

# HALLE-DANISH (TRANQUEBAR) MISSION AND WESTERN PROTESTANT MISSIONARY TRADITION

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## *Introduction*

Mission is an encounter of persons in their life situation and world views grounded in their traditions and coloured by their ever changing experiences. The communicating partners allow, either consciously or unconsciously, their preconceptions challenged, enriched and altered. This two way communication process holds true for cross-cultural and international mission relationships. The common assumption that the West molded the East through its political, colonial, diplomatic, technical, cultural and ideological undertakings, but remained largely unaffected, proves doubtful. The following essay attempts to demonstrate how the 18th Century Protestant mission activity in South India<sup>1</sup> influenced the West, especially the places where German pietism was prevalent, in creating new world views, mission awareness and new mission societies.

## *I. Importance of contexts in the mission encounter*

Every human society is a meeting place of the past traditions, present multifaceted context and future hopes of a particular society in a particular time in a particular way. A brief survey of the outstanding characteristics 18th Century will throw more light on the mutual influence of the Christian missions in India and certain circles of the society in the West. In Europe the end of the Thirty Years' War (1618–1648) marked a new way of looking at the coexistence of different Christian groups with their distinct traditions and interpretations of the Christian Gospel. The deep thirst for tolerance drained the power of unique claims of the Church. Nominal Christianity consisting of performing religious rites such as baptism, mechanical administration of the Eucharist, confessing and moral sermons made Christian belief to a private property with little relevance to day to day life in the society. New avenues for practicing Christian faith were in great need. The movement of German Protestant Pietism came as an answer especially through the

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<sup>1</sup> The term 'Protestant' refers to the historical event on April 19, 1529 at the Diet of Speier in which six German princes and fourteen north German cities firmly expressed their strong disapproval about the decision of the Emperor Charles V. (Spanish King, but emperor of the Holy Roman Empire from 1519–1556) and the Roman Catholic Church that the followers of Martin Luther had to get themselves reconverted to Roman Catholicism.



teachings of Jacob Böhme (1574–1624) John Arndt (1555–1621), Philip Jacob Spener (1635–1705),<sup>2</sup> August Herman Francke (1663–1727)<sup>3</sup> and John Albert Bengel (1687–1752). Their general emphasis lay on conscious regeneration and commitment to the cause of Christ in theology and in practice. Their desire to live the requirements of the Gospel of Christ made them to engage in missionary activities both in Europe and in other countries. Moved by the teachings of Spener and certain domestic problems, Frederick IV. (1671–1730, from 1699 King of Denmark) started the first German Lutheran overseas mission in 1705 and sent two young students of theology, Bartholomäus Ziegenbalg (1682–1719) and Heinrich Plütschau (1677–1746) as missionaries to his small colony Tranquebar (1620–1845)<sup>4</sup> on the Eastern Coromandal Coast in South India.

On political side, the 18th century was a time of European efforts to colonize the newly discovered countries. The British East India Company (EIC) could establish itself in Surat from 1600; their Fort St. George in Chennai (earlier known as Madras) was established in 1639 by Francis Day. In 1653 it became an independent Presidency. The death of Aurengzeb in 1707 created a political vacuum in India and gave a fertile ground for warring European powers, France and England, to consolidate their colonies. The wealth of the British East India Company in India and the prospect of transferring it to England were attractive so that the cost of English wars with France, Holland and North America could be paid with revenues from India. With the help of sick King George III (1738–1820) William Pitt the Younger (1759–1806, Prime Minister of Great Britain from 1783) passed special laws to centralize power in India.<sup>5</sup> During this period Great Britain

<sup>2</sup> Cf. BRUNNER, 1988, p. 25. Brunner summarizes six objectives of Spener's pietism: »1) a more extensive use of the Word of God among us; 2) the establishment and diligent exercise of spiritual priesthood; 3) to awaken a fervent love among our Christians and to this into practice; 4) to beware how we conduct ourselves in religious controversies; 5) that schools and universities would pay attention to the life as well as the studies of the students entrusted to them; [and] 6) that sermons may be so prepared by all that their purpose (faith and its fruits) may be achieved in the hearers to the greatest possible degree.«

<sup>3</sup> The specialty of Halle Pietism was the emphasis laid on the »exemplary« conversion method of Francke himself. Cf. BRUNNER, 1988, p. 119. The order of conversion should follow divine stirring (göttliche Rührung), the struggle for repentance (Bußkampf) and break through (Durchbruch). In 1702 Francke founded the *Collegium Orientale* in Halle to teach oriental languages such as Greek and Hebrew. His *Der große Aufsatz* (the great essay of 1704) shows the moral decay in all social stratification. He wanted spiritual and social reform all over the world and in all walks of life.

<sup>4</sup> During the rule of the Danish King Christian IV. (1588–1648), the founder of the first Danish East India Company (1616, DEIC), his admiral Roland Krappe rented the village Tranquebar (Tamil: Tarangambadi) in 1619 from the Tanjore King Ragunatha Nayak (1600–1630) and laid the foundation for the Danish colony. After the collapse of the first DEIC a second one was formed in 1670 which ended in 1729. In 1732 a Danish Asiatic Company was founded to trade with China and India. In 1777 the Danish state took over the possession of DEIC in India. In 1796 Tranquebar trade was abolished. The Danish-English War (1807–1814) weakened Tranquebar greatly. From 1816 a Board of Customs and Trade in Copenhagen controlled the affairs of the DEIC, now mostly in Serampore near Calcutta. In 1845 the Danish possessions in India were sold to the British. Cf. FIHL, ESTHER: »Some Theoretical and Methodological Consideration on the Study of Danish Colonialism in Southeast India«, *FOLK*, 26, 1984, pp. 51–56; FELDBAEK, OLE: »The Development of an Indo-European Town in Mogul-India – Tranquebar in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries«, in: *Changing South Asia – City and Culture*, ed. by KENNETH BALLHATCHET and DAVID TAYLOR (Asia Research Service – School of Oriental and African Studies at the University of London) London 1984, pp. 11–20.

<sup>5</sup> Some of the earlier and later Acts regarding India are as following: Regulating Act of 1773; Charter Act of 1793; Charter Act of 1813; Charter Act of 1833.



followed a dual foreign colonial policy. After the Declaration of Independence on July 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1776 the British colonies in North America became independent in 1783. From that time onwards Great Britain began vigorous colonizing process in India. The India Act of 1784, by which British government would be supervising the commercial, military and civil activities of EIC in India through its governor-general in Calcutta, was introduced in India on February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1788.

The administrative reforms introduced by Governors Robert Clive, Warren Hastings and Lord Cornwallis reflected the change of British policy towards North America, France (in relation to British Seven Years' War (1756–1763) and French Revolution (1789–1799)). The British victory over the Marathas, with Hyder Ali (1721–1782) and with his son Tippu Sultan (1750–1799) made them virtual rulers of vast Indian territory.<sup>6</sup> In the West it was also a time of rationalism and secularization. The established tenants of Christian Church were criticized. There were attempts to separate the Church from the State. New interpretations of Christian doctrines and practical piety were emerging. Within the context of the international social and political upheavals the Christian Protestant mission activity in South India had its manifold influence on the West.

## II. Christian Protestant Mission Work in South India

Before the arrival of the German Lutheran missionaries there was a small community of Christians consisting of the St. Thomas Christians (from 3rd Century A.D.), Roman Catholics belonging to the movements of Padroado<sup>7</sup> and Propaganda Fide<sup>8</sup> and a few Reformed Christians (from 17th Century A.D.). They had limited influence in India. Their influence on the West does not form the main concern of this study. The Tranquebar

<sup>6</sup> First Carnatic War (1744–48) against the French winning Madras back; the Second Carnatic War (1749–1759) against the Nawab of Arcot, especially against Chanda Saheb winning Tiruchirapally; the third Carnatic War (1756–1763) defeating the French in Pondicherry and Cuddalore; the First Mysore War (1767–1769) against Hyder Ali, but defeated by him; the Second Mysore War (1780–1781) against Hyder Ali and his ally the French winning over him; the Battle of Pelliore in 1780 against Hyder Ali, but defeated by him; the Battle of Porto Nova in 1781 conquering Hyder Ali; the Third Mysore War (1790–1792) defeating Tippu Sultan and conquering Mysore and other strategic territories; the Fourth Mysore War (1799) killing Tippu Sultan. In 1801 the Madras Presidency was formed.

<sup>7</sup> RAJAMANICKAM, S.: »Madurai Mission – Old and New«, in: *Jesuit Presence in Indian History*, ed. by ANAND AMALADASS, Madras, Satya Nilayam, 1988, pp. 301–315, here quoted p. 311. »Padroado means Patronage. It was the result of a concordat between the Pope and the Portuguese monarch. By this the Portuguese king undertook to maintain all Churches, chapels, monasteries etc. and pay stipends to all missionaries and ecclesiastics from the royal treasury. In return he enjoyed the following privileges: no bishop could be appointed in India, no missionary could sail there, without the permission of the king and then only in a Portuguese ship.«

<sup>8</sup> Pope George XV (1554–1623) founded the Congregation for the Propagation of Faith in 1622 as an institution to »counter the colonial and political expansion of Portugal: and to spread the Roman Catholic tradition throughout the world. As a result the Propaganda missionaries were not placed under the jurisdiction of Portuguese Archbishop in Goa. This double rule ended up in numerous misunderstandings and quarrels between the missionaries of Padroado and Propaganda.



Mission,<sup>9</sup> also known as the Royal Danish Mission or the Danish Halle Mission, is known as the ›Mother of all Protestant missions‹. Nørgaard traces three phases of its existence: the founding period (1706–1729) was the most creative time of the mission.<sup>10</sup> With the ordination of the first Protestant Pastor Aaron on December 28<sup>th</sup>, 1733 the Church emerged as an indigenous Church<sup>11</sup>. During the period of consolidation (1730–1780) the business of the Danish East India Company was hampered by the Danish wars with Sweden. The Tranquebar Mission could expand itself far and wide. The disappearance of the mission (1780–1845) had its roots in the age of European reasoning which questioned the authority and authenticity of the Christian Bible. It did not promote mission. In the meantime the war between the Danes and the British in India developed in such a way that Denmark sold its property to the British in 1845. The mission disappeared; but the Church that had emerged from this mission continued to grow. About 54 missionaries and untold number of national Christians of the Tranquebar Mission toiled in Tamil Nadu. Their letters, diaries and manuscripts created in the West a great passion for missionary work.

### III. Influence on the Creation of an International missionary network

Initially the Tranquebar Mission was an undertaking of a few individuals in Copenhagen and in Berlin. After the first news of this mission was published in 1708 in Berlin many people began to show interest in the affairs of this mission. A.H. Francke who was first unwilling and greatly hesitant to support this ›Danish‹ mission financially, dared take up the leadership around 1709. To his surprise he was enthused to observe the ever growing mission interest among the German pietistic groups.<sup>12</sup> In 1712 Francke appointed his

<sup>9</sup> LEHMANN, ARNO: *Es begann in Tranquebar – Die Geschichte der ersten evangelischen Kirche in Indien*, Evangelische Verlagsanstalt / Berlin 1955.

<sup>10</sup> GERMANN, WILHELM: *Ziegenbalg und Plütschau. Die Gründungsjahre der Trankebarschen Mission*, Band I und II, Erlangen 1868; Nørgaard, 1988, pp. 11–140; Jeyaraj, 1996.

<sup>11</sup> JEYARAJ, DANIEL: ›Ordination of the first Protestant Indian Pastor Aaron – 28.12.1733 and its significance – A contribution to Indian Church History – A study based on the newly discovered original documents‹, in: *Ordination of the first Protestant Indian Pastor Aaron*, ed. by DANIEL JEYARAJ, Lutheran Heritage Archives, Madras 1998, pp. 1–79.

<sup>12</sup> Propagation of the Gospel in the East, London, 1718, pp. On 26.2.1713 A.H. FRANCKE wrote to the Society for Promoting the Christian Knowledge: ›Posterity shall learn by it how one Nation can help the other in the common cause of Propagating the Christian Religion, finding that the German Nation assisted the Danes, as the English do both. I must acquaint you here, that in the Beginning of my Design to promote this glorious Enterprise of the Danish Nation, I very much scrupled, whether I should embark in it or not: For I thought, to meddle with a Foreign Work would not only hinder ours here, but even diminish it; considering the vast Expenses required to provide every ensuing Year for the whole Orphan-House, so many School-Masters, and other innumerable Accidents, without any certain Foundation. But I overcame that Scruple with a deep Reflection on so many signal Steps of the Divine Providence in Works of this Nature, since I laid the first Stone of the Orphan-House, and other Buildings where I was engaged: Yea, I found by Experience, of which you may be certain, that the Promoting this Foreign Work was not a Hindrance to our own, but that even the Heavenly Blessing was more signally showered upon it. ... the Undertaking of converting the Malabarrian Heathen to the Christian Religion, was a catholic Work, worthy to be promoted by all charitable and public-spirited Christians.‹



colleague Christian Benedict Miachaelis (1680–1764) to be in charge of the Tranquebar Mission,<sup>13</sup> and especially to edit the mission news from South India and publish the famous Halle Reports. This was the first institutionalized approach to the mission affair in India. In the same year there was considerable administrative change in Copenhagen. Franz Julius Lütken (1650–1712), a great promoter and guardian of the mission interest in Copenhagen, died. On October 31<sup>st</sup>, 1712 the Danish king appointed two theologians, Johannes Trellund and Jacob Lodberg, to form a small mission committee in Copenhagen. However, they were unable to accept the pietism of Halle and did not want the Germans to be engaged on the Danish ground in India. They recommended two young theological students, Niels Koch and Hartwig Spleth, to go as missionaries. Halle refused to send them<sup>14</sup> because of their great trouble with the missionary Johann Georg Bövingh (1676–1728)<sup>15</sup>, who did not come from Halle and thus created a long anti-mission campaign in Europe. Halle's opposition ended in not sending the Danes as missionaries. Moreover they could not withstand the denunciation of the Danish orthodoxy and the attacks of the Danish East India Company against the Tranquebar Mission. They left the mission committee. To rectify these deficiencies the King established a »mission board« entitled *Collegium de cursu evangelii promovendi*<sup>16</sup> on December 10<sup>th</sup>, 1714 and placed it directly under his control and under the leadership of trusted advisor Johann Georg von Holstein (1662–1730). Its aims were to revive the mission interest in the Danish Church and to clarify the relationship of the mission to the Danish government in Tranquebar. The Tranquebar missionaries were henceforth designated as the Royal Danish Missionaries supported by the finance and authority of the King. The Danish East India Company did not accept the mission fully because it would harm their already endangered business if the mission would spread into territories which did not belong to Tranquebar.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Archives of the Leipzig Mission at Leipzig, Kapsel 5a. On 8.12.1712 C.B. Michaelis informed the Tranquebar missionaries of this appointment and wished that his service would bring blessing to them. Cf. GERMANN, Vol. I, 1868, p. 236. Francke himself requested the missionaries by the end of 1712 to accept the instructions by Michaelis as if they would come from his own hand.

<sup>14</sup> FENGER, 1845, 281; cf. PEDERSEN, JOHANNES: »De forste sammenstod mellem orthodoxi og pietisme«, in: *Den Danske Kirkes-Historie*. Ed. by HALS KOCH / BJON KORNERUP, Vol. V, Copenhagen 1951, 23–44 and 51–56.

<sup>15</sup> BÖVINGH, JOHANN GEORG: *Curieuse Beschreibung und Nachricht von den Hottentotten, welche er neulich an einen guten Freund überschrieben und von demselben auff Ersuchen zum Druck überlassen worden, also eingerichtet, daß sie zu einer Erläuterung der Briefe von Herrn Ziegenbalg und Herrn Plütschem wie auch umständlicher Relation, derer darinnen benannten Oerter und Völcker dienen kann, wobey noch eine ganz neue und accurate Beschreibung von dem jetzigen Religions-Wesen, samt angehängtem Bericht von einigen unter den Missionariis daselbst entstandenen Streitigkeiten*, n.p. 1712; cf. BACHMANN, ELFRIEDE: *Die Lebensbeschreibungen des Johann Georg Bövingh (1676–1728)*, (Rothenburger Schriften, Heft 48/49) Rothenburg 1978, 29–181; cf. GENSICHEN, HANS-WERNER: *Neue Materialien und Forschungen zur Frühgeschichte der evangelischen Missionen*, Teil II: *Der Fall Bövingh*, 1980, 106–112.

<sup>16</sup> Nørgaard, 1988, 63–71. Cf. HANSEN, 1980, pp. 63. In the course of time the »Missionskollegiet« was to look after 1) Tranquebar mission for the foreign territory in South India (1714–1845), 2) Lapland mission (1720 – 1814) working among nominal Christian Lapps or Laplander living in the northern parts of present Norway, Sweden and Finland, and enjoying their own culture and language, and 3) Greenland mission (from 1721). In 1847, supervision of the Tranquebar Mission passed to the Missionary Society in Dresden (Leipzig). In 1795 a fire destroyed most of the archival documents of this Borad.



The organizational influence of the Tranquebar Mission was also seen in England. Through the mediation of Heinrich Wilhelm Ludolf (1655–1712), who was a secretary (1686–1692) to the Danish (Lutheran) Prince George and the husband of the English Queen Anne (1665–1714, Queen of England from 1702) and who visited the Francke Foundations in 1703/4 and 1707 one of Francke's students, Anton Wilhelm Böhme (1673–1722) got a job as a court chaplain of the ›German Lutheran Royal Chapel‹, St. James in London, and in 1705 became a member of the *Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge* (SPCK).<sup>17</sup> Böhme was a great translator of pietistic literature from Halle. In 1705 he published Francke's *Fußstapfen* (Footsteps) as *Pietas Hallensis* (Halles-pietism) into English and influenced certain pietistic circles. In 1709 SPCK authorized Böhme to translate *Merkwürdige Nachricht* (Notable News), first published in 1708 in Berlin, because of its devotional nature and many curious information. Böhme translated and dedicated it to Rt. Rev. Thomas Tennison, the Arch-Bishop of Canterbury, the President of SPCK. It generated a great mission interest among the friends of the SPCK that many wanted to give financial help to the Tranquebar Mission.<sup>18</sup> On September 7<sup>th</sup>, 1710 SPCK decided to invite both Ziegenbalg and Plütschau as its ›corresponding members‹. There was a very cordial relationship between SPCK and Tranquebar Mission. Henry Newman, the secretary of SPCK, informed the missionaries that due to success stories of the Tranquebar Mission ›God has raised up many Friends to the Mission in India, and I hope the number of them increases daily in Europe which I can't but look upon as a sure presence of the Divine Blessing upon it.‹<sup>19</sup> In 1712 the SPCK sent a printing press to Tranquebar; Halle sent the printing fonts; the Danish King Frederick IV who was happy about this donation,<sup>20</sup> granted the authority to print Christian books without censorship.<sup>21</sup> In Tranquebar this press

<sup>17</sup> BRUNNER, 1988, pp. 54–55. Prince George founded St. James around 1700. Rev. J.W. Mecken († 1711) refused to administer Holy Communion to Prince George because he had already partaken of it along with Queen Anne in an Anglican Church. So he sought for a new pastor. Ludolf recommended Böhme. After Böhme his successors showed great interest in the mission work in India. Frederick Michael Ziegenhagen (1694–1776) succeed Böhme in 1722. Frederick Wilhelm Pasche (1728–1792) succeeded Ziegenhagen. From 1761 he looked after St. James Church at London. From 1767 he was related to SPCK. His successor was Johann Christian Christoph Uebele.

<sup>18</sup> *Halle Reports*, Vol. I, Con. VI, Preface, Second leaf, front side.

<sup>19</sup> SPCK microfilm roll ME CS 1, p. 50. Newman's letter to Ziegenbalg and Gründler dated 4.10.1717. Cf. *Propagation of the Gospel in the East*. Part III, London, 1718, pp. vii–xvi: Böhme reported that some show shallow interest at first and give it up totally; others ›have been startled at the Newness of the Thing and are shy to venture into a Road so little beaten in this Age, and so much exposed to Danger and Difficulty.‹

<sup>20</sup> Cf. SPCK Microfilm roll ME Cr 1, pp. 241–243. The Danish King was pleased to know that the SPCK donated a printing press to the Tranquebar Mission. On 7.3.1715 the Mission Board, consisting of J. G. Holstein, G. Münch, I. Stenbuch, J. Lodberg and C. Wendt wrote to SPCK: ›The single instance of your having presented a printing press with a Font of Portuguese Types to the Malabarians will perpetuate the memory of your concern for them as long as the Books that shall be printed at it shall endure. ... As this has afforded his most serene Majesty of Denmark, our most gracious King, a most exquisite pleasure which he has taken all occasions to declare both publicly and privately with the Highest Gratitude: So all good men who knowing the value of human soul employ their cares about the Salvation of men, being as highly delighted with these endeavors, thought they had hence reason to join with him in adoring the Remarkable Providence of a gracious God.‹

<sup>21</sup> Cf. DUVERDIER, GERALD: ›Über die Bedeutung unbedeutender Drucke – Die ersten tamilischen Drucke zu Halle (1712–1713)‹, in: *Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift der Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg*, Halle. XXIV (G.H.), 5, 1975, pp. 103–126.



became the first Protestant printing press which enabled the spreading of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, systematization and uniformity of Tamil orthography and increasing desire for reading. On January 2, 1716 Ziegenbalg was the honored guest in SPCK headquarters. He informed the audience of the success in his mission, the possibility of more expanded work and his commitment to serve in Tamil Nadu till his death. He donated twelve copies of his Tamil grammar *Grammatica Damulica* to SPCK. He preached in Anglican Churches. The Directors of the British East India Company, who noticed his popularity, gave him free passage to Madras in their ship. He spent a few days with Rt. Rev. John Wake, the new Arch-Bishop of Canterbury. Then he returned to Madras.<sup>22</sup> When he and his colleague J.E. Gründler died the Arch-Bishop of Canterbury wrote to A.H. Francke on June 1<sup>st</sup>, 1721 that he was deeply moved and God might send more missionaries to South India. When this letter reached Halle, many students of theology declared their readiness to go to India.<sup>23</sup> The cooperation among the four centers Tranquebar, Halle, Copenhagen and London continued a few decades, not on the grounds of theology,<sup>24</sup> doctrine, Church administration or liturgy, but because of common mission and »pragmatic ecumenism« promoted by strong personalities like Francke, Böhme, Neuman and Ziegenbalg.<sup>25</sup>

#### IV. Influence on intercontinental relationship

Tranquebar Mission influenced mission relationship across three continents. Lehmann summarized this relationship with the following words: »A priority of special nature [of the Tranquebar Mission] is the ecumenical four corners – Halle, Copenhagen, England and Tranquebar, which is unfortunately not clearly emphasized in the ›History of the Ecumenical Movement‹. National boundaries were crossed over there; ecumenical cooperation was done despite the Church barriers. Christians in Netherlands, Sweden, Italy and Petersburg participated in the mission actively. Not even America failed in this.«<sup>26</sup>

This intercontinental relationship was made possible through the correspondence of Ziegenbalg with the Puritan leader and prolific writer Cotton Mather (1663–1728)<sup>27</sup> of

<sup>22</sup> *Halle Reports*, Vol. I, Con. 10, pp. 817–819 and 823–828.

<sup>23</sup> *Halle Reports*, Vol. II, Con. 19, pp. 368–376.

<sup>24</sup> With regard to counting the Ten Commandments the Tranquebar Missionaries were following the Lutheran tradition. When the Archbishop of Canterbury saw the book *Summario das Douctrinas Christaas Por Uso Dos Catechumenos* (In Tamil and Portuguese: Summary of Christian teachings for the use of students of Catechism) printed in Tranquebar in 1715 he was upset and did not want to support Tranquebar Mission enthusiastically.

<sup>25</sup> BRUNNER, 1988, p. 309.

<sup>26</sup> LEHMANN, 1956, p. 39.

<sup>27</sup> LOVELACE, RICHARD F.: *The American Pietism of Cotton Mather – Origins of American Pietism*. Grand Rapids, Christian University Press, 1979. SMOLINSKI, REINER [Ed.]: *The threefold Paradise of Cotton Mather – An Edition of Triparadisus*. Athens, The University of Georgia Press, 1995. In a study symposium held in the Francke Foundations in November 1997 Prof. Dr. Gensichen spoke of the relationship of Cotton Mather to Halle, Germany. The author of this essay did not have any access to this learned lecture.



Boston. On December 31<sup>st</sup>, 1717 he replied a »dear Christian letter« from Ziegenbalg in Latin.<sup>28</sup> He considered Ziegenbalg as the »most respected, world famous and distinguished servant of the Gospel«. He wrote further: »It is greatly distressing and moving to see that in the Protestant Churches that very little and almost nothing is happening to promote the spreading of the faith. ... Certainly there are a few, who were manly and courageous in doing this work; among whom you are the first. I do not mention this to flatter you, but the marvel at the wonderful divine grace attending you. ... The news of your mission and of your industrious work has already reached us in West India from East India. The news of what you have accomplished in India through God's grace to gather a Christian people is accepted in America as good news from a far away country, and as a cool water for a thirsting person; it is conveyed to several American. This information has been already shared with several American Christians.«<sup>29</sup>

Thus the Tranquebar Mission exerted an influence in the far away continent. Almost thirty years later, in 1742, Heinrich Melchior Mühlenberg (1711–1787) went from the Francke Foundations in Halle as a pastor of »diaspora German Lutherans« to the »Salzburg Emigrants« in Ebenezer, Pennsylvania and Georgia.<sup>30</sup> There he emerged as the »Patriarch of the American Lutherans«. According to an advice given by the leaders and eminent supporters of the Tranquebar Mission, Gotthilf August Francke in Halle, Samuel Urlsperger in Augsburg, Germany, and Michael Ziegenhagen in London, Mühlenberg introduced a Church order which took the laity seriously. Each pastor was to choose seven deacons. Each Church must take care of its own pastor, children, widows and all needy persons. Mühlenberg was building on the almost three decades of experience of the Tranquebar Missionaries. He followed their methods in his pastoral work, recording the events in his diaries and communicating his observations and experiences to Halle for publication.<sup>31</sup>

Christian Frederick Schwartz (1726–1798) was a great missionary from Halle working in Tamil Nadu from 1750. He and Mühlenberg were contemporaries. Both of them were

<sup>28</sup> The author of this essay discovered this greatly damaged letter in the Archives of the Leipzig Mission at Leipzig, Kapsel 19. Its German version is printed in the *Halle Reports*, Vol. I, pp. 840–842; Abstract is found in LEHMANN, 1955, pp. 170–171; LEHMANN, 1956, pp. 39–40.

<sup>29</sup> LEHMANN, 1956, pp. 38–39.

<sup>30</sup> URLSPERGER, SAMUEL: *Ausführliche Nachrichten von der königlich Großbritannienischen Colonie Salzburgerischen Emigranten in America*, Halle, Part I, Vol. 2, 1746.

<sup>31</sup> The author of this essay is grateful to Dr. THOMAS MÜLLER-BAHLKE, the Archivist of the Francke Foundation in Halle, and the expert on Mühlenberg studies, for the following information communicated on 11.05.1998: »Mühlenberg and Schwartz did not correspond with each other directly. In his correspondence Mühlenberg did not even make any reference to Schwartz. That his work was influenced by the Danish Halle Mission is evident. In fact this mission was in existence several decades before he was sent to North America. In several aspects the taking care of the Diaspora Lutherans in East and West India were organized similarly, especially in the communication techniques, such as keeping diaries, writing letters and printed mission documents. In this aspect Mühlenberg could build on the several years of Halle with overseas. On the other hand there was a radical difference between the two enterprise, especially in their objectives: While the Tranquebar Missionaries were sent to »convert« the non-Christians the mission in North America was to take care of the German Lutherans in »North American wilderness.« Cf. MÜLLER, THOMAS: *Kirche zwischen zwei Welten – Die lutherische Kirchengründung in Nordamerika durch Heinrich Melchior Mühlenberg*. (Transatlantische Historische Studien 2) Franz Steiner Verlag, Frankfurt 1994.



loved and respected by those whom they served and by those authorities to whom they were responsible. There is no recorded evidence of direct relationship between these eminent persons from Halle. However, an American editor of the book on C.F. Schwartz claimed in 1835 that all the Western missionaries, especially from North America,<sup>32</sup> working among the Tamils in South India, were the successors of Schwartz.<sup>33</sup> In 1835 itself The Central Missionary Society was formed at Mechanicsburg with Rev. John Christian Frederick Heyer as their home missionary. Following the request for financial help from Rev. Charles Theophilus Ewald Rhenius (1790–1838) of Tirunelveli the German Foreign Mission Society was formed in May 1837. In 1842 ›Father Heyer‹ reached Tamil Nadu as their missionary and proceeded to Guntur in Andhra Pradesh. Due to his efforts the present Andhra Evangelical Lutheran Church (constituted in 1927) has grown.<sup>34</sup> Thus through Halle the Tranquebar Mission built directly and indirectly a two way bridge between South India and North America.

## V. Influence on English Protestant Missions

### A. Influence on the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (SPCK)

Thomas Bray (1656–1730) founded the SPCK to remove moral ignorance of the British society in England and in its overseas colonies through imparting Christian knowledge. The *Dharmapatacalais* (i.e. schools of charity) of the Tranquebar Mission met the expectations of the SPCK. Ziegenbalg established charity schools for boys in 1707 and for girls in 1710. The fame of these schools impressed the British chaplain in their colony at Cuddalore, also known as ›Dewanapatnam‹, and the Governor of Madras, Harrison. In 1717 a charity school was founded in Cuddalore. It had to be closed down because of the

<sup>32</sup> In June 1810 the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions was formed. In February 1812 Rev. Gored Hall and Samuel Not reached Calcutta. Rejected by the government in Calcutta, they went to Bombay. In July 1834 the Governor of Madras, Sir Frederick Adam, granted permission for the American missionaries from Sri Lanka, Rev. William Todd and Rev. Henry R. Hoisington, to settle down in Madurai. Soon other American missionaries followed. Tirumangalam, a place near Madurai, became their center.

<sup>33</sup> PEARSON, HUGH: *Memoris of the Life and Correspondence of the Reverend Christian Frederick Swartz to which is prefixed a sketch of the History of Christianity in India*, First American Edition. D. Appleton & Co., New York 1835. p. iv. ›The missionary labors of Swartz and of his associates, must have a permanent and increasing interest in this country, from the fact that an American mission has just been commenced among the Tamul people on the continent, on the very ground where [Christian Frederick] Swartz and [Christian Wilhelm] Gerické [1742–1803] labored and prayed. ... The influence of Swartz and his associates, was so diffused among the Tamul race, that all missionaries now among that people, are *his successors*.‹ This book concludes on page 414 with the following wish: ›May it soon be reclaimed to the service of Jehovah, and may the blessing of the Head of the Church crown with great success, this effort of American Christians to labor on the ground once trodden by the feet of Swartz, Gerické, and Kohlhoff.‹

<sup>34</sup> SWAVELY, C.H.: ›The India Mission of he United Lutheran Church in America‹, in: *The Lutheran Enterprise in India*, ed. by C.H. SWAVELY, Federation of the Evangelical Lutheran Churches in India, Madras 1952, pp. 32–48.



English resistance to the ›Danish mission‹. But the SPCK could no longer tolerate the fact that it did not have its own mission in India. Already on December 17<sup>th</sup>, 1713 the SPCK wrote to the Director of the English EIC in London ›that the Danish Nation is the first nation to send Protestant missionaries is a matter of joy to all. They chose the persons for this Errand from the Seminary in Germany which the History of Pietas Hallensis tells. ... This zeal is a reproach to the English Nation.«<sup>35</sup> In the meantime Benjamin Schultze, a missionary from Halle, who reached Tranquebar in 1719, learned Tamil and Portuguese well, engaged in translations of the Bible and hymn books and could not work with his colleague Christopher Theodosius Walther arrived in 1725, went to Madras in September 1726 on his own and started a mission work. SPCK accepted him as their first missionary and the Madras Mission took its roots. It impressed the Directors of the English EIC in London to issue an order that ›if any of the Danish Missionaries shall visit or reside at places under the Company's Jurisdiction, our Governors and Officers may give them their Protection; we hereby consent there unto, upon supposition that they behave themselves respectfully and suitable to the Rules of the Place«.<sup>36</sup> For several decades SPCK supported this mission work in Madras morally because most of the financial help continued to come from Halle.

The Cuddalore Mission was continually enjoying the benefit of SPCK. Missionaries Hüttemann and Gerické from Halle were giving leadership to this mission, especially during the war between the English and the French.

From 1762–1772 C.F. Schwartz was working in Trichy. There he was voluntarily looking after the welfare of the English soldiers wounded in the wars. Impressed by his care and integrity the English government appointed him as a garrison chaplain and paid him a salary. The SPCK supported this Trichirapalli Mission in a very small way.

The Tranquebar Missionary, Johann Zecharias Kiernandar 1711–1798 was responsible for the English Mission in Calcutta. Robert Clive, the Governor of Calcutta, whom Kiernandar knew in Madras as an ordinary person, gave some moral support to him in Calcutta.<sup>37</sup> It was Bartholomäus Lebrecht Ziegenbalg, a son of the founder of Tranquebar Mission in India and from 1758–1760 Director of the newly founded (1755) Danish Colony Frederiksnagore (i.e. Serampore), who invited Kiernander from Calcutta to Serampore. In the early stage SPCK supported this Bengal Mission. Kiernander's involvement into money making business, his great wealth brought by his English wife, his intimate acquaintance with Robert Clive, his ignorance of Bengali language, his prolonged quarrel with the SPCK missionary C.Ch. Diemar (1745–1792, reached Calcutta in 1785), and the change of mission policy from the Halle pietistic model (gathering a Church through

<sup>35</sup> SPCK Microfilm roll ME Cr 2, p. 80.

<sup>36</sup> Quoted in BRUNNER, 1988, p. 151. Company Act 1727, Paragraph 93. Minted in the SPCK on 13.2.1728.

<sup>37</sup> SANDEGREN, 1928, p. 34: ›Kiernander was received with kindness in Calcutta. The governor, Lord Clive, whose acquaintance Kiernander had made at Madras when he was only an insignificant clerk of the Company, promised to protect his help. And when shortly after their [Kiernander and his wife] arrival in Calcutta [18.9.1758] a son was born to Kiernander, Lord and Lady Clive were sponsors at his baptism. The two English chaplains at Calcutta were also very friendly. They started a subscription among the Europeans in the city in order to obtain means for the new mission.«



individual conversion) to the emerging Anglo-Saxon model (converting whole societies through English education) were some of the reasons why the tie between him and the SPCK could not be continued.<sup>38</sup> His numerous letters kept in the Mission Archives of the Francke Foundations, discovered by the author of this essay, are not yet researched. The schools and the Church erected by Kiernander had produced a generation of young Protestant Christians who were employed in the service of the British EIC who were later on helpful to the famous Baptist missionary William Carey (1761–1834) and his colleagues both in Calcutta and in Serampore.

### *B. Influence on the Baptist Mission Society*

Usually English mission literature is strangely silent in dealing with the relationship between Tranquebar and Serampore.<sup>39</sup> Bishop Sandegren's work *From Tranquebar to Serampore* is an exception (1955). He proves that »without Ziegenbalg there could be no Carey, without Tranquebar no Serampore« because Tranquebar Missionaries and their writings paved the way for William Cary's coming to India, his getting refuge in Serampore (January 10<sup>th</sup>, 1800) and establishing the mission following the methods of Tranquebar.<sup>40</sup> Hans-Werner Gensichen, a world renowned missiologist at Heidelberg, worked out the relationship between the Tranquebar Mission and the Baptist Mission Society in Serampore. Here a brief summary of his presentation in place: In his »Enquiry« published in 1792 Carey pointed out the exemplary of the Tranquebar Missionaries, especially their Bible translation.<sup>41</sup> When he landed in Calcutta in 1793 he met the aged Kiernander and seems to have mentioned that he had never met anyone with such glowing zeal for the mission work. By the end of 1797 he wanted to get the advice and help of the celebrated C.F. Schwartz who died in February 1798. But his friends (e.g. Gericke) continued to have abiding relationship with Carey. Col. Ole Bie, a trusted friend of Schwartz, who was first in Tranquebar and then became the governor of Serampore (1772, 1776–1785, 1788–1797, 1799–1801 and 1802–1805), gave refuge and protection to Carey and his colleagues. Carey married his second wife, a German from Schleswig which was then under the rule of Denmark. In Schleswig there were many earnest supporters of Tranquebar Mission. Thus Carey's wife might have contributed much to his settling down in Serampore.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> SANDEGREN, 1928, p. 66: »There is a difference between the Lutheran epoch to which Kiernander belonged and the new one which he saw commence. Nobody came to continue his work, there was scarcely anybody who could understand it. But without bitterness he welcomed the new time.«

<sup>39</sup> HOWELLS, GEORGE: *The Story of Serampore and its College*, Serampore, 1927. There is not a word about Kiernander and his pioneer work on which Carey built his mission activity.

<sup>40</sup> SANDEGREN, 1955, pp. 2–3.

<sup>41</sup> Cf. CAREY, WILLIAM: *An Enquiry into the obligation of Christians to use means for the conversion of the Heathens*, London, First published in 1792. Reproduced in facsimile and with an introduction by Ernest A. Payne in 1961.

<sup>42</sup> GENSICHEN, 1956, pp. 58–60.



It is assumed that it was the work of Carey alone that brought forth the inclusion of Pious Clause in the English Charter of 1813 opening India for British mission activity. However, a period of active preparation preceded this episode, largely connected with Charles Grant which is overlooked. When Grant had lost his baby daughter he approached Kiernander for consolation, who, in turn, revived his evangelistic faith. When he was in 1780–1787 in Malda one of his assistants was Obeck, »who had worked as a school master under Schwartz«.<sup>43</sup> When Kiernander could no longer look after his Church »Beth-Tephilla« (House of Prayer, popularly known as »Lal Girja or the Red Church« or the »Old Mission Church«) in 1787 Grant bought the Church.<sup>44</sup> Grant also knew the Baptist medical doctor Thomas in the service of the EIC in Calcutta. From 1783 he seems to have attempted to establish a Baptist congregation in Calcutta. Mr. Chambers, probably a friend of C.F. Schwartz in Tanjore, and Grant wanted to help him to found a mission in Goalnalty near Malda. In 1792 he returned to England and came to know the missionary zeal of Carey and accompanied him to Calcutta. C. Grant himself returned to England in 1792 and in 1794 he became a Director of the British EIC; in 1802 he was elected a member of Parliament in London. Along with his friends Wilberforce and David Brown he tried to introduce the Pious Clause in 1793, but failed due to opposition, but succeeded in 1813. Thus the influence of the Tranquebar Mission on William Carey had a far reaching effect.

### C. Influence on the Methodists

Lehmann and Gensichen have already pointed out the influence of Tranquebar Mission on the founders of the Methodists<sup>45</sup>: Susanne Wesley used to read the *Propagation of the Gospel in the East* (letters of Ziegenbalg and Gründler, published in London for SPCK from 1709–1718) for her son John Wesley (1703–1791). Touched and encouraged by the news of Tranquebar Mission she laid the cause of mission into the hear of John Wesley. When Wesley was working as an Anglican missionary in Georgia in North America from 1735–1737 he came in contact with Halle pietism and the faith of Maravians. He was not satisfied with his work and returned to London in 1738. According to a tradition he met the Moravian Peter Böhler who seems to have urged him to experience Jesus Christ personally and to preach the saving grace always. Wesley noted down the exact time of his conversion as May 24, 1738 at 8.45 p.m. In 1749/50 he met the Tranquebar Missionaries C.F. Schwartz and David Polzenhagen (1726–1756) in London and was encouraged by their determination to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ through word and deed. When the Methodists planned their first mission Thomas Coke (1747–1814), who joined John Wesley in 1777, became his »right hand man« and was appointed in 1784 as the Superintendent for America, wrote to C.F. Schwartz in 1786 and requested him for

<sup>43</sup> GIBBS, 1972, p. 27.

<sup>44</sup> GIBBS, 1972, p. 28.

<sup>45</sup> LEHMANN, 1956, p. 49 and GENSICHEN, 1956, p. 61.



his advice to start a mission. Schwartz expressed his joy over the efforts to start a mission to preach Jesus Christ. He cautioned them not to emphasize their denominational specialties. As the first bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church in America he started Methodist missions. On his way to India he died in 1814 and was buried in the sea.

#### *D. Influence on the London Missionary Society and Church Missionary Society*

Within the scope of this essay only a brief overview of the beginning of LMS and CMS can be considered, leaving aside their complex history. In 1795 LMS was founded with mission friends from several denominations, mostly from congregational tradition. Their first missionary was William Tobias Ringeltaube (1770–1816), who was educated in Halle and was influenced by the Moravians. He could not join the Tranquebar Mission. In 1797 SPCK sent him as a missionary to Calcutta. In the following year he returned to London because of the huge expenditure, his inadequate English knowledge and his Lutheran ordination.<sup>46</sup> In 1803 he joined the LMS and reached Tranquebar in 1804. The Tranquebar Missionaries (e.g. Johann Balthasar Kohlhoff) advised him to look after the Lutherans in Tirunelveli (at that time belonging to SPCK). There he came to know Vedamanikam Maharasan († 1827), the founder of the Protestant Church in Mylaladi (now mostly known as Marthandam, in Kanyakumari District of Tamil Nadu).<sup>47</sup> After 1816 his whereabouts were not known. Thus the influence of Halle and Tranquebar made itself known in England and in India.

Aged and blind Samuel John, one of the last missionaries of the Tranquebar Mission, requested the Church Missionary Society (CMS) to send helpers for his schools. CMS sent Charles Theophilus Ewald Rhenius (1790–1838),<sup>48</sup> who was educated in Berlin at a theological seminary by John Jaenicke, a brother of a Tranquebar Missionary in Tirunelveli. In 1814 he was sent by CMS to Tranquebar. Since John had already died, he stayed in Madras and learned Tamil. At the request of James Hugh, the CMS Chaplain in Palayamkottai, he went there in 1820. His work among the Nadars of Tirunelveli helped in their social upward mobility.<sup>49</sup> Like the Tranquebar missionaries he engaged himself in

<sup>46</sup> GIBBS, 1972, p. 29.

<sup>47</sup> Cf. WILSON, M.J.: *A Study of the Contribution of Ringeltaube and Vedamanickam in the Work of London Missionary Society (1806–1826) in Kanyakumari District (formerly South Travancore)*. An unpublished B.D. Thesis in United Theological College at Bangalore. SAMUEL, BHANU: *Vedamanikam Maharasan (ca. † 1827) – His Contributions to the Travancore Protestant Churches and Society with special Reference to the Early work of London Mission Society and to the Dalit Communities*. An unpublished B.D. Thesis at Gurukul Lutheran Theological College and Research Institute, Madras, 1997.

<sup>48</sup> RHENIUS, J.: *Memoirs of the Rev. C.T.E. Rhenius comprising extracts from his journal and correspondence with details of missionary proceedings in South India*, James Nisbet and Co., London 1841.

<sup>49</sup> WESTERN, F.J.: *The Early History of the Tinnevely Church*. Unpublished Manuscript, written around 1940. Available in the Bishop Stephen Neill Ecumenical Study and Research Center at Palayamkottai.



revision of Bible translations and writing *A Grammar of Tamil Language* (printed in 1836)<sup>50</sup> Tamil grammar book.

Thus the influence of the Tranquebar Mission was active in the English missions for more than a century. What happened in South India molded the formation and policy of the mission societies in England. The Tranquebar Mission continued to exercise still stronger influence on the formation of German missions.

## *VI. Influence on the German Missions*

### *A. Influence on the Moravian Mission*

The founder of the Moravian mission was Count Nikolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf (1700–1760), who was acquainted with the Tranquebar Mission by first his grandmother who raised him and then from 1713 by A.H. Francke himself. Zinzendorf was his student at »Pädagogium« and ate at Francke's table. He knew Timothy, the first Tamil student in Halle, who accompanied Plütschau in 1711 when he returned to Germany. In 1715 he met with Ziegenbalg himself, who had then married Dorothea Salzmann, a sister of his friend. In 1732 he began his Moravian Mission and sent missionaries to different countries. From 1739 till 1755 he traveled to many European countries and North America. He did not forget all through his life. In 1753 he recollected the source of his missionary zeal:

»Were there no mission reports from East India there would have been no conversion of the non-Christians. But since we have seen that in our own mother tongue there are people who preach the Gospel to the non-Christians and they accept it, we have thought: if others obey our Gospel we too can obey it. We reached this conclusion neither from the Bible nor from the travel reports, which come to us with unclear interpretations, as they reach the English societies from their colonies; but the first apostles Plütschau, Ziegenbalg and Gründler have made us aware of it. We have seen them and spoken with them and ate with them almost a whole year; and they have explained to me the heathen mission so clear and candidly that we could read of it nowhere else.«<sup>51</sup>

The missionary zeal of Zinzendorf and his followers did not have any parallel in the German speaking world. However, a gap between the Halle pietism and Zinzendorf's piety began to appear and widen as years went by. Zinzendorf emphasized wandering missionaries who emphasized the suffering and atonement of Jesus Christ. Halle had the tradition of establishing Churches in one place. Usually their converts took the Gospel to other places. Zinzendorf sent out lay preachers; Halle preferred theologians. Around 1760 a group of missionaries landed in Tranquebar and wanted to evangelize among the Tranquebar Christians. This caused tension and pain. At last they were expelled to Nicobar

<sup>50</sup> Cf. MOHANAVELU, C.S.: *German Tamilology – German Contributions to Tamil language, literature and culture during the period 1706–1945*, Saiva Siddhanta, Madras 1993, pp. 98–100.

<sup>51</sup> LEHMANN, 1956, p. 50. Cf. GENSICHEN, 1956, p. 56. German translation is by the author of this essay.



Islands where many of them died.<sup>52</sup> Even today the influence of the Moravians is felt in almost all German Protestant Christian families; in these homes and in the German Protestant Churches the »Losungen«, published by the Moravians from Herrnhut, are read and meditated.

### *B. Influence on the Basel Evangelical Missionary Society (Basel Mission)*

Lehmann made a passing comment that there was an influence of the Tranquebar Mission on the origin of the Basel Mission.<sup>53</sup> The story goes back to Samuel Urlsperger (1685–1772) who first served as a court chaplain to Duke Eberhard Ludwig (1676–1733) of Württemberg residing in Stuttgart. He was friend of A.H. Francke and a regular reader of the Halle Reports. He wrote letters to the Tranquebar Missionaries.<sup>54</sup> When Ziegenbalg visited Germany in 1715 he organized a collection of offering through out Wüttemberg and sent the money to Ziegenbalg. Till the end of his life he supported the Tranquebar Missionaries. G.A. Francke wrote to the missionaries (15.10.1730) encouraging them to thank him for 1000 Reichstaler.<sup>55</sup> Around 1779/80 his son, Johann August Urlsperger (1728–1806) founded the *Deutsche Gesellschaft edler thätiger Beförderer reiner Lehre und wahrer Gottseligkeit* (German Society of noble active supporters of pure teaching and true piety) to defend pietism against the onslaught of Enlightenment and secularization. Later this Society assumed a new name: *Deutsche Christetumsgesellschaft* (German Christian Society). In 1804 this Society was transferred to Basel where it tried to unite Pietism and Evangelical Awakening. From 1808 till his death Christian Frederick Spittler (1782–1867) was the executive secretary of this Society. In 1804 he founded the Basel Bible Society. In 1815 he established the Basel Mission. After England delivered Germany from Napoleon the secretary of Basel Mission and a good friend of CMS, Theophilus Blumhard, agreed (1817) to send Basel missionaries for training and ordination to CMS in London.<sup>56</sup> After the Charter Bill of 1833 was passed allowing non-British missionaries to come to India, Basel Mission sent Johann Christopher Lehner (born 1806), Christian Lenhard Greiner (born 1810) and Samuel Hebich (born 1810) to South India to evangelize, to open schools for children and catechists. On 24.8.1834 they landed in Calicut in present Kerala State and went to Mangalore in present Karnataka State. Basel Mission is known for its

<sup>52</sup> BISCHOFF, DIETRICH: *Die Herrnhuter in Tranquebar*. Unpublished »Staatsexamenarbeit« at the Theological Faculty of the Martin Luther University Halle Wittenberg at Halle, Germany, 1962.

<sup>53</sup> LEHMANN, 1956, p. 50.

<sup>54</sup> Cf. Archives of the Leipzig Mission at Leipzig, Kapsel 7. On 27.10.1713 he wrote to Tranquebar Missionaries thanking them for their letter dated 16.9.1712 and informing them of the influence of Tranquebar Mission on Wüttemberg. He wanted to collect money for the mission.

<sup>55</sup> Cf. Archives of the Leipzig Mission at Leipzig, Kapsel 2a.

<sup>56</sup> GIBBS, 1972, p. 82.



social development projects (e.g. tile factories and schools).<sup>57</sup> Some of Basel Missionaries like Hermann Gundert (1813–1893), Hermann Mögling (1811–1881) and Ferdinand Kittel (1832–1903) earned international reputation through their great service to Malayalam and Karnataka languages and to indological studies. Thus the Basel Mission got its original impetus from the Pietism of Halle, Tranquebar and Wüttemberg. It developed its missiological methods according to its contexts in Switzerland, England and in India.

### *C. Influence on the Leipzig Evangelical Lutheran Mission (Leipzig Mission)*

In 1836 a mission society was formed in Dresden, Germany, to support the Basel Mission. Soon the denominational aspects of this mission that it contained both Lutheran and Reformed elements did not find any acceptance. There was a desire to start a pure Lutheran mission. It was the time when the grand old Tranquebar Mission was approaching its end through the death of Dr. Cämmerer, the last missionary from Halle (1837). On July 24<sup>th</sup>, 1839 the Dresden Mission Society decided to redeem the Tranquebar Mission. In March 1840 it sent Heinrich Hordes (1813–1892) to Tranquebar to evaluate the state of the Tranquebar Mission and its belongings because during this period the Danish government was planning to sell its possessions to England. The Church Missionary Society was willing to take up the Lutheran Churches. In March 1841 Cordes reached Tranquebar and worked as a helper to the last Danish Pastor-Missionary Knudson. In February 1845 the Collector of Mayavaram, H. Stokes, entrusted the Lutheran Mission in his place to Cordes. After the English took over Tranquebar in 1845 the Danish governor Hansen entrusted the Lutheran mission institutes in Tranquebar and its vicinity to Cordes and thus at least a part of the Tranquebar Mission could be saved. In 1848 the Dresden Mission Society was transferred to Leipzig. Since then the Leipzig Mission is looking after a part of the heritage of the Tranquebar Mission in Tamil Nadu.<sup>58</sup>

A brief mention on Leipzig Mission and its caste policy needs to be mentioned here. As against all the Anglo-Saxon Protestant missions working in South India, who were totally against the observance of caste difference by Christians in their Church and homes, Leipzig Mission, under the leadership of its Director Karl Graul (1814–1864), came to the conclusion that caste as a social institute could be tolerated among Christians.<sup>59</sup> He seems to have taken this stand because of his Lutheran theological conviction of grace and gospel

<sup>57</sup> KUMAR, VIJAYA: *Ecumenical Cooperation of the Missions in Karnataka (India), 1834–1989: A Historical Analysis of the Evangelistic Strategy of the Missions*. Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago, 1996.

<sup>58</sup> LEHMANN, 1955, pp. 304–312. Cf. FLEISCH, D. PAUL: *Hundert Jahre lutherischer Mission*, Verlag der Evangelisch-lutherischen Mission, Leipzig 1936.

<sup>59</sup> GRAUL, KARL: *Die Stellung der Evangelisch-Lutherischen Mission in Leipzig zur ostindischen Kastenfrage*, Leipzig, 1861.



as against Calvinistic (i.e. most of the Anglo-Saxon missions),<sup>60</sup> of the feudal system prevailing in Europe which was slowly dismantled through Enlightenment, and because of his concern to protect Lutherans leaving their Churches. In this issue he could not unite all his missionary friends. In 1919 Leipzig Mission had to hand over its authority to Indian Christians. Thus the present Tamil Evangelical Lutheran Church had its origin.

## *VII. Influence on the Danish Lutheran Missions*

### *A. Influence on the Danish Mission in Greenland*

In English mission literature this mission does not usually get adequate attention. Hans Egede (1686–1758)<sup>61</sup> was a pastor in Norway, at that time belonging to Denmark. He wanted to discover the descendants of Erik den Røde (around 1000 A.D.), the discoverer of Greenland, and of those who had migrated to Greenland from Norway and Denmark. Till 1710 he did not succeed in his efforts. Having heard of the Tranquebar Mission and its success he requested King Frederick IV to send him as a missionary to Greenland »as he had done with the missionaries to Tranquebar«. In 1719 Hans Egede approached the Danish Mission Board (formed in 1714) personally to be sent as a missionary. On its recommendations the King appointed him as a missionary. In 1721 he, his wife Gjertrud Rasak and forty four Danes reached Greenland. Egede became the apostle of Greenland. He tried to implement the mission principles of the Tranquebar Missionaries. He found it hard to learn the language of the Eskimos. He was unable to get himself acquainted with their animistic religious belief. In 1731 Egede could baptize 102 Eskimos. In 1733 a terrible small pox epidemy broke out. Family Egede took care of the sick so much that they themselves were at the verge of death. In 1734 their son, Paul Egede (1708–1789), who was born in Greenland and knew the language and culture well, finished his education and joined his parents in their mission work. He founded the Christian colony »Christianshaab«.

When Count Zinzendorf was in Copenhagen 1731/32 and came to know that the Greenland Mission did not get much support from Denmark he decided to send his missionaries not only to Greenland, but also to other Danish territories. Consequently, in 1732, two Moravian missionaries, David Nitschmann and Leonhard Dober, reached the islands St. Thomas and St. Croix, belonging to Danish West India. In May 1733 three Moravian missionaries, the carpenter Christian David, Christian and Matthus Stach, landed in Greenland. Soon the theological differences between Hans Egede and Christian David

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<sup>60</sup> NEILL, 1974, p. 370.

<sup>61</sup> *Hans Egede: Colonizer and Missionary of Greenland*, Copenhagen, 1952; *Pioneers of Eskimo Grammar: Hans Egede's and Alberet Top's early manuscripts on Greenlandic*, Copenhagen, 1986. The author is grateful to Rev. MORTEN MOEBJERG in Randers, Denmark, for providing this bibliographical information and a few other details on H. Egede.



became apparent. The Moravians accepted the validity and authority of the Bible only, not *Confessio Augustana*. Though Egede tried to establish his stand that he followed the teachings of the great fathers of pietism J. Arndt, P.J. Spener and A.H. Francke, the Moravians doubted the very regeneration experience of Egede.

Hans Egede returned to Denmark in 1736; and the eye sight of Paul Egede became very weak. He wrote a grammar for the language in 1760 and translated the New Testament in 1766.<sup>62</sup> Like the Tranquebar Missionary Benjamin Schultze who had translated the *Imitation of Christ* of Thomas a Kempis into Indian languages Tamil and Telugu around 1740 the Egede family translated it into the language of Greenland. It took two hundred years to baptize 23 Eskimos in East Greenland on July 3rd, 1921. On May 20<sup>th</sup>, 1934 the last non-Christian Eskimo was baptized. »Thus the evangelism of the Eskimos in Greenland was accomplished during a period of 213 years.«<sup>63</sup> The Tranquebar Mission had an indirect influence on the Danish Mission to Greenland. In South India its influence is seen in establishing a separate mission.

### *B. Influence on the Danish Missionary Society and Arcot Lutheran Church*

On January 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1843 C.C.E. Ochs (1812–1873), sent by the Leipzig Mission, reached Tranquebar to help Cordes. He was unable to work with him because he considered that Cordes was working in too close a cooperation with the government authorities. He did not agree with Graul's opinion that caste was a social institute which could be tolerated among the Christians. For Ochs the caste system was a religious factor which could not be tolerated because of basic Christian tenet that before God all men and women are equal and Christ died for every one. When catechist Nallatambi belonging to a higher caste was to ordained, he had to prove his concern for all people by drinking along with the missionaries and others a cup of tea prepared by an Adi-Dravida. Nallatambi declined and wanted to remain as a catechist. With the trouble that followed Graul and Ochs could not agree with each other.<sup>64</sup> In June 1859 Ochs left the Leipzig Mission and started his own mission work. When he visited Denmark the Danish Missionary Society (started by Pastor Bonne Falch Rønne in 1821 to preach the Gospel and to demonstrate it through corresponding social work) accepted him on January 5<sup>th</sup>, 1864 and commissioned him to start work in the North and South Arcot Districts, in the Shervaroyan Hills and in Madras. In 1870 he built a Church of the Holy Cross in the place Melpatambakkam. His vision

<sup>62</sup> NEILL, 1974, pp. 159–161.

<sup>63</sup> HEIBERG, 1952, p. 82.

<sup>64</sup> HELLINGER, W.: »The Leipzig Evangelical Lutheran Mission«, in: *The Lutheran Enterprise in India*, ed. by C.H. SWAVELY, Federation of Evangelical Lutheran Churches in India, Madras 1952, pp. 15–31, here quoted p. 25. Cf. Wandall, Povl: *The Origin and Growth of the Arcot Lutheran Church*, The Christian Literature Society, Madras 1978; BUGGE, HENRIETTE: *Mission and Tamil Society*, Curzon Press Ltd., Richmond 1994. The headquarters of the Arcot Lutheran Church is in Cuddalore.



becomes evident, if one considers the large size of the Church. While there were only 193 Christians this Church was built to accommodate more than 400 persons! The work of Ochs and his successors resulted in the growth of a Church, which after inaugurating its own constitution in 1913 emerged as the present Arcot Lutheran Church.<sup>65</sup>

### VIII. Influence on the emerging Western Mission Literature

German Protestant mission literature is new type of communicating cross cultural news from South India to interested German speakers in Germany, Denmark, Switzerland, England and many other countries. Ziegenbalg sent his first letters to his teacher Joachim Lange (1670–1744) in Berlin where they were published in 1708. The newness of the information created much interest in Germany that this booklet was printed several times. As mentioned earlier these letters were translated into English under the title *Propagation of the Gospel in the East*. This appeared till 1718 and created much mission interest. However, in this essay some important German mission books are mentioned briefly.

After J. Lange had moved to Halle in 1709 and A.H. Francke took over the mission leadership the *Halle Reports*, the first German Protestant mission magazine, appeared from 1710 to 1767. These nine volumes, each containing twelve Continuations spread the news of Tranquebar Mission far and wide, especially through book fairs at Frankfurt/M and in Leipzig. Francke's correspondents stationed in all major European cities distributed the *Halle Reports*.<sup>66</sup> These large nine volumes contain invaluable material for the study of mission and Church history, South Indian culture and society. They accommodate edited information because the mission authorities did not want to instigate the enemies of the mission with information favorable to them (rationalists like C. Wolff), to confuse the readers with unhappy quarrels of the missionaries among themselves (e.g. disagreements between B. Schultze and C.T. Walther), to confront the readers with unpleasant wars between the European colonies in India (British, French, Dutch, Danish and Portuguese), to pass on messages on Indian culture and religion which might be unintelligible to the Europeans, and to withhold anything that would hinder the flow of money for the mission. If one take the original materials (letters, diaries and other manuscripts kept in Halle, Leipzig, Copenhagen and London) and compare with the printed materials one would gain a full picture of the development of the mission and the emerging indigenous Church within the South Indian context of 18th Century.

In 1715 Samuel Urlsperger (1685–1772) published the *Short Historical News* consisting of the history of Tranquebar Mission to collect offering for the Tranquebar Mission.<sup>67</sup> On

<sup>65</sup> HEIBERG, 1952.

<sup>66</sup> From 1768 till 1848 a new series, *Neuere Geschichte der evangelischen Missionsanstalten zur Bekehrung der Heiden in Ostindien* (New History of the Lutheran Mission institutes for the conversion of the Non-Christians in East India) was published and had the color of Enlightenment.

<sup>67</sup> URLSPERGER, SAMUEL: *Kurze Historische Nachricht von dem Missions- und Bekehrungs-Werk auf der Cüste von Coromandel bey den Malabarischen Heyden in Ost-Indien, samt der Erinnerung zu einer Christlichen Beysteuern aus*



July 5<sup>th</sup>, 1715 Ziegenbalg wrote from Hamburg to Eberhard Ludwig, the Prince of Wüttemberg, requesting him to arrange for a financial support for the Tranquebar Mission. Ludwig entrusted this matter to Urlsperger. The latter wrote an introductory letter mentioning the ten year missionary work of Ziegenbalg, how he had learned Tamil, translated the New Testament into Tamil and how he had collected 40,000 Tamil words for a dictionary. This letter mentions of the great influence of the Tranquebar Mission on the German states like Brandenburg, Berlin and Halle and how mission friends in these States continued to help this mission. He encouraged the Christians in Wüttemberg to participate in the Tranquebar Mission. This history of the Tranquebar Mission was read from all the pulpits of the Protestant Churches in Wüttemberg. The money which had been thus collected was handed over to Ziegenbalg in London in 1716.<sup>68</sup>

In 1727 there was another larger book with information on the Tranquebar Mission. When Ziegenbalg visited Berlin in 1715 Mathurin Veyssiere La Croze (born in 1661 in Nantes, France),<sup>69</sup> the librarian of the Prussian Library and the educator of the Wilhelmine Fredericke Sophie, the 14 year old daughter of the King Wilhelm I., wanted to translate the *Halle Reports* into French, the language of all European royal houses. La Croze was a Benedictine monk. He left Nantes hurriedly because he was translating a writing of Martin Luther into English. His authorities found it out and wanted to punish him. After living sometime in Basel, where he accepted the reformed faith, he found refuge in Berlin. He became a friend of A.H. Francke who sent the King Wilhelm I a copy of the *Halle Reports* as soon as it was published. He was the only person whom Francke entrusted with the 'prohibited' manuscripts of Ziegenbalg (like Genealogy of Malabarian Gods) which he used in his famous book *Portrayal of Christian State in India*, published first in French in 1724, and then in German in 1727. German edition was printed in Halle. La Croze, a person who bitterly hated the Catholic missions, presented the Tranquebar Mission as the ideal alternative to preach the Gospel of Christ and the establishment of a national Church. In 1739 a second German edition appeared with additional information on Tranquebar Mission.<sup>70</sup> For his treatment on the Roman Catholic Church in Kerala, South India, he depended on the information given by his former class mate Nicholas Dal. He encouraged the European academicians to study the *Vedas* of the Brahmins in India to

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*Gelegenheit der in Sr. Hoch-Fürstlichen Durchleucht deß jetzigen Regierenden Herrn Hertzogen zu Würtemberg ganzem Lande zur Außbreitung deß Evangelii unter den Heyden gnädigst außgeschriebenen Freywilligen Collecte, und damit solche von allen Cantzeln verlesen werden möchte.* Christian Gottlieb Rößlings / Stuttgart 1715. The original document is kept in the 'Landeskirchliches Archiv Stuttgart', Call No. A29/4386. Reprint is available from Referat für Mission und Ökumene, Gänsheidestr. 2, Stuttgart, Germany.

<sup>68</sup> *Halle Reports*, Vol. I, Con. 10, p. 827.

<sup>69</sup> WIEGAND, FRIEDRICH: »Mathurin Veyssiere La Croze«, in: *Beiträge zur Förderung christlicher Theologie*. Published by D.A. SCHLATTER and D.H. CREMER. No. 3, 6th Year, 1902, pp. 80–104.

<sup>70</sup> LA CROZE, M.V.: *Abbildung des Indianischen Christen-Staats, aus dem Französischen ins Deutsche Übersetzt: Nach dem Original durch und durch verbesserte und mit vielen vom Autore schriftlich communicireten Zusätzen vermehrte Andere Auflage, welche noch mit verschiedenen neuen Anmerkungen und Erläuterungen, wie auch einem besonderen Anhang von dem Königlich Dänischen Missions-Geschäfte versehen von M. Georg Christian Bohnstedt*, Leipzig 1739 (Library of the Leipzig Mission, Leipzig, Call No. D 48).



get to know their philosophy. European interest in Indology grew steadily and in 1818 first chair for Indology was established in Bonn.

Three small books on Tranquebar Mission were published around 1730 in Strassburg. They document the change of German mind towards Tranquebar Mission and the Tamil Christians. In 1708 Ziegenbalg wrote that one of the purposes of his writings was to remove the false European notion that the South Indians were wild and barbarian people without any idea of faith in God, civil life and academic disciplines.<sup>71</sup> Twenty seven years later a slight change of German mind was evident. The three books, based on the *Halle Reports* and published in Strasbourg, aimed to persuade the European public to accept the Tamils as equals. In the first volume the author informs his readers that the Tamils had experienced a bit of God's truth. But their poets spoilt it.<sup>72</sup>

As the readers of the *Halle Reports* increased and the reprints of the *Halle Reports* became impossible, J.L. Niekamp took up the challenge to produce a summary of the *Halle Reports* till 1736 presenting first a comprehensive survey of social, religious, geographical and anthropological aspects of the Tamil society and then a chronological description of the Tranquebar Mission.<sup>73</sup> For every year he gave a fairly accurate conclusion. He did not consult the manuscripts of the missionaries. What had been published, he summarized splendidly. This book was soon translated into Danish and French.

In 1749 Kleinknecht, a pietistic pastor near Ulm in Germany, published on *Dependable News about the Sheep bought through the costly blood of Christ*.<sup>74</sup> He was a friend of G.A. Francke in Halle and Nicholas Dal in Tranquebar. Kleinknecht encouraged the European Christians to accept the Tamil Christians as their equals because Christ had died for them and now God redeemed them. As a sign of recognition his readers were to pray for the Tamil Christians and donate financial aid for the help of suffering Christians. If one considers the predominant European view on India these writings were revolutionary in helping people to get rid of their supposed prejudices and to engage in practical solidarity.

Tranquebar Mission continued to exercise its influence on Christians belonging to pietistic tradition. Since no reprints of the *Halle Reports* were available the desire to prepare a summary of the mission work from 1737 till 1767 grew steadily. M. Meier followed the model of Niekamp and published his summary in 1772. In his foreword Gottlieb Anastasius Freylinghausen, the then Director of the Francke Foundations in Halle,

<sup>71</sup> *Halle Reports*, Vol. I, Con. 1, p. 45.

<sup>72</sup> *Kurz zusammengezogener Anfangs-Bericht von Außbreitung der Evangelischen Kirchen in Ost-Indien an der Küste Coromandel Durch abgeordnete Königliche Dänische Missionaries, Beschreibend derselben Zustand von Anno 1705 biß 1712*, Straßburg. Gedruckt by Melchior Pauschinger, Vol. II (1713–1726); Vol. III. (1727–1732). Available in the Main Library of the Francke Foundations in Halle (Call numbers: 159 M 34, 159 M 35 and 159 M 36). Here quoted from Vol. I, pp. 28–61.

<sup>73</sup> NIEKAMP, 1740.

<sup>74</sup> KLEINKNECHT, CONRAD DANIEL: *Zuverlässige Nachricht von der, durch das Blut des erwürgten Lammes theur erkauften schwarzen Schaaf-und Lämmer-Heerde oder von den Neu-Bekehrten Malabarischen Christen in Ostindien*, Augsburg, Johann Jacob, 1749 (Copy available in the Mission Library of the Leipzig Mission, Leipzig. Call Number: G 83).



outlined the main purpose of this book: The reader is to thank God for his grace and patience bestowed upon the mission work which began very small and slowly expanded into a large enterprise. If one would consider the troubles that his mission had both in Europe and in South India its mere existence is a sign that God, not man, stands behind it. Thus throughout the eighteenth Century Tranquebar Mission began to influence the Western mission literature.

### *IX. Influence on certain Western public*

In this essay more attention is given to the leaders of the Churches, mission societies and political leaders and others who were influenced by the Tranquebar Mission. These could not do anything of lasting importance if the common people would not extend their support. A brief mention is due here to demonstrate how ordinary people upheld the cause of the mission in South India. As soon as the *Propagation of the Gospel in the East* was published it is recorded that there was a revival among people, high and low, women and men, who wanted to support the Tranquebar Mission. Even some children were ready to donate their pocket money to support poor children in India. This revival began in London and spread quickly to Cambridge and Sussex.<sup>75</sup>

Great orientalist Theophilus [Gottfried] Siegfried Bayer (1696–1738)<sup>76</sup> of Petersburg was in touch with the Tranquebar Missionaries. He was interested in the Tamil moral book *Needi Venba* and the insights of Tamil to clarify some unclear Hebrew terms and concepts.<sup>77</sup> About 1745 the influence of the Tranquebar Mission was felt in Switzerland. A pastor from Lindau, a South German city near Bodensee, visited a businessman of reformed faith in Switzerland and received from him a large offering for the Tranquebar Mission.<sup>78</sup> In 1772 Meier, a historian of the Tranquebar Mission, could testify that God had been gracious to touch many Europeans through the Tranquebar Mission in such a way that ordinary mission friends in Denmark, England and Germany supported and sustained this mission with their prayer and money.<sup>79</sup>

<sup>75</sup> *Halle Reports*, Vol. I, Con. VI, Preface, leaves 2–3 (published in 1714).

<sup>76</sup> Cf. WINTER, EDWARD: *Halle als Ausgangspunkt der deutschen Rußlandkunde im 18. Jahrhundert* (Halle as the starting point for Russian Studies in 18th Century), Berlin 1953, pp. 190–196 and 391–395. More information on Bayer is found here.

<sup>77</sup> *Halle Reports*, Vol. II, Con. 24, pp. 1032–1043. Tranquebar Missionaries (C.T. Walther, M. Bosse etc.) wrote to him on 16.10.1726. Cf. *Halle Reports*, Vol. III, Con. 31, pp. 751–777 (letter from Tranquebar dated 16.10.1726).

<sup>78</sup> *Halle Reports*, Vol. V, Con. 55, Additional Note to the Preface, p. 23. On 20.9.1745 this businessman died.

<sup>79</sup> MEIER, 1772, pp. 23–24.



### X. Influence on the European opposition to mission

The legacy of the Tranquebar Mission did not always enjoy a smooth acceptance in the West. Now and then there were oppositions and criticisms. The following examples demonstrate this tendency. When King Frederick IV. called for missionaries to his overseas colonies no Dane came forward. The orthodox Lutheran Church in Denmark did not want to cooperate. F.J. Lützens, the palace chaplain, approached his friends in Berlin and got two pietists, Ziegenbalg and Plütschau. Both of them were unwelcome to the Danish public. Their association with Halle pietism earned them more aversion. After the work was started in Tranquebar there arose doubts and hatred towards this mission. The Church, schools and other works of the missionaries were considered as concocted stories. The principle of Ziegenbalg to establish a national Church firmly rooted in the Tamil cultural context was not acceptable to the radical orthodox Christians in Copenhagen and in Wittenberg who believed that there was no need for any mission because the apostles of Jesus Christ had already gone to all corners of the world; and a missionary should not settle down in one place.<sup>80</sup> Later Christian Wendt, the secretary to the Mission Board in Copenhagen, held this view and became very unfriendly to the missionaries. He could not understand why the missionaries got married, and why they started schools, orphanages and why they built Church buildings. In Wendt's opinion these aspects of mission were unnecessary. In his letters he reproved the missionaries so much that they questioned themselves, their work and achievements. In the course of time the hurt feelings affected their psyche and physical health. Consequently Ziegenbalg's stomach sickness and mental depression increased. He died in February 19<sup>th</sup>, 1719. In March 1720 his colleague J.E. Gründler died.

One of the Tranquebar Missionaries himself generated hatred towards this mission. Johann Georg Bövingh (1676–1728),<sup>81</sup> who was educated in Kiel, not in Halle, chosen by C. Wendt, not by Francke, a radical orthodox theologian, not a pietist, could not find the sympathy and cooperation of Ziegenbalg and his colleagues. He reached Tranquebar in 1709 and returned to Germany in 1711. Bövingh was extremely disappointed that he could not influence the mission methods in Tranquebar. Ziegenbalg and Gründler did not have lasting sympathy for him. Moreover he was unable to learn the Tamil language and appreciate Tamil culture. He was of the opinion that European money was unnecessarily

<sup>80</sup> Cf. Royal Library at Copenhagen, Call No. Thottske Samling 1567,4. *Wahrhafter Beitrag zum Kirchen- und Schulnbau: Aufrichtiger Beitrag zum Kirchen- und Schulen-Bau in Ost-Indien in einem Send-Schreiben an einen guten Freund übermachtet von LETHANDERN nebst einem kurzen Historischen Vorbericht eines Freundes der Wahrheit*. Anno 1710. The printed version of this manuscript is found in British Library, Call No. 8304.aa.21. Cf. Royal Library at Copenhagen, Call No. Ledr. 422.4\*. *Kurze und wahrhafte Relation von dem Ursprung und Fortgang der dänisch-malabarischen Missionarium. Auß Liebe zur reinen Wahrheit außgetiget von Christiano Alethophilo*, Anno 1715. The full text of this manuscript is printed unaltered in FENGER, 1845, pp. 267–287.

<sup>81</sup> BACHMANN, ELFRIEDE: »Die Lebensbeschreibung des Johann Georg Bövingh (1676–1728)«, in: *Rothenburger Schriften*, Heft 48/49, Rothenburg 1978, pp. 92–181. GENSICHEN, HANS-WERNER: »Neue Materialien und Forschungen zur Frühgeschichte der evangelischen Mission – Teil II – Der Fall Bövingh«, in: *Neue Missionszeitschrift*, 1980, pp. 106–112.



spent on Indian beggars and vagabunds. Those Danes who were unhappy with pietism, especially the pietism propagated from Halles, used Bövingh's writings to counter the Tranquebar mission. His »Curieuse Beschreibung« appeared in 1712 anonymously. It disturbed the friends and supporters greatly. The Mission Board in Copenhagen had to fight against these writings till the King passed a general law in 1718 prohibiting all such writings. Other attacks began to appear.

A book of Erik Pontoppidan (1698–1764) deserves a special mention. From 1723–1734 he was a pastor Nordborg and Frederiksborg in present North Denmark. From 1735–1738 he was the Court chaplain and a professor of theology in Copenhagen. At this time he was serving as a member of the Danish Mission Board.<sup>82</sup> In 1741 he published a 722 pages long Danish novel entitled *Menoza – An Asian Prince*.<sup>83</sup> Soon it was translated into several European languages. It seems likely that Prince Menoza, born in 1688 in North India under Islamic rule, started his journey in 1710. Judged from Menoza's letters (VI–IX) he is portrayed as having stayed two years, 1712–1714, in Tranquebar and reasoned with the missionaries. After much discussions and consideration he accepted the faith of the missionaries. He was unable to reason out the doctrines of Trinity and resurrection. The missionaries convinced him that these truths were meant for belief and life, not for analysis. When Menoza reached Europe, especially Italy and Germany, he came to know about the devastating religious wars between different traditions of Christians. He was wondering why they could not tolerate each other. In January 1730 he reached Halle and was disappointed by the hypocrite spirituality of many Halle pietists. He could not understand why the rationalist C. Wolff was excommunicated from Halle in 1723. From Halle he went to other North European countries. Menoza learnt to stress the human ability to strive after some good goal which might help mankind. This novel reflected the spirit of Enlightenment, with which an Indian tried to verify how Christian faith was lived in Europe. The Tranquebar Missionaries were teaching that in Europe the light of the Gospel shone greatly was not simply true, at least in the view of Menoza. These and other opposition or discrediting was a part of the influence from South India. But the positive influence of the Tranquebar Mission on the West is much more and long lasting.

<sup>82</sup> E. PONTOPPIDAN was known for his famous *Sandhed til Gudfrygtighed* (Truth leading to Piety). In 1747 he became a bishop of Bergen in Denmark. In 1758 he published his *Sandheds Kraft til at overvinde den atheistiske og naturalistiske Vantro* (The strength and truth to defeat the atheistic and naturalistic disbelief). In 1759 he summarised his pastoral letters and sermons and published *Collegium pastorale practicum – Frimodige Vidnesbyrd om de Christnes Tro og Pligt* (Open testimony about the faith and duty of a Christian). The author of this essay is grateful to Pastor MORTEN MOEBJERG in Randers, Denmark, for this information.

<sup>83</sup> PONTOPPIDAN, E.: *Menoza – Ein Asiatischer Prinz, welcher die Welt umher gezogen Christen zu suchen besonders in Indien, Hispanien, Italien, Frankreich, England, Holland, Deutschland und Dänemark aber das Gesuchte wenig gefunden*. (aus dem Dänischen übersetzt von N. Carstens). Copenhagen, 1750. The author of this essay is unable to get either the Danish original or the German translation. He derives his insights from the following essay: TRÖGER, RALF: »Menoza, die fiktive Europareise eines Inders«, in: *Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift der Universität Halle – Geistesgeschichte*. XV, 2, 1966, pp. 219–260.



## Conclusion

Tranquebar Mission is a good example to demonstrate the interdependence of East and West in their mutual influence. The missionaries were children of their own political, cultural and religious context. They brought their nature and nurture with themselves when they came to South India. Their language learning, culture contacts, missionary experience with the native Christians molded their world views, character and missionary approach. Their reports reveal these aspects and in turn contribute to the transformation of Western world views. Different countries like India, Germany, Denmark, England, North America and Switzerland were brought together to undertake »ecumenical« missionary work. Several sections of People belonging to these countries learned to pray for each other and help each other. Through prayer and service they were transformed. Tranquebar Mission was instrumental in the genesis of several Western missions. This essay is an example of the interdependence of East and West, their mutual influence and transformation. Now most of these missions changed their previous policies. In the context of national and political changes the mission agencies needed to revise their working methods. There was a definite move from the »mission« to »national churches«. The Churches that have grown from the activities of the Western mission still need the helps of the missions. Their interdependent partnership continues!

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