

RELIGION FOR MIGRANTS *THE CASE OF THE NETHERLANDS*

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In the Dutch public debate on migration the issue of religion has been underrepresented until now. Nevertheless religion is for migrants, not for all of them, very important and essential. In this essay I give first an historical sketch of the religious panorama of the Netherlands and especially of the religions of the migrants. I can distinguish different aspects and models of migrant religion. At the end I can design a new type of theology and pastoral approach for the migrants and the existing institutions of churches in the Netherlands.

God at the steerage

We want to start with a perhaps strange introduction under the title God at the steerage, as a tween-decks passenger. The Jewish Historical Museum of Amsterdam organized for 2003-2004 an exposition of works of the Belgian artist Eugeen van Mieghem (1875-1930) living in the harbour of Antwerp, painting people on exodus, predominantly people of Eastern Europe around the turning of the century, to the new world of the United States of America with the Red Star Line. The expo is underlining the quest of migration. It is a phenomenon of life, a clear cut in history of individuals and nations. We have to do with a significant illustration of the migrants by ships, and actually by airplane, but with as basis the ship, the vehicle of a new life under new circumstances, centuries long and without end. Eugeen van Mieghem made migrants to the main subjects of his artistic life. Eugeen van Mieghem painted old and young men, individuals with the darkness of suffer and the eyes of new hope, liberated from disdain, discrimination and overrule. God is a god of the steerage. That is for us a deep fundament of the issue of migration and migrant life, like the statement that the sea is the history of peoples. The migrant literature is a witness of the various subjects in the question of migration, first the family and friends leaving at home, secondly the men travelling on real and idealistic expectations, coping the difficulties to speak another language, to learn to eat other food and to be dependent of other people, thirdly the people of the new country, following a wait-and-see policy, watching their own territory, and fourthly the second generation of newcomers and autochtonous men, by and by accustomed for a new constellation of life. So is life for many.

1. HISTORY

Actually the composition of the Dutch people is a conglomeration of a variety of small peoples and groups of migrants, from the time of the Huguenots (16th century), the Jews from East Europe, and in the twentieth century people from the Dutch colonies of East and West Indies, guest labourers from Mediterrenian areas, and at present asylum seekers and refugees. This conglomeration is on the go seeking cohesion by party-politics, education, entertainment, common and new language, spread of housing, and participation in labour and power. We can distinguish the migrants according to their histories, motives, religious contexts, the dynamic attitudes and possibilities in the new situation. First of all we can say that everybody is a migrant, from all times people are moving, like nomads, sometimes in periods of sedentary life but afterwards prepared for a new trial for betterment of life. In the Netherlands the aftermath of the Second World War brought poverty and despair. At the occasion of the erection of the World Council of Churches in Amsterdam 1948 representing 147 churches of 44 countries, with 351 delegates (270 clerics and 81 laymen) the assembly agreed with a resolution asking the member churches to give high priority to work

for the material and spiritual welfare of refugees and asking to influence the public opinion towards a liberal immigration policy for refugees, immigrants, and settlers (W. Visser 't Hooft 1948, 95). That was a sign of time. The Dutch government promoted emigration of citizens to South Africa, Australia, Canada, the United States of America, New Zealand. Thousands of Dutch migrated for a new and better life. Of course some were adventurers and perhaps marginalised. It was a period of emigration.

The group of Moluccans (of Ambon, also called Ambonese) has a special place and status in the Netherlands. The Moluccans in the Royal Netherlands-Indian Army (Koninklijk Nederlands-Indisch Leger) refused to join the new Indonesian Republic in 1949. The Dutch government promised them a special status and in the time of waiting for a new regulation the group with their families- about 12.000 people-came to Holland in 1951 for the time being, waiting for return, They never returned and proclaimed the separate Republic of South Maluku and worked hard, sometimes with violence, for recognition. They weren't successful. Meanwhile the Moluccans grew in number and distinguished themselves by language, culture, religion and forms of sports and entertainment. The number of first, second and third generation is now 50.000-60.000. Until now the Moluccans are looking for identity construction in the Dutch society, which never recognized them as a special group or 'minority'.

Speedy after this period, guest labourers were invited by Dutch companies and they came in for the recovering economy. First of all, people from the mediterranean regions, from Spain, Portugal, Italy. And afterwards, people came in as guest labourers from Marocco and Turkeye. In that time groups of Hungarians came to the Netherlands as political refugees. The movement of decolonisation stimulated people from the Dutch colonies, predominantly from the West Indies, to migrate to the mother country and especially around the event of national autonomy of Suriname in 1975. The last two decades new migrants came in with another scope: the transnational trade and way of life in the cadre of the worldwide mondialisation or globalisation.

Real globalisation in the Netherlands is that the Turkish Sertab Erener, born in Almelo (The Netherlands) won the Eurovision Songfestival 2003 and a Capeverdian woman, Susanna born in Rotterdam, became in 2003 the best lady singer of Africa. Crown prince Willem-Alexander married Máxima Zorreguieta of Argentina, and the wife of the new president of Georgia in 2004, Michail Saakasjvili, is Dutch. That is real global and local.

The Netherlands is using a specific noun for the newcomers, namely *allochtonen* in opposition to the natives, the *autochtonen*. But also the nouns *Nederlanders* and *Medelanders* (living together in the Netherlands) are usual and popular. According to the Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek an allochtoon is: a person of whom at least one of the parents was born abroad. The first generation allochtoon is a person, born abroad, the second generation born in the Netherlands of whom at least one of the parents was born abroad. Non-western allochtoon is every person from Marocco, Turkeye, Africa, Asia, Latin America with the exception of Indonesia (former Dutch colony) and Japan and a western allochtoon is every person from Europe, North-America, Indonesia, Japan and Oceania. Actually there is resistance against these notions, creating stereotypes and generalisations, which can lead to racism and discrimination, eventually victimising and demonising in the sometimes, chaotic life.

We can give numbers and prognosis concerning allochtonen according to their generation

	total	first generation	second generation
allochtonen total	2 964 949	1 547 079	1 417 870
non-western total	1 558 362	971 706	586 656
western total	1 406 587	575 373	831 214
Maroccans	284 124	159 605	124 519
Dutch Antilleans and Arubans	124 870	82 209	42 661
Surinamese	315 177	182.262	128 915
Turkish	330 709	185 943	144 766

(CBS, 15-6-2003)

The prognosis concerning the allochtonen according to CBS is

	2010	2020	2050
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allochtonen total	3 619 722	4 350 752	5 904 410
Dutch.Antilleans and Arubans	176 397	217 982	309 208
Surinamese	344 189	366 534	365 381
Turkish	380 534	428 229	505 078
Maroccans	358 674	434 317	570 137

(CBS 2002)

With these groups came Orthodox Christianity, a variety of Protestants, Roman-Catholics, Hindus, Moslems: really religion in plural. At the moment the position of Islam, and the danger for Islamisation of the society are very critical issues in politics, party politics and socio-economic life in the Netherlands. Charting religious Holland for example in research papers of *KASKI Publikaties*, there isn't special attention for the religions of the migrants (Hortulanus-Machielse, 2002).

2. ASPECTS

The world of migration has to do with migrants with a variety of motives. We can distinguish some clear motives for migration

- very silent, marginalized and backward, trying to become slowly familiar with the new world
- coming from the Dutch colonies, familiar with language, religion and the set of values and norms
- coming for a new job, making money
- coming as a transnational for support of the families abroad
- looking for full integration, with farewell to the original home-country.
- featuring the society to multi-ethnicity and multi-religiosity.

These motives of migration are creating various options concerning religion. People who want to live their own life, a little marginalized, shall foster the own culture and religion. For them it is difficult to say farewell to the own roots and memories. Another approach is to affiliate with a new religion along the line of integration processes. A third option is to leave the old affiliation and to take rest. The dynamics of the different motives can lead to different stance concerning religion. Religion is in all cases a vehicle for survival or for development of perspectives: a social capital. Religion is a co-passenger or is totally unimportant. In fact, co-travelling, looking for the best lifestyle. Religion is helping to move boundaries to a better horizon for life from the perspectives of diaspora.

A decisive issue concerning migrants is the quest of identity. Identity (re)construction and (re)definition for migrants have special aspects because the external and internal dimensions of man are under a challenging pressure, at least for coming in balance or harmony with past, present and future. The different aspects of identity like the personal or individual, the collective or ethnic, the national and the global identity are levels of operation and facilitation for man in a new context. Now the quest is how long people are living in a state of diaspora and what it means for the social, religious and political positions in the new context. When are men really people, what means integration, who are the actors and where are the means for integration? These quests are fundamental. It is difficult for many to involve in these issues and to work for answers.

The psychological aspects of migration, living in diaspora, are very decisive and important. In the Dutch context it is necessary to do research in this field because we suppose that a clear view on that field can avoid clashes in neighbourhoods and sections of cities. The policy of the government can be restrictive in disadvantage for the newcomers, vulnerable in the new context. But the social capital helps to overcome barriers and gives tools to build a new life. Migrants have different motives and different perspectives.

Migration can be normal: in every family and in every village. Another thing is the forced migration by social circumstances, violence, or natural disasters. In that case the migrant is not mentally ready for a new challenge.

The quest of integration in the new society is a hot issue in Dutch political circles, but also the preservation of own culture and lifestyle is predominantly present. In the hospitals, in the army, in houses for the aged and hospices the call for multicultural approaches is increasing. The population of these social institutions is multi-cultural, multi-lingual and multi-religious. The function of *geestelijke verzorger* (Hindu, Moslim, Christian, humanist, Buddhist), the spiritual consultant is important in these circumstances. Exchange of contacts at the occasion of religious feasts is very welcome. Common services in inter-marriage situations are moments for exchange. There are many fields for cooperation and there are many instruments to learn to understand each other. We can mention: help for coping common youth problems, the service for the seniors, discussion on death and life, and life after death. Small groups of relatives, neighbours can do that on the work floor, in the media, promoting the pastoral of inter-religious dialogue, and convivence.

Actually the phenomenon of migration in the Netherlands is an issue of hectic public debate, a hot issue for the media, for and within political parties and for research institutes. One of the critical issues is the quest of the schools. Migrants are living in the concentration section of Amsterdam, The Hague, Utrecht, and Rotterdam, the called Randstad, the four biggest cities. Sections of these cities are sections of predominantly migrants (cheap houses, low rentals). Schools with predominantly migrant children are called black schools, a noun full of discrimination and a metaphor of asocial registration. Black schools and black sections in the big cities are the maledictions of the modern times in the Netherlands. In party politics the erection of confessional schools is possible according to Article 23 of the Constitution. The largest political party in the Netherlands is the Christian Democratic Appèl and she is the custoder of Article 23 concerning religious freedom and freedom to start own schools, in the years 20 of last century conquered by Christian emancipation actionists.

A new development in the Netherlands is the position of migrant foundations. In The Hague the migrant Hindostani Seva Netwerk was launched as an umbrella for 20 non-governmental organisations for aid for India, Bangladesh, Guyana, Suriname, Nepal. It is a transnational example for other migrant organisations and for the government to use these networks as channels for development and aid. In this framework we have to mention transnationalism as a new feature in the globalizing world with effects in the homelands and in the new countries. This new phenomenon is attractive for poor people. Transnationalism is a way to overcome poverty. In this cadre discrimination is a critical issue. Forms of public features of discrimination in Holland have to be registered by a official institute. There are quite problems concerning the concepts and the process of conceptualisation in the political and public discussion on migration. We have to do with a structural quest and it is necessary to clarify the position of religion in that cadre.

3. RELIGION

For us religion is for man a set of visions, acts and perspectives with links to the past and to the future, with elements of social control, imagination, revelation, transcendence. Men is making religion for some reasons: as a problem solving system for individuals and groups, as a section of power play, and as a production place for freedom, solidarity, human fellowship. The organisation for rituals, the hierarchy and dogmas is connected with the human condition, namely with conservatism, preservation of traditions and power, and trials to control and to sanctify wrong things. From our point of view religion is social, emotional, mental and political capital and production, and is a possible positive and negative factor in the society.

Religion can be linked with identity and ethnicity because religion can be a vehicle for cohesion and emancipation in a process of confrontation and threat, with individuals or groups with other options, orientations and perspectives. But religion is more than functional in the society. The content is the heart of the matter, and constitutive.

In a colonial situation like in the former Dutch colony Suriname and the present Dutch colonies of the Dutch Antilles and Aruba, religion has to do with power from abroad. The coloniser submitted the colonized to become member of the foreign, Christian, religion. Numbers of colonized converted to the new Christian religion for social status, getting the advantages of mission organisations for education, social care, medical service. Nevertheless the colonized could preserve their own religion, totally or partially, sometimes by processes of syncretism and compartmentalism.

In the Netherlands scholars are summarizing the actual Dutch religious context as secularized, rationalized and individualized: three dominant reasons for de church leaving tendency. In the Dutch Constitution the strict separation of church and state and religious freedom are the basis for the legislation. The presence of Islam in the Netherlands since the last decades confronted the society with another starting point, namely the presence and influence or social relevance of the Moslim tradition. In the Netherlands the typical character of the society was, according to sociologists and church historians, the pillarization of society on the basis of religion. The Roman-Catholics, the Dutch Reformed, the Calvinists, the Evangelical Lutheran, created their own political party, own broadcasting, sport clubs, schools. It was an excellent vehicle for emancipation of the religious groups against the predominant position of the Dutch Reformed, a sort of state church. A couple of decades after the Second World War this panorama disappeared by the called modernization. Attention is logic in these circumstances. Just in the process of disappearing of public religion the migrants settled down from Spain, Portugal, the Dutch colonies, Africa, and Asia: Christians, Hindus, Muslims, Buddhists and others. It was and is a dialectic situation. The church affiliation of Dutch people was (in %)

	1966	1979	1996
Roman-Catholic	35	29	21
Dutch-Reformed	20	17	14
Calvinist	8	8	8
other	4	3	4
without church	33	43	53

(Dekker, G. e.a., 1997, 12)

Religious affiliation in the Netherlands in 2000 is

without affiliation	54.4 %	calvinistic	7 %
Roman-catholic	20.3 %	moslim	4.4 %
Dutch reformed	9.5 %	rest	4.4 %

A clear difference between these established churches is the measure of charity. A research on sharing in the Netherlands shows that members of the Reformed Bond were the most open-handed, after them the Roman-Catholics and after them the non-church people. Protestant households give per year more then 400 euro on the average for the own church and the Roman-Catholics the half of that (older more than younger people). Protestants are more involved in the own church structure and have more responsibility for the own institution, according to the researchers. The Roman-Catholic church with the vertical hierarchy is shaping distance from above to below (and reverse), losing every year 50.00 members (*Bisdomblad*, 5).

The Dutch Roman-Catholic bishops visited the Pope *Ad Limina* in March 2004 and they prepared a report on the actual situation of the Roman-Catholic church. We want to bring forward some data and remarks as significant for the religious situation in the Netherlands. First of all, the data of the church research institute KASKI show that above 5 million Dutch are Roman-Catholic: 31 % of the population. But the SILA, the foundation of Inter-church

member registration, registered about 4.5 million: 21 %. A reason for the difference can be the issue of privacy protection from the side of the civil population registration, but also the manner of interview methods. The church lost about 50.000 members every year between 1995-2002. The secularisation, individualisation, pluralism and growing grey, the economic climate, and the attitude to values and norms are the main issues in the development process of the Roman-Catholic church and all the other religious churches and institutions (Nederlandse bisschoppenconferentie, 2004). In 1990 the religious affiliation of non-Christians (in thousands) was

	Hindus, Buddhists and Confucians	Muslims
1890	4.000	49.000
1960	24.800	139.900
1980	48.200	225.800
1990	81.900	432.700

(Knippenberg, H. 1992, p.275-276).

According to the Social Cultural Planning Office (SCP) of 2000 Moslim affiliation is

sunni	58.9 %	shi'ite	1.7 %
unknown	34.9 %	ahmadiyya	1.6 %

Actually the number of Moslims in the Netherlands is about 1.5 million, all non-western allochtonen, the same number as the old group of Calvinists. The number of Hindus is about 100.000, of whom 90.000 are from Surinamese origin.

There are about 343 Christian communities of migrants (Amsterdam 70, Rotterdam 65, Den Haag 60 and 25 in Utrecht), predominantly Africans. The groups of Pentecostal signature increased from 205 in 1980 to 252 in 2000 (V. d. Broek 2001). A recent research of KASKI on the Roman-Catholic migrants shows us that two-third of the twenties see themselves as non-church member: in the category of the thirties is that 53 %; 44 % of the twenties belief in God and 63 % of the thirties. For the majority of the twenties religion hasn't priority: two-third of the twenties is not busy with religion or the sense of life. The picture of the thirties concerning religion is quite the same (*Trouw*, 20-12-2003). The trend of the decrease of the percentages of non-church believers is stabilised in the Roman-Catholic Church (*Pius Almanak*, 2004; *rkkerk* 19-12-2003). The religious affiliation of the main migrant groups in 2002 was

	first generation	second generation
Turks	95 %	93
Maroccans	98 %	97
Surinamese	75 %	57
Antilleans	73 %	45

(Rapportage, p.328)

It is for Turks and Maroccans clearly another situation than for Surinamese and Antilleans. How more integrated how more secularising, can be the conclusion. But the second generation of Turks and Maroccans are even integrated as the second generation of Surinamese and Antilleans. The background, the historical setting is different. The ethnisation of religion is strongly correlated with the self-concepts and the content of religion like the Islam. The socio-public position of the migrants concerning religion is remarkable in the Dutch mass media, one of the issues for pillarisation from the past. In 1979 the government received proposals for the start of an own broadcasting on behalf of the orthodox Sanatan Hindoe Parishad Nederland. The government asked the organisation to join with the reforming Arya Samaj, neglecting that the two were quite heavy opponents of each other. In 1993 the OHM, the Hindoe broadcast and tv, started in the Netherlands. In circles of the Islam it is difficult through the difference of directions or schools of Islam. It is difficult for the Sunnis to work together with members of the Ahmadiyya. Making an umbrella is quite impossible and it is for the government a challenge to open discussions with representatives

of all the groups: the government want to talk with only one umbrella, opting for uniformity. The reality is quite diverse.

Many of the migrants have at least two religious affiliations in the process of localisation or contextualisation within the specific Dutch context. Concerning religion there is always place for dynamics and change, multiple loyalty, multiple participation. That is the socio-political configuration, a characteristic or factor of religion. Besides secularisation, rationalism, and individualism fundamentalism in churches and new religious institutions is growing. New religious expressions like burning candles at the place of a murder, erection of memorials at the place of a deadly accident by families, pilgrimages, the taste for mysticism and spirituality are also phenomena in the spectrum of religion in the Netherlands, but religion of a new quality. A actual very important event is the structural and institutional coalition between the Reformed-, Dutch Reformed-, and the Evangelical Lutheran Churches in the Netherlands at May, 2004, forming the *Protestantse Kerk in the Nederland*. That is a significant happening in the field of ecumenism. Another new element in the Christian churches in the Netherlands is the fighting attitude of churches against the governmental restrictive actions against people without papers, and asylum seekers, in short against categories of migrants. The churches are asking communities to help this category of citizens and they gave room to people without papers after a sometimes years long, juridical procedure with expulsion as result. That kind of actions gives the churches a new face in the social and political framework.

In the diaspora situation different aspects of religion are at hand. A logical principle is that men are not migrating with the scope to go to churches or for membership of religious institutions. It is possible that migrants and their religions can be used for the power play of political leaders: they can use migrants for the extension of influence and power. That is a challenge to be careful to all citizens, but especially scholars and even more the planners and policy makers. The central issues in the framework of migration like identity, identity construction, ethnicity and ethnisation are useful in global sense, because the notions have a rich history. It is quite difficult to formulate in this cadre the exact definitions. We are using the terms in the general sense: it is not the place here to give an extensive attention to these fields of study. That gives our remarks a provisional character.

In the Netherlands a new vocabulary emerged with words and notions of the Surinamese, Antilleans, Turks, Maroccans, Moluccans, called *straattaal*, street language, but a new canal of communication between allochtonen and autochtonen, especially the youth (Meulenberg, 2003). Like the action for *Mekka-Cola* in the Netherlands: a new product also in the field of multiculturalism, using notions like *Noordzee Hinduism*, *Polderislam*, or *Nederislam*. We have to do with a remarkable number of splinter groups, all busy with the construction and definition of their self-portrait. In that case, religion can get an ethnic character.

4. STANCE OF THE GOVERNMENT

A current and accepted theory concerning migration is: how older the migrant how stronger the tradition: how longer in the new land how smoother the integration, how younger departed from the homeland how smoother the assimilation or integration in the new society. The concepts concerning religion and migration are in some way clear: the binding with the old culture and country makes the integration process long. Then success is possible only on the longer run. The theory in that case is that how further from the initial culture how fewer and weaker bindings. That is a sociological theory, the called assimilation theory with as focus point that the second and third generation should assimilate more and more and quite more than the first generation. How older the migrant is how more binding with the culture and religion of the country of birth and life, looking for contacts with countrymen and speaking the home-language. How younger the migrant is how easier to integrate and to learn the new

culture and language. The start position is important for the rest of life. The prediction is that how longer migrants are in the new country how more the binding with the former country is disappearing (V. Tubergen, p. 338). The home-situation, the starting-point of migration, is decisive in the integration- and assimilation theory. But in reality things are going their own ways and it is a hell of a job to analyse actual migration with consequences for planning and administration of the government and the cities.

In the Netherlands the three starting points for policy concerning religion are: the principle of freedom of religion (art. 23 of the Constitution), equality of all religions and thirdly separation of church and state. The government, the parliament and the citizens are many times in conflict with each other concerning the application of these principles. We can give some examples of the search for balance. The Dutch government installed, after the long times smouldering up and down suggestions of predominantly Moslems, in 1982 a commission (chairman J., Waardenburg) to study the thematique of the religious support for ethnic minorities. The growth of numbers of Moslems in the society had a confusing effect on many citizens. The public debate emphasized the separation of church and state, in general. The basis of the commission was

- the principle of religious freedom in the Dutch Constitution
- recognition of the own cultural identity of ethnic minorities in the Netherlands
- the responsibility of the government for the welfare of the minorities
- the separation of church and state in the Netherlands and
- equality of all religions.

The report is focusing on the new religions in the Netherlands, but especially Islam (p. 46-49), nevertheless nothing about the Surinamese Javanese Moslems in the Netherlands and the Afro-American Surinamese Moslems. The commission got information from Hindostani Hindus and -Moslems, under the umbrella of the foundation Lala Rookh (Utrecht) with 15 Moslim- and 35 Hindu organisations in that time. A very important question for the new religious institutions was the regional spatial supply (shortage of buildings and meeting points). They asked for at least three Hindu and Moslim pandits and moulvis in each of the twelve Dutch provinces and the care for individual pastorate, the training of pandits of the Council of Pandits (Priest Council) of 48 of the Sanatan Dharm and 15 of the Arya Samaj. For the governmental commission it was clear that for the ethnic groups in general religion and culture are intermingled; that Moslems needed recognition and religious education of the children, and permission to install their own mass media. Besides the typical religious activities the groups wanted to be active on other fields for the community. The commission proposed the government to develop a rational and positive policy, with the direct or indirect support of the government for ethnic religious minorities, support for the own development of life style and identity with preservation of own religious culture and ethnic identity. The groups were in need for (financial) support and it was better, according the commission that the Dutch government donated in place of the donors (governments) from abroad. That advice brought some rest, but not for long. In 1988 the governmental Commission E. Hirsch Ballin, installed in 1986, followed in her final report the same line, based on the separation of state and church but with room for some support and quite places for religious ministers, other than the Christian, in the army, the jails, hospitals, houses of the aged, and service flats (Commission Hirsch Ballin 1988). That cleared the air a little and since that report Hindus and Moslems have more space in juridical sense. After the turn of the century the discussion on the issue of church and state started again, now concerning wearing of veils of the Moslim women. Normally the public debate is asking for tolerance and respect for individual expression of faith. The focus on Moslems is remarkable and political parties are moving selectively to forms of religious discrimination, not far away from the dangerous area of racism. The parliament of the Kingdom of the Netherlands nominated a commission (the

temporal commission Blok) to research the policy of the government concerning integration of migrants in the Netherlands in 2003. This commission focused on labour and income; education; housing and recreation; emancipation of women and girls; organisation of and for the minorities, without any remark on religion. In general all the political parties, also the coalition, had serious comment on the process of integration and judged the process as unsuccessful (*Tweede Kamer*). It was clear that the impact of the newcomers in the Dutch society was discutible and especially on the side of the autochthonous people. The government and the municipalities of the big cities used various policies, unfamiliar with the newcomers. The government installed a special department *Integratie en Grootstedenbeleid* (big cities policy) from 1998-2002, followed by the department of *Integratie en Vreemdelingenbeleid*. In the first period of migration after the Second World War the government and the municipalities were concerned on the material impact. They were caring for housing, labour, and schooling. After the experience of misunderstanding and the not so rapid realisation of some ideas on integration as was expected in that time, the government took pains to emphasize the self-organisation of the newcomers. The newcomers were very busy on this field, charmed by that idea because it created possibilities for development of upward move for local and ethnic leaders. That policy was very expensive for the government and the big cities and led according to them, to segregation in the place of integration. At the moment a third policy is going on: a policy of emphasis on participation from the side of the government and a tendency from the side of the migrants to participate in party politics going for political power. The balance between assimilation (synchronisation, symbiose), and integration is far-away until now. For the newcomers the quest is crucial: it concerns the quest of unity in diversity in opposition to uniformity as the central idea of the government and party politics. Many of the autochthonous people want uniformity (in language, in values and norms, in respect for laws). In the meantime: the migrants conquered their place in the mass media, in the field of entertainment, shows, in sport and in the academic world.

The central theme of the last three decades is integration, a notion with elastic performance. The Dutch Scientific Council for the government published in 2001 her report for the government *Nederland Immigratieland*, with the three central themes: participation, responsibility and encounter. The largest political party, the *Christian Democratic Appèl* presented her report on integration in March 2004 with special attention to religion. The meaning of the government is that integration was a failure: a stance without consulting the umbrellas of migrants or newcomers. The CDA report is underlining the function of religion, especially of the Islam, in the society and the public debate. This remark was an exception because in all reports and research religion is a hidden agent. The second largest political party, the Labour Party published later her *Integratie en immigratie aan het werk* (Integration and immigration at work) with the emphasis on emancipation and the call for orientation on what binds and not on what divides. A partner in the present coalition, D66 (Democrats, erected in 1966) gave her vision the title *De Anderen, dat zijn wij* (The others: we are them), emphasizing the solidarity and value of migration. The public debate is looking for a good practice of solidarity above theoretical explanations and biases.

A crucial issue for migrants is the use of the own and a new language. In the Netherlands migrant literature is an issue in literary circles. There is now a bunch of diaspora- or migrant literature with authors like Kader Abdolah, Abdulkader Benali, Naima el Bezaz, Edgar Cairo, Astrid Roemer, in short from Asia, Latin America and Africa. Besides, the world of the language is the handhold for life, just in the transition to a new configuration of life. We can imagine that it is a long process in transformation. It is a quest of recognition of otherness and also the importance of heteronomy and autonomy of man on both sides, the side of the receiving country as well on the side of the newcomers. The basic move is the intercultural- and inter-religious option, approach, and attitude. We have to do with important and

necessary processes of hermeneutics. It is necessary that the newcomers can be free in his/her transforming process. The Dutch government is asking for a citizen-izing course with a program to learn the Dutch language as a key operation. This issue is in cabaret programs and one man shows of migrant artists and also of Dutch cabaretiers a frequently used item for ridiculizing the political stance by humor and cynism. In the meantime and between all research, reports and publications the quest of the involvement of the autochtonous people in the processes of migration and integration became manifest and clearer. Until now, the emphasis in the case of migration and integration on the position of the newcomers is unbalanced with the handicap to lose the focus on the autochtonous people.

It is now clear for many: integration can be successful only when the autochtonous people is involved in the project and only when they pick up their task in this special case. Then the government and the society can expect an acceptable success.

A third issue is the network. The Netherlands is a part of the European Union and the number of members is now 25. It is a very broad field for common policy and common ideas.

Analyses and concepts can clear the air, until now polluted by voluntary restrictions, expulsion, anxiety and xenofoby. It is a hard job to work together for the benefit of the poor and unregistered from abroad, but necessary in the context of safeguarding the citizens and to bring them forward to international an global problems and issues.

A fourth point is the ideology of oblivion in the Netherlands. The really horrible colonial history of slavery and indentured labour, vivid in the yearly cyclus in Suriname, is totally absent in the history of the Netherlands, It is an essential part of identity and identity construction in the Netherlands where politics and research are concentrated on social status, education level, political participation on local, regional and national level, jobs, and welfare, but not on the colonial impact and relicts in mentality, psychology and social behaviour. The groups coming from the former colonies are manifest present in the Dutch society. It is time for recognition of own history by the Dutch.

We want to bring in a fifth point. In most of the home-countries of the migrants religion is a civil religion, publicly, in the air, in the mass media, in architecture, arts and music. Migrants have most of the time, another experience of religion than people in the Netherlands. People of the Netherlands can't disdain the type of religions of abroad. The Dutch can learn from people from abroad. That idea is until now unfamiliar and strange for the Dutch public. But the issue is crucial for an effective integration policy and realisation of the high ideals of participation, responsibility and encounter. The publicly recognized religions have a public place and function, normal in many societies all over the world. The loss of this position is quite a pity (or a shame) in the framework of ethnicity and emancipation. Rivalry and concurrence are pillars for strengthening the own place and stage and can open the ground for cooperation and understanding. With these remarks as background we want to show the growth of the groups and especially the transformation of the religious panorama amidst the called tendency of secularisation.

5. MIGRANT CHURCHES

In the Netherlands the tradition is that every religious groups is totally free in organisation. The historical principle is separation of church and state. The state can not interfere in internal religious affairs, individually and collectively. The tradition is that a lot of churches have a tradition of self-organisation like the Hugenots, the orthodox churches of Eastern Europe and churches of people of the embassies and commercial companies. We can make a lot of distinctions for example concerning autonomy, network, internal dynamics, age, composition of members, self supporting, hierarchy, independency, authentic and so on.

Common distinctions of migrant churches are: churches and groups of the old migrants (Chinese, Église Wallone, Methodists, Indonesian, Syrian orthodox, Moluccan); churches and groups of the temporal migrants (Korean, English Reformed Church, Scottish Presbyterian, Patriarchate of Servia etc.) and the third: churches and groups for new migrants like the Ethiopian Orthodox, Vietnamese, Armenian-apostolic church, Africans etc. (Hoekstra-Ipenburg 2000, cl. 737-38). Hoekstra and Ipenburg mentioned in 2000 a number of about 40 African Independent churches and groups in the Netherlands (cl. 713-14), a couple of Hindu groups and only 3 of the Islam (cl.736). There are quite more. It is impossible to collect the exact data. The KASKI report of 2002 concerning the data of the Dutch Roman-Catholic church did not mention the special group of the migrants. Only the Syro-orthodox church in the Netherlands is a member of the Council of Churches in the Netherlands, the rest of the migrant churches have other umbrellas. That is a serious point to reflect within circles of migrant churches and within the circles of the Council of Churches in the Netherlands. For us, the most important distinction has to do with the migrant attitude of the churches. That concerns the central quest of the measure of change to a new image and organisation of the migrant church, in short, the localizing process in the new context.

A first impression is that most of the migrant churches prefer the own religion and culture: they want to persevere the home situation. In a second stage some of the migrant churches are disappearing in existing churches. Very few churches are capable to construct a new image or model of church and organisation in the new world by intercultural and inter-religious activities. Some are on the way to independence without an impact on the existing churches. That is a pity in the framework of actual tendencies to interculturality and inter-religiosity. In this cadre we can bring forward the idea of reversed mission for the Dutch churches. In this essay we have to clarify these positions.

In the period after the first experiences of guest labourers and migrants of the Dutch colonies the churches were involved in the quest of migrants and strangers. In this cadre we can mention the outspoken stance of the R.C. church as an example. Jan Rijk, the late moderator, or national secretary of R.C. pastorate for foreigners, called allochtonen- or migrants pastorate *Cura Migratorum*, since 1976 gives us the earliest overviews (Rijk, 1985). He is referring to the working-group *Pluriforme Samenleving* (Pluriform Society) of the Council of Churches in the Netherlands in 1985 and the four booklets for the religious communities and institutions as an instrument for discussion and opinion formation (*Met elkaar veder; Vorming en viering; Wat valt er te doen?; Waar kiezen we voor* (Together with each other; Formation and celebration; What to do? What is our choice?). The Christian churches were seriously concerned on the position of the newcomers and tried to awaken the members, asking for solidarity and organizing meetings for contacts, not only with Christians. The most vulnerable group of migrants is the group of the refugees. The churches did not deny the bad position of this group. The Council of Churches in the Netherlands took a stance in *Voor vluchtelingen partij kiezen* (taking sides of the refugees) in 1987, asking the members of the churches to be active for this group and asking the government and political persons to cope the bad chances of the refugees in national and international policy-making. Later the governments of Europe chose for a stricter policy concerning migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers and churches continued their diaconal and koinonical care. The most important problems at that moment were

- difficult housing situation for many migrants in the big cities
- the problems around the strangeness of the environment
- the problems of the second generation
- the specific problems of the women of the ethnic groups
- the fear for strangers and hatred of strangers. (J. Rijk, 1985, p. 413)

The situation was and is a situation within a political framework. The socio-economic position of the migrants was marginalized position. Joining the public discussion on government's policy is very difficult for migrants. The Roman-Catholic church in the Netherlands established her branch *Cura Migratorum* in 1976 on the basis of a call from Rome. The pope published in his *Motu Proprio* of 1969 some new directions for pastoral care for migrants, *Pastoralis Migratorum* (Acta, 1969). After the Second World War the Roman-Catholic church was quite concerned on the life of the emigrants of Italians, Spaniards, French, Dutch in the new countries. The churches sent priests for the emigrants to the new countries for example to Australia, New Zealand. The Roman-Catholic church established a central institute, the Pontifical Council for the pastoral care of migrants and itinerant people, the PCMIP, organizing regularly meetings on continental and international level, like in 2003 with the results of recommendations and calls. The Dutch Roman-Catholic church is a participant in the Pontifical Council and *Cura Migratorum* is busy to facilitate and realize the proposals for pastoral. The duties of *Cura* from the beginning are

- looking for priests for the migrant-churches
- deliberations with the leaders of the migrant-churches
- emphasizing that the migrant groups have to maintain their own churches more and more
- contact service with the other migrant churches
- thinking together about future policy and strategy concerning allochtonen pastorate (Maaskant, 53)

In the sixties of the last century the situation changed totally. The influx of migrants in the countries of Europe was visible increasing and the pastoral care heavier, also in the Netherlands. In the Netherlands the Roman-Catholic church could ask ex patriate fathers, former missionaries, to serve the ex-colonials (Suriname, Antilles, Indonesia), language groups like the Italians, the Russians, the Spanish, the Portuguese, the English and French. One of the deep problems is that the communities of Roman-Catholic migrants are poor without money for the follow up of the church work. Nevertheless the R.C. church province developed in the church juridical models for the structuring of the R.C. allochtonous communities in the hope to cover the internal ecclesiastical problems (R.K. Kerkgenootschap, 1992). Another problem became the shortage of fathers, specialised in languages and cultures of the migrants. The old missionaries, returned to Holland, retired or died and there aren't successors. The migrant communities have to form their own leaders now (Jorge Castillo 2003). The Roman-Catholic church is recognizing the growing discrimination in the Dutch society and the dioceses are involved in the organisation for better pastoral care, but the bottlenecks are the shortage of priests, pastoral workers of the own migrant groups, and shortage of money and buildings for meetings. In the dioceses of Den Bosch and Roermond there are serious discussions on the go the recruit fathers and sisters from abroad. They can fill the open places by shortage of vocations. In the R.C, Dutch convents about 100 religious from abroad are staying. The idea of reversed mission is growing and expanding.

In that period the Remonstrant Brotherhood published the pamphlet *Één van geest* (one in spirit) in 2000. The Council of Churches in the Netherlands was active and published for their members the research-study *Op weg naar de toekomst* (underway to future) in 2001 as a vision of the churches on migration and *Samen vieren met mensen van andere religies* (together celebrating with people of other religions) in 2003. Also the Dutch calvinistic groups are concerned on the migrants, with a lot of them as members. In a meeting in 2002 the reformed churches were talking about a multicultural society and the multireligious offerings. The question is like in the other religious communities, the choice between territorial organisation or categorial organisation, between autonomy or integration in existing communities. It is a

dilemma and time shall learn. That is the most usual instrument. The churches are struggling with these new issues, until now without clear, direct options and perspectives.

6. SKIN

Old and new Christian groups are concerned on the issue of migration. But the religious panorama is broader. The number of Moslim allochtonen is about one and half a million, about 15 % of all allochtonen, but there are Christian allochtonen, about half a million.

Usually the distinctions in the case of migrant churches are, according age,

1. the historical migrant churches, for example from the Dutch colonies, familiar with the language and culture
2. the new churches, some decades in Holland
3. the new religions like Islam, Buddhism and Hinduism

In relation to the historical development of migration in the Netherlands after the Second World War, the main currents were in that time

1. the decolonisation process, Chinese, Indonesians, Surinamese
2. the guest labourers of the mediterranean region
3. asylum seekers of Sri Lanka, Somalia, Irak, Iran, Congo
4. a group for union of the family and students.

Under the new religious groups there are three sections

1. linked up with the quite existing churches, inserted
2. aligned with the home churches like the Armenian Orthodox church, Syrian Orthodox
3. new independent churches, prayer groups, Pentecostal churches

Mutual contacts can help to overcome biases and fear (*Multined*, 5-2-2004). An instrument coping the problems of migrant churches is SKIN, launched in 1996. This SKIN, Samen Kerk in the Netherlands, estimates the number of migrant-Christians on 700-800.000 of whom 200.000 Protestants (Kathleen Ferrier 2002). The targets of SKIN as an umbrella and as a platform, are

1. strengthening the ties of the migrant churches, about 55 with 100.000 members,
2. improvement of the relationship of SKIN churches and the Dutch churches,
3. information for the migrant churches on the Dutch society, the law and the culture,
4. facilitating migrant churches, specially for finding rooms and places for services and housing (*Multined*, 5-2-2004).

At the moment SKIN has 54 members, churches and movements, some old, some new, some independent some connected with older churches or umbrellas. The Foundation Support Fund Allochtonous Churches (Sofak) is prominently present in the big cities for aid to the new churches or religious groups. We want to illustrate the different developments concerning religion and migration by some examples.

7. HINDUS

In the Netherlands, the Hindus are with a small number: about 100.000, of whom 90.000 from Suriname. The Surinamese Hindus brought their religion to Suriname and now for the second time, to the Netherlands both of them in diasporic situation. The first experience in the Netherlands was the overwhelming position of Christianity and Islam in comparison with the Surinamese experience of equality. There the Hindus were a quarter of the population and everywhere present. The most significant symbol of the Hindu presence, the vehicle for religious ethnicity, is the *jhandi*, the stick with flags in the forefront of the compound. That is impossible in the Netherlands. A next issue was the position of the pandits in the midst of

other religious leaders of Christianity and Islam. The call for training, instructions and courses to enable them for doing a good job, emerged and the Hindus organized trajectories for training. The Dutch Training Hindu Clergy (Nederlandse Opleiding Hindoe Geestelijke) course has three parts: theoretical, practical and spiritual forming with as result: to be a general Hindu clergy for spiritual guidance, as a pandit for the orthodox Sanatan Dharm or for the reformed Arya Samaj, or as a shastri (an ethicist and scribe) or in the service-sector of the government.. A third issue is the position of the youth, under the influence of the secularisation tendency in the Netherlands. The use of Sanskrit and Hindi is a barrier for the youth to read and hear the holy books. The process of translation is on the go. The Hindus have to conquer their own place and space, for the second time. Normally they have not problems with living in the new country. They are equipped for integration, full active for their households, their jobs, earning money for buying a house and to send money for the family in Suriname (Freek Bakker 2003). Especially in the concentration the Hague the Hindus are active and quite at times of Holi/Phagwa, Divali and are promoting chawtal singing, and other cultural-religious elements. Hindus are partners in inter-religious dialogue but very modest and until now, a little marginalized. Via broadcasting, tv, and erection of own schools there are perspectives for a better future.

A new noun was created by migrants and the autochthonous people namely North Sea Hinduism (Noordzee Hinduism) in opposition to Surinamese and Indian Hinduism. The Netherlands is a country on the North Sea and The Hague (on the North Sea) is the concentration-city of the Hindostanis, and of course the Hindu Hindostanis. The noun means a call for renewal, integration, and assimilation. For the Hindus modernization means a program for training of the religious leaders, the pandits for their new challenges like the new set of values and norms, the challenge of a secularizing society, the challenge to discuss with other religions. Just like in other religions membership of Hinduism is not a sake of tradition for the youth. In the new context Hinduism is especially for the Surinamese for the second time busy with making room in a new environment.

8. MOSLIMS

Islam is an actual issue in the Netherlands, with the new cultures of Maroccans and Turks. In the fifties of last century a lot of Moslim Indonesians came to the Netherlands like Surinamese Moslims (Hindostani, Javanese, Negro) some decades later. They could build or buy mosques in the cities and even schools. Their presence is clear and significant. The clothes, kerschiefs question, the diet (no pigs), slaughter regulations are issues in the public debate. The government recognized religions like Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism and is talking with them on speaking terms. Some Dutch parliamentarians are opposing to some significant and public signs of Islam. In the Netherlands the government is subsidising confessionnal education. Islamic organisations erected, legally Moslim schools. In 1997 there were 29 Islamic schools, and 101 mosques. In 1985 the Islamic Broadcasting Foundation started, like in 1994 the Hindu broadcasting organisation, OHM. The new notions like Nederislam or Polderislam are new notions of a new language in the Netherlands, created by the newcomers, signs of a new environment. We can give an example of this tendency. The The Hague Union of Lahore Ahmadiyya Moslim Organisation, Ulamon organized in 2004 a seminar on the offering of Id ul Adha as a contribution to the society, promoting solidary citizenship. For Ulamon the absence of Moslims in the sector of voluntary work is a problem. Ulamon is looking for a network with other organisations of voluntaries and with Moslim organisations of that kind (*Weekkrant Suriname* 5-2-2004). These are signs of transformation within Islam in the Dutch context of life and religions and also manifestations of a growing, inclusive identity of Moslims.

The government is alert and wants to talk and negotiate with only one organization. But umbrella forming is quite impossible. At the moment there are six umbrellas: the Islamitische Stichting Nederland, the Mili Görüs Noord Holland, the Nederlandse Islamitische Federatie, the Turks Islamitische Culturele Federatie, de Unie van Marokkaanse Moskee Organisaties in Nederland and the World Islamic Mission. They are assembled in the Contactorgaan Moslims and Government, the CMO, like the Interkerkelijk Contact in Overheidszaken from the side of the Christians. The Nederlandse Moslim Raad, who is the official institute responsible for the Nederlandse Moslim Omroep, took distance of the CMO. The government is waiting for the coalition, never in mind to work with the principle of unity in diversity.

A new noun for Islam in the Netherlands is *Nederislam*, Islam in Nederland. A significant new notion is *Polderislam* as a reference to the poldersystem in the Netherlands, where the polder is a metaphor for Dutch manner of negotiating like the matrix of the polders, flat with a meandric system of dikes and ditches, a little parochial. Islam in the Netherlands is now in a state of renewal, in the sense of contextualisation or localisation. Very interesting are the developments because the combination of Islam and ethnicity (Turkish, Moroccan, Surinamese, Indonesian, East European) is a hot issue of discussion. The Council of (Christian) Churches in the Netherlands Churches is focusing on exchange, mutual encounter and above all a sense for togetherness avoiding tensions. Inter-religious dialogue is a priority and some theological faculties started programs like Christianity and Islam, or Christian and Islamic spirituality.

9. AFRICANS

The African migrants are striking migrants because they are clearly different, not only by colour but also by language and life-style. We can speak about a large variety of origin, religion, languages. In the Afrikahuis in Amsterdam the Catholic Ghanaians have their Eucharist in Twi and immediately after, the Nigerians in their English. In The Hague the English speaking migrant churches erected the Council of African Churches. The French speaking groups are busy to do the same. Some of the groups have an international platform like the Holy Ghost Revival Centre International of Amsterdam. Africans are busy to unite themselves via umbrella building and via local organizations like the Nigerian Christian Association in the Netherlands from 1998 or the Pentecostal Council of Churches Amsterdam. A lot of new and independent African churches were erected and they are growing in numbers and impact. We can imagine that not only space is a problem but also the quest of integration and acceptance in the new country.

In the Netherlands Gospel of Africa to Europe, GATE is busy to bring the Gospel in the secularized Dutch society and Christian churches. It is a revivalist movement for the Netherlands. Catholic Africans can find connections in the big cities but have to deal with autochthonous Catholics in smaller towns. Occasionally a Indian priest, speaking Tamil has a lot to do, visiting the Tamil speaking families and groups. It works only for two years, because the priest is doing his Masters in theology within two years. Afterwards he has to leave the Netherlands. That shows the phenomenon of improvisation and fragmentation for the migrant religious communities and groups. The Somalians are refugees and have another approach than the Congolese and Sudanese. The people of the Mediterranean area can go to their countries for holidays, a normal phenomenon, but that is too expensive for people from Africa.

It is a pity that the distance between the African and the Dutch churches is so deep that exchange is quite impossible. It is difficult in this case to promote and support intercultural and inter-religious connections with the scope to a better and more fundamental view on religion and society. It would be welcome for the Dutch autochthonous churches, for new

stimulance, revitalisation, and inspiration. The gap between the two is serious with on the background the transnational impact of the Africans. It is a pity that these circumstances are not favourable for the development of new theological insights on the basis of African contributions with specific issues like the experience of charisms, healing, and leadership.

10. VARIETY

First of all we have to mention: sometimes migrants are passants. They have to live in a new country for a short time for training, schooling, employment, with official tasks on embassies. These people, normally not the poorest people, have the scope to return and they have not a mentality of definitive migration. They can contribute and participate in migrant church affairs. But within a short time they go back, perhaps with nice talks about their stay. That is one group. Another group can find, in religious affairs, their equals in institutions in the new country. Old churches like the Deutsche Evangelische Gemeinde in Rotterdam, the Norwegian, Swedisch, Danish and Finn churches, or the Scots International Church Rotterdam, are churches for seamen, traders. That is the model in all harbour cities and embassy centers. In the Netherlands there are churches for Croatians, the Polish people, Hungarians, Italians, Capeverdians, since decades. They can find their way for a short or long time. The function of these churches is practical and fragmented, most of the time very dependent of a leader. Since the last decades new migrants come from Irak, Iran, Afghanistan, Somalia, Congo, Rwanda, Burundi. They are the newcomers of this moment. They can make a choice: they can continue their religious ideas and practices in existing own institutions for themselves, or they can look for affiliation with religious institutions like theirs, or they can start a new individual or (family) collective attempt to cope the difficulties of migration with religion as an essential contribution. It is remarkable that conversion of Moslims or Hindus to other religions is seldom, but the change from one Christian to another church is frequent, something like church hopping and church shopping. We think this phenomenon has to do with the strong monolithic ethnic character of some groups. Leaving the group or the families in this special religious case means losing the social milieu. In that case the danger of sanctions are not unthinkable.

These are some varieties of the issue migration and religion in practice. Now we can take a look on migrant religion with the theories on migration, namely how longer in the new country how lower level binding with the old religion and culture. We can formulate some objections. Isolation is one of the abnormal and unexpected issues because the thresholds of the Dutch parishes or communities are too high, by use of language, manner of liturgy, the architecture of the buildings, the emotional environment. Another experience is that in some cases the participants selves changed. We can give a clear example. The services for and with the Catholic Spaniards as guest labourers were necessary in the sixties and in the seventies of last century. The system of services in Spanish continued but now with Latinos and Latinas and that makes a difference. The people of the former colonies are different. The early Indonesia, a Dutch colony, has not learned Dutch but in Suriname and the Dutch Antilles the Dutch language is the official language but they speak their own local languages, also in the Netherlands. They are multilingual, at least trilingual (mother tongue, Dutch and Sranantongo or Papiamentu). These are examples of the internal diversity, a structural pillarisation of the Dutch at hand.

The planning for immigration policy on national and municipal niveau can suppose the theory of the migration: how longer from home how easier to integrate and to live together with the autochtonous people. In reality there are variations like we saw. The quest is the validity of integration in the framework of the realisation of the concept of unity in diversity. It is a pity when the richness of languages and religions is disappearing. It can be a task for the churches

to resist against (some) ideas of integration in the sense of uniformity. Sometimes strategy can interfere the process of integration. The offer of pastoral care for the migrants by the Dutch church can be finished according to some groups in the church self and in migrant groups. Integration is their slogan. The responsibility concerning their own leaders is their own duty just like their own tempo and involvement, according to this option. For many the time of over-indulgence is over, like they like to signify this period. They proclaim that the migrants have to do their own things for the sake of sound development and perspectives of autonomy. On the other side, the new migrants are asking for special treatment because they need in the new environment some points of contact with their own language, religion, and culture. That is normal. Now church leaders can emphasize the memory, forstoring homesickness without preparing the newcomers for a new future in a new context. The churches can help migrants also to take steps in the direction of an autonomous position within the universal framework of the national or universal church. It is possible that migrants have experiences with religious autonomy and independence in the home-countries. For them it is easy and normal to start a new religious movement with their own countrymen and others. Perhaps some religious men have the experience to be a part of a small group or a minority in their own country. For them it is not difficult to find a way in the overwhelming new country. In the case of religion, the theory of how longer away how easier to integrate, is not totally useful. Religion is most of the time, the heart of the matter for man. Man can assimilate and integrate on many levels. Concerning religion many migrants want to catch at a strow and we think especially in the secularised Netherlands. Some scholars in the Netherlands are waiting for the secularisation of the newcomers, predicting that the Dutch tendency is a general and universal process. We think that other and new possibilities for religion and churches are real, now and in the future. We are trying to open the new future by interculturality, transculturality, and inter-religiosity. It is impossible to prognosticate because so many elements of the issue are open and variable. In this cadre we want to pinpoint a special quest in the Netherlands. The phenomenon of a host of new independent African churches in the Netherlands is significant. In notably Ghana and Nigeria there is a long experience of creating new independent churches. For them the Dutch religious context is alienating: the move in the liturgy, the lack of emotional touch in the sermons, the fear for wonders and miracles, the stiffly hierarchical constructions: in short a strange world, a world of difference. For them in the Netherlands the creation of new churches is part of their identity in spite of the assimilating or integrating options on a lot of levels (language, commerce, education, job development, labour participation, housing). We have to be careful with the integration theory especially in the case of religion and church building. It is dangerous to use generalisations and stereotypes, labelling people for the sake of uniformity. Here is a challenge to resist the seduction for uniformity and monotomy. It is quite a serious ethical issue for newcomers and migrants, in a real state of emergence concerning identity and selfhood. The quality of migration in our sense is at stake.

11. MIGRANT THEOLOGY

Until now churches and religious groups are involved in logistic and predominantly material problems in migrant affairs. The real encounter around issues like development of a new vision on man, world, God, and church, in short a new theology, is quite absent, but relevant for the future.

In the framework of understanding the socio-political climate of welfare for all newcomers, the underlining of the development of new theological concepts is a test case for the old and new churches. A fundamental view is that migration is the heart of the matter concerning a new world-order. Migration has to reform world structures. A new world-order is in

advancing on the back of migrants. They takes that as luggage for baggage from home. Further we have to develop interconnectedness and dialogue with the poor, with the cultures and religions of grassroot people. That group is the migrant group in the rich societies. That means moving of boundaries, all over the world, and contextualised in the Netherlands.. We have to look for a new approach of the panorama and configuration of religion in the Netherlands

- logistically, not only in the Randstad and in big buildings
- formally, concerning content, the quality of organisation and network
- message, the message as good news, not fundamentalistic, and extremistic
- interconnected with the global world.

First of all we have to recognize that the actors for a new theology concerning a new image of God, image of man and formation of community are all men, all citizens. That means that everybody has to be metaphorically and literally, multilingual and intercultural. The conditions for that situation are for example the nearness and togetherness by meetings, exchange of information, global thinking and global dedication. The perspectives for new insights are different because all groups have their own agenda. The management of diversity in religious affairs can help to develop new insights from below and from the poor strata of the society, never asked for advice and vision. In that sense, this new approach is changing positions and changing sources, the loci theologici.

Since decades the issue of migration is present in the Dutch churches, started by the care for the emigrants after the Second World War. The churches organised pastoral for and with the migrants, but within the religious communities the approach did not change visibly. The party politics blocked a free development of good relationships and harmonious integration as an ideal. The process of mutual exchange of migrants and churches is a difficult process due to the various languages, cultures, and aspirations. The empowerment of the migrants in typical religious affairs was handicapped by lack of knowledge, lack of stimulance. The Dutch standpoint of the strict separation of church and state was strange for many newcomers and the idea that religion is a vehicle for cohesion and a instrument for development was denied by the Dutch government, based on the idea of secularisation, rationalisation and individualisation. It is quite difficult to clarify issues around identity construction and new definitions concerning identity by others, new ideas on culture and changing processes, especially in public debates where oneliners are preeminently welcome. Nevertheless the need for de development of intercultural theology and inter-religious dialogue is knocking on the door, like experiments on the field of inter-religious pastoral and liturgy.

An aspect of the quest is: the follow-up of the pros and contras on the field of logistics (separation or/and concentration, integration or autonomy), on psychological level (the awareness of a migrant mentality, a diaspora sense and mind), culturally (the bridge for old and new men for a new challenge and not for perservation of heritage but a choice for new cadres), historically (the lessons from history forgotten and not correctly analysed).

Another aspect of our issue quest is: how it was possible that the development of relations and togetherness of men especially in religious affairs was so feable and vulnerable? The heart of the matter has to be discutable. Man has to live with questions and slow processes without a blueprint of the future. Nevertheless, all sorts of convivence or togetherness can lead to new connections and configurations. The presence of various forms of Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism and also of new religious movements and even new attempts to bring forward the sense of religion in the society, are calling the scholars to do theology on a broader level between globalisation and localisation.

Concerning the thematical aspect we can mention that it is fundamental to start on and with the experience of the migrants concerning passion, suffering, and marginalisation. Good News means solidarity, mutually between migrants, contacts with the mother country,

liberation of restrictions against migration, colour and suspicion. Themes like heteronomy and integration, recognition of church diversity, openness to other religions and folk religions, balance between individual and collective expressions and experiences are actual. Results of meetings and discussions are ways for humanisation on global level. But also the value of oral traditions and narrative approach of stories of believers with new issues like wonders, miracles, para-religious powers and gifts, knowledge of healing processes, revenge of spirits, the value of the unseen world, the cosmic experience and the law of similarity of man and nature, abominated for a long time in some theological circles.

The fifth world congress on Pastoral Care for Migrants and Refugees of the Papal Council for Migrants and Itinerair people (PCMIP) at Rome, 17-22 November 2003 underlined the importance of dialogue between cultures and religions. Inter-religious dialogue is more than an option, it is a pastoral obligation. An interesting point of the congress is the recommendation to see an essential connection between *missio ad gentes* (mission under the peoples), *missio ad migrantes* (mission under migrants) and *missio migrantium* (mission by migrants). This congress pinpointed the human dignity of the migrants and refugees and their rights. The congress asked the Roman-Catholic church, the hierarchy, the members and related organizations to plan special pastoral programs based on the idea of the Church as a Pilgrim church (Verslag 2003). This important document is constitutive for a migrant theology, based on migrant pastoral with the emphasis on the contribution of the migrants and their experience and expertise. The theme of the pope for the 90st World Day for Migrants and Refugees is migration for peace. Last year the theme was; migration and action against racism, hatred of strangers, and extremistic nationalism and in 2002 migration and inter-religious dialogue. The themes are quite actual and necessary. Any migrant theology has to go down to earth: the everyday misery and handicaps for peace and human rights (*Kerkelijke Documentatie* 2004).

We can refer now to our introduction. Migrant theology, has to do with the God of the steerage, co-travelling with nomadic and sedentarian man. Not a God of powers and wars, but a God of migrants in good and bad days, in sickness and health, with memories of the past and perspectives for the future. His reflection has a new human experience as basis, unfamiliar with the image of God of the Gospel and without the traditional mainstream theology with official and unofficial documents of the hierarchy. Here is the porch of a new man and new world, liberated from all kinds of slavery. We have to do with liberation theology, active for a new concept and image of God and world.

Our essay is too short and too fragmentaric. It is not more than a call for research and analysis of a extremely important and constitutive issue for the recognition for developments of changing religions in changing contexts on the way to a new world-order.

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