). Orgaan of NZV reveals that the cause of Pennings' was cholera. However, based on De Klerck report, NZV missionary in Tangerang, L. Tiemersma sent a letter to NZV headquarter in The Netherlands reporting that the real cause of the death of A.A. Pennings was poisoning (NZV, 1902: 141-143). The information of the real cause of Pennings's death was not published in the published literatures on the history of Christian missionary in West Java. According to van End, this was so, to avoid 'kehebohan' (noise). Unless the information is 'covered', it exerts harmful effect to 'the project of christianization' (Ali, 2021: 183). The death of Pennings forced NZV to close a missionary post in Leuwidamar Lebak. His missionary assistants, Laban Djalimoen moved to Cirebon. Pennings' wife, A. Dijkmann along with his five children went back to The Netherlands. whereas other members of the Community moved to Bogor (ONZV, 1902: 186; Coolsma, 1910: 33-4).

Conclusion

The study of missionary archives housed in Land Protestant Kerk in Utrecht, official magazines of NZV 1861-1925, diaries of the missionary activists, ethnographic documentation as well as delving to the published literatures dealing with this issue convey us indispensable information that (1) during the Sultanate period (1527-1811), European missionary activity was not devoted to the Bantenese, since the trade interest of the Europeans was put into priority over the theological one; (2) The establishment of the first Indigenous Christian Community in Cikoja Lebak in 1855-1856 was associated with the land clearing for cash crop by its landlord, Reesinck along with his foreman (*mandor*), Adolf Mühlnickel (1822-1897), who is concerned with conveying Christianity for his indigenous land assistants; (3) *tembang*, *ngelmu*, *colportage*, and mobile medical service are among the methods used by missionary activists in Banten; finally, the Bantenese consistently showed harsh and hostile opposition toward Christian missionary shown in a form of excommunicating the

members of Christian community, burning religious school and church and even poisoning a Dutch missionary activist.

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