

kritisch auf dieses Manko hin. Der Bischof der Brüderunität, der in der Unität den »Prototyp« einer vereinigten Menschheit sah (S. 226, vgl. auch S. 205 – einen Text von Johann Gottfried Herder – und S. 213), ist bisher kein Kirchenvater deutschsprachiger Theologie geworden. Korthaase referiert vereinzelte Forderungen nach einer stärkeren Beschäftigung mit dem Theologen Comenius (S. 308–313). Die trinitarische Struktur seines Denkens könnte noch heute bei der Überwindung von Engpässen eines dogmatischen Dualismus behilflich sein (so Herwart Vorländer, referiert auf S. 310). Die praktische Theologie könnte, im Licht der Theologie des Brüderbischofs gesehen, einen neuen, gleichberechtigten, ja zentralen Ort im Gefüge der theologischen Disziplinen erhalten.

Die Beiträge des Buches bieten eine gute Einführung in das pädagogische Lebenswerk des Comenius und seine Wirkungsgeschichte. Doch wird auch die theologische, allgemeinphilosophische (S. 10ff.), sprachphilosophische (S. 316) und politisch-irenische Bedeutung (S. 120ff., S. 208ff.) Komenskys gewürdigt. Die vielfältige, gelegentlich auch kritische³ Resonanz auf das Werk des Comenius kommt insbesondere in den umfangreichen Referaten über die moderne Comeniusliteratur zum Ausdruck. Auch fortgeschrittene »Comeniologen« werden erstaunt sein über die breite Wirkung, die Comenius in Rußland gefunden hat (S. 215–245), oder über die beachtliche Comeniusrezeption in Japan (S. 276–281).

Das Buch macht Appetit darauf, sich erneut mit Comenius zu beschäftigen und sich von seinem Denken anregen zu lassen.

Helmut Bintz

Maria Lenders: *Strijders voor het Lam. Leven en werk van Herrnhutter Broeders en Zusters in Surinam 1735–1900*. Caribbean Series, KITLV Uitgeverij, Leiden 1996

Maria Lenders is a Dutch cultural anthropologist. Some years ago she received a doctoral degree from the University of Amsterdam for her recently published dissertation, entitled »Warriors for the Lamb. Life and Work of Moravian Brothers and Sisters in Surinam 1735–1900«.

The title is promising, but the summary on the back cover is irritating: »The Moravian faith sustained and ultimately enforced the superiority of men over women and of whites over black and coloured people. As often in colonial history the Western sense of superiority played here an important role«. It feeds the suspicion that this is again one of those wiseguy doctoral dissertations which

³ Kritische Anfragen an Comenius werden etwa auf S. 261–264 und S. 317ff. referiert.

force mission history into an ideological strait-jacket, this time of twentieth-century feministic gender-ideology. The book itself offers an encouragement to think that way. In the Introduction we are admonished that in this publication the Moravian Mission in Surinam has been studied from the »gender« perspective e.g. »the total of social, psychological and cultural constructions of masculinity and femininity by which one is domesticated through socialization«. And in the final chapter V (»Emancipation but not for everybody«) the author concludes that »the Moravian gender ideology was oppressive for the sisters and female converts by means of exclusion and hierarchical formation«. And indeed she finishes her book with the sentence from the back cover quoted above.

But anyone who continues reading in spite of the author's ideology and the reader's prejudice will discover that the main body of the book offers in four chapters a carefully documented analysis of the situation and work of the Moravian missionaries, paying full attention to the often neglected role of women. The body focuses especially on the mission among the slaves and among the Creole congregations (which had its roots in this mission branch). Some attention is paid to the missions among the original (Amer)Indian tribes and among the Maroons (Bush-Negroes), but the recent missions among the Asian immigrants are beyond the scope of the historical period. The author has consulted the major works on Moravian Surinam mission and church history and she has researched carefully in the archives in Herrnhut, Zeist/Utrecht and Paramaribo. Correspondence from and to mission boards as well as diaries and memoirs of missionaries have been extensively used and translated into Dutch.

Chapter I summarizes the Moravian history, organization and ideals. Special attention is paid to Zinzendorf's ideas of mission, marriage and family life, and rightly also to the concise mission manuals of his successor Spangenberg which have played an important and longlasting role in mission practice. Chapter II-IV deal with certain aspects of the mission in Surinam in three periods. The first period, 1735-1825, saw a century of difficult and lonely pioneer mission facing strong opposition from the Surinam planter society. The second period, 1825-1863, was marked by church growth and a change in the attitude of society. In the third period, 1863-1900, after slave emancipation in the Dutch territories, there was not only freedom for mission, but missionary leaders were allowed into the colonial elite, and a Creole people's church emerged which already produced critical voices. Every chapter offers a bird's eye view of colonial society and the position of women in the period concerned, a description of relations between the Moravian Mission and colonial society, of the missionaries way of life and how they supported themselves and of the role of the »sisters«.

the female missionaries. Each chapter concludes with a description of the period's mission work. There are notes on evangelism and congregation building, but more attention is being paid to education, social service and family relations. The rather generalizing description of such long historical periods is supplemented with the biography of a typical missionary couple from each period. The Appendix adds some interesting documents such as questionnaires for the evaluation of missionary candidates by the leaders of the congregational divisions of the Moravian home settlements, and charts with the professional vocations of the missionaries and the composition of their families.

An important part of the Moravian missionary community in Surinam were the female missionaries from the home congregations. From 1735 till 1900 approxim. 250 »sisters« and 300 »brothers« were commissioned. The majority were couples. In the 18th century quite a few single brethren served in the field. Usually there were a few widows, but only at the end of the 19th century were single sisters sent out, especially for schools and care of the sick. In the 18th century there were very few children in the »Mission Family«, as they returned to Europe at a very young age; but in the 19th century they were allowed to remain until the age of 6 or 8, forming one-third of the missionary community at that time.

Lenders notes that the nuclear family of husband, wife and children was for the missionaries the ideal model, but not the most frequent family unit! In the 18th century and at the beginning of the 19th the common household was the predominant situation. Married couples, single men, widows and widowers lived together in a kind of commune. The missionaries were prepared for sacrifice of comfort and privacy by their training in the »choir houses« and by the *Streiterehe* (»warrior's marriage«) in their home settlements. Men and women worked hard together to survive and to earn their livelihood. And together they dedicated themselves to the mission work – the missionary sisters among the female part of the congregation. Around the middle of the 19th century the missionary family pattern changed, due to the opening up of the rural plantations for the mission and the growth of the slave congregations in and around the capital city of Paramaribo. The missionaries were now scattered in nuclear families among the mission stations and parsonages (although in that period some mission stations were led by widows). This allowed the housewife to pay more attention to her husband and children. In the third period after the emancipation of the slaves the task of the missionary sister changed even more as a result of specialization, clericalization, individualization and indigenization.

The mission specialized in business, schools, care of the sick and congregational work. It was clericalized by the arrival of trained male theologians »who

grabbed the priestly office«. It was individualized by salary supplies to set up family households. It became indigenized by the training of Surinamese men (!) as teachers, catechists and pastors. These took over the duties of the missionary sisters, who lapsed into an isolated position within the nuclear family, identifying with the role of housewife in European ideology.

The indigenous sisters, mostly female slaves, found themselves in a difficult position. Marriage for slaves was prohibited, husband and wife were allowed to be sold separately, female slaves in a raw white male society were often sexually abused. But in the Moravian congregation they were treated with respect as baptized »sisters«; and in the 19th century they functioned in ecclesiastical offices as »*Helferin*« and »*Dienerin*«. However, the Moravian Mission tried to create some order in the loose and damaged family relations of slave society by the introduction of the »*Verbontoe*« (covenant), a kind of ecclesiastical semi-marriage. And after emancipation they tried under official pressure to introduce civil marriage by disciplinary measures on a grand scale, as the colonial government did not recognize the *Verbontoe* or church marriage. In this way European values and standards of monogamy and heterosexuality were enforced. This in turn stimulated a strong protest from the emancipated indigenous congregation. Moreover, indigenous women were not considered for mission training as teacher or catechist nor for election as elder at the institution of local church boards. Therefore, the author concludes, for the Creole women emancipation was no liberation but threatened her with a new marriage slavery.

These conclusions seem to result not so much from the perspective of 18th and 19th century mission history as from 20th century western ideology. The nuclear family (defined as a dominant provider/father and a dominated housewife/mother) is the author's bogey as being unworthy of a missionary sister. Therefore the 18th century seems to be preferable to the 19th century. However, in the 18th century Moravian homebase family homes existed side by side with the »*choir-houses*« for brothers and sisters; both patterns were important. On the other hand, in the 19th century husband and wife were commissioned together as a missionary couple; all missionaries served for a period in the common household in Paramaribo before moving to a mission station as a nuclear family; in this way one experienced both patterns of family life. In the same period missionary sisters were in charge of the spiritual care of the female half of the congregation. Moreover, being housewife on a busy mission station was and is certainly no isolation from society! And married sisters were often really happy to be able to spend some more time with their family and to have the children with them for a somewhat longer time. For many female missionaries serving in the family and serving the Lord and one's neighbour was no contradiction.

It is too easily said that the missionaries introduced »European« values and standards. In their diaries and correspondence they fiercely criticized white European society in Surinam. They rather tried to be true to biblical guidelines, and in this respect they had the support and guidance of indigenous leaders. The massive protest of the Surinam Creole congregation against the missionary leaders only erupted, rightly, when these tried to enforce by church discipline the western laws of the colonial government.

The mission's Christian emphasis on loyalty to the Lord and loyalty to one's partner may have created more difficulty for the brothers than for the sisters in the young congregations! Becoming a Christian in the situation of a slave society implied for the indigenous sisters the recognition of one's human worth and dignity; by law one was an object, but in the congregation one became a person. Consequently, as a witness to Christ one sometimes had to have the courage to say »no« to one's nominally Christian proprietor and to one's own people; often one had to pay the cost of much suffering for such an attitude. After emancipation, the indigenous sisters did not object against the mission's appeal to the responsibility of the fathers for wife and children in its efforts to overcome a bad inheritance of slavery. Indigenous sisters played an important and leading role in that period in the congregation and in the missionary community as female »Helpers«. And the Surinam Moravian sisters officiated as members of the local church board a long time before this was practised in the European congregations. In Surinam the Moravian Church (Brethren's Church) is sometimes jokingly called the Sisters' Church, which does not indicate a very oppressive organisation!

This is not to deny the author's thesis that Europeanism, sexism and racism played a role in the 19th century mission community even as the mission was allowed to become fashionable. Moravian male and female missionaries were also just part of their own country and time with its own prejudices. And there were no training courses in cultural anthropology! But they were willing to follow the Lamb in dedication to their Surinam brothers and sisters.

T sum up: this is an original and well documented book with an important point of view, but with one-sided, ideologically coloured conclusions.

Jan M.W. Schalkwijk

Wilhelm Faix, *Familie im gesellschaftlichen Wandel. Der Beitrag des Pietismus. Eine sozialgeschichtliche Studie*. Gießen, Basel: Brunnen 1997, 144 S.

Anlässlich des Jahres der Familie 1994 veranstaltete die Evangelische Allianz ein Seminar über die christliche Familie, das den Anstoß zu diesem Buch gab.