

zumindest zum Magdeburger Kloster U.L.F. und zu Jerichow gefunden. Anschließend wird über *allegorische Bedeutungen* in mittelalterlichen Kirchen allgemein und in der Leitzkauer Stiftskirche im Besonderen nachgedacht: Zahlen und Proportionen, die Lage des Kreuzaltars in der topographischen Mitte sowie das Kirchengebäude als Abbild des himmlischen Jerusalem bzw. als *Templum Salomonis*.

Ein Schlußkapitel faßt die Ergebnisse zusammen. Es folgen Quellen- und Literaturverzeichnis, ein Nachweis der 70 Architekturskizzen, Orts- und Personenregister sowie 72 Abbildungen zu Leitzkau und seinen Parallelen.

Zur Wertung: Größere Monographien zur Geschichte oder zu Bauten der Prämonstratenser im Norden und Osten Deutschlands (mit rühmlicher Ausnahme Magdeburgs) waren im nun vergangenen 20. Jahrhundert recht selten. Schon von daher ist eine so gründliche Arbeit zur Stiftskirche Leitzkau, eingebettet in die lokale Ordens- und Profangeschichte, zu begrüßen und für andere Klöster anzuregen. Was auf Jahrhunderte bleibt, ist die genaue Baubeobachtung und Baubeschreibung durch den Autor, wozu er bereits feststellt, daß einiges davon durch Unkenntnis bei nachfolgenden sogenannten »Restaurierungs«-Maßnahmen unwiederbringlich zerstört wurde. Zeitgebunden ist meiner Ansicht die recht breit geführte Auseinandersetzung um den Bedeutungsgehalt des romanischen Kirchenbaus zwischen den verschiedenen zitierten »Schulmeinungen«.

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J.C.M. VAN STRATUM, *De Vijftig van Berne; het werk van de Norbertijnen in India, 1923-1998* (Edition Missieprocurer Abdij van Berne, Heeswijk, 1998), 478 p. with sources, literature, indexes of persons, objects, places, and name lists; illustrated with 120 photographs.

Over 3000 letters, sent in the course of three-quarters of a century from the Indian mission-territory to the abbey of Berne and kept there in the archives, were used in the publication of this beautifully published book. From 1996 onward the author — who had already published a scientific study on Saint Norbert's College¹, lead by the abbey in earlier days — compiled a catalogue and summary of these letters. The commemoration in 1998 of the start of the Bernenses' work in India 75 years before was an opportunity for the administration of the abbey and the mission-office to issue a memorial volume on the occasion of this jubilee.

¹ VAN STRATUM, drs J.C.M.: *Hoe Berne het rooide*, in: *Om kijken en doorgaan; gedenkboek bij de viering van honderd jaar gymnasium te Heeswijk, 1886-1986* (Heeswijk 1986), p. 15-260.

In preparation to this, the author stayed in India during the autumn of 1997 and the spring of 1998, each time for a period of four to six weeks, to do research in the archives of the diocese of Jabalpur and St. Norbert's Priory of Jamtara. There in a number of cases he came across reactions from Berne to problems that the mission had submitted to the abbots through the years. This was a find of importance, because a copy of the letters, even from the abbey superiors, was rarely kept there. In this way the principle of hearing both sides could be applied, what improved the value and quality of this present study.

The book is diachronic of design and contains, besides a sketch of the global development of the mission in India, three main parts: a survey of the pragmatic structure of the missionary work, followed by an explanation of the organisation and staffing policy and a history of the permanent establishment in India. The whole ends with lists of names, registers, and many other sources. The extensive references, over one thousand, are listed page by page. Many illustrations are inserted as well as tables and graphics.

The publication opens with a description of the mission idea that emerged in Europe in the middle of the 19th century, which can be contrasted with that of the Norbertines in general and specifically that of the Bernenses. It is striking that the choice made by Berne for the mission in India showed all features of coincidence. Originally the abbey had a mission territory in the present Indonesia in mind, but by misunderstandings in the papal Curia and because of the state of emergency at the time in the archdiocese of Madras, Berne decided to put confreres at the disposal of the local archbishop, J. Aelen.

In the actual development of the missionary work in India one should bear two periods in mind. From 1923 until 1929 a group of Bernenses (three in 1923 increasing to six in 1926) were active in the South of India. When there was no apparent prospect for a permanent establishment of a mission territory of their own in the South of India, due to the fact that they had become superfluous, Berne accepted the challenge to make a new start in and about the town of Jabalpur in Central India, where they could have a mission territory of their own. Within a few years this region developed into a prefecture, which in 1954 was raised to the status of diocese.

It is obvious that the book pays little attention to the first, or so-called Madras-period, which scarcely left any traces of Bernensian activity. An overview of the growth in number of the mission stations in the Mandla-district, a tribal territory situated South of Jabalpur and entrusted to the Norbertines by the Propaganda Fide, the development of education, and the expansion of the medical provisions is followed by a description of a "self-examination" of the diocese, conducted by the Jesuits (!) in 1975, and of the current situation of the Catholic Church in the state of Madhya Pradesh.

From the beginning there was a business-like relationship between the abbey and the mission territory. The first so-called contract, closed in 1935 between abbot Stöcker and prefect Ignatius C. Dubbelman (1894-1977),

who later became the first bishop, was in the opinion of abbot Ondersteijn (1942-1959) far too generous, particularly concerning the matter of who was to bear the costs for the missionaries coming on holiday after the Second World War. The book describes extensively the problems regarding finance between the two authorities, who often behaved as real fighting-cocks.

The second contract was closed in 1950, after abbot Ondersteijn had postponed his visitation to India by many years. This, however, led to new dissatisfactions, as the abbot later on interpreted certain parts of the contract in a different way. His successor abbot Haselager (1959-1967) brought about modifications to the already disturbed relations. As a result, a third contract was concluded with bishop Dubbelman in 1962, offering more breathing space. He also decided on the definitive establishment of a Priory in India, which his predecessor had delayed for many years on account of indistinctness about the ideal place, lack of finances, and other matters.

In this business-like part of the book, the author pays full attention to the way in which the mission acquired the necessary funds. This is quite exceptional, as this is mostly a neglected chapter² in the description of missionary activities. Besides the traditional source of income for the mission from contributions of the Propaganda Fide, Bishop Dubbelman was very smart in securing money from the Holy Childhood Fund, and later from other relief organisations. This part of the book also deals with the activities of the various mission procurators working from the abbey to collect funds by taking part in exhibitions, lecture-engagements, organised all over the country, and collections taken from the famous mission-box. These funds were pleasing to some in India, but not to others. From the mid seventies onward, bishop Theophane Thannickunnel, with the help of procurator and former missionary Fr. Lamers, was also able to secure funds from the above mentioned relief organisations. It was a brilliant idea of bishop Dubbelman and his first Indian successor bishop D'Souza, to withdraw missionaries from their missionary work and to appoint them as procurators in the U.S.A. between 1940 and 1972 to collect funds. In this respect abbot Ondersteijn and bishop Dubbelman appeared to be each other's opposites, whereas abbot Haselager had a more open approach. The correspondence between abbot Haselager, bishop Dubbelman, and the missionaries showed that the relations were far better than at the time of his predecessor, abbot Ondersteijn.

In the section dealing with the organisation and the staffing policy of the mission various superiors are mentioned: Bazelmans, Dubbelman (besides prefect he was also superior from 1933 until 1946), van Oosterhout (superior 1946-1961 and 1965-1975) and van Heertum. While the superior had to take to heart the personal needs and interests of confreres

² STEENBRINK, dr. K.: *Enkele tendensen in de recente missiegeschiedenis*, in: Trajecta (1995), no. 4, p. 355.

with respect to holidays and income, it appeared that bishop Dubbelman, being charged with leadership over the territory, took matters into his own hands. He clearly put his stamp on matters such as education and building, but barely paid any attention to developments in the agricultural field. Initiatives of individual missionaries rarely got off the ground and when they did, they were not continued for a long time. Together with the author one may be surprised and consider it a missed opportunity of the mission, that no agricultural undertaking ever got off the ground, even though the majority of the missionaries came from the countryside and had known in the abbey at close quarters the "farmers' apostle", Father van den Elsen (1853-1925), or had at least heard of his work.

After the Second World War the function of secretary of the diocese became important. Part of his task was to provide for the confreres. Particularly secretary van Thiel (1954-1969), originating from a family of manufacturers, developed many activities in this respect, and the vicissitudes of his cigar commerce gave rise to hilarious moments. Within the diocese he also took care of the distribution of food relief, which mainly came from the U.S.A., and which was supplied to India for many years as part of an agreement made in 1951.

Problems continuously cropped up from the very beginning of the occupation of the mission territory. In bishop Dubbelman's view, the abbey did too little in sending reinforcements. Attempts to find support from the abbeys of Postel, Grimbergen, and De Pere came to nothing. With regard to this matter the government of India closed its borders to new missionaries in 1953. During the Second World War a few Indian priests came to strengthen the ranks and in the beginning of the fifties a minor seminary was started.

On a personal level, the policy of bishop Dubbelman, who kept on extending the mission stations, clashed with the abbey's policy: there, one wished to take to heart the interests in spiritual care, education, and liturgical work. Again, with the author one can wonder whether the consequences of the choice of the Indian mission and the continuous intensifying of the work there had been evaluated well from the beginning, viz. as far as the required quantity of staff was concerned. Also, one may ask oneself whether or not there should have been a regular evaluation between. Now one cannot dispose of the fact that from the abbey's point of view a somewhat reckless interpretation of the Order's motto "*Ad omne opus bonum parati*" was made, and that on bishop Dubbelman's side, on the other hand, there seemed to be a rash trust in his own motto: "*Deus providebit*".

The author also examines some angles of human resource management concerning the mission. Missionaries did not seem to have any say as far as their nominations were concerned: when one of them would ask if he could first think about it, the abbot would reply: "I already did that for you!" In selecting, one did not take into account matters of character or personal structure. Actually, any sound preparation for the task ahead in a completely strange country was out of the question: they had to do with

the little information gathered from the mission procurator or a missionary who happened to be on holiday. Some candidates, however, took a course in Missiology during the Second World War. Hindi was not taught, but they learned English in the abbey or during a stay of a few weeks in England. A medical course was mostly taken, but according to bishop Dubbelman it was a matter of minor importance. After arrival in the mission one studied Hindi, mainly on one's own, after which one was appointed as assistant to an experienced missionary. Some time later a transfer was made and after a few years one was experienced enough to be able to occupy a mission post independently, after which one was transferred with a certain regularity. The author discerns in this so-called transfer-system one of the reasons of the fairly frequent problems of a psychosomatic nature, which arose among the missionaries. The fact that 25% of the missionaries remained at the most for ten years in the mission territory hints at that fact. One may link this problem with the scanty progress made in agriculture at the time.

On their definitive return to the Netherlands (seven died in India and among them was bishop Dubbelman himself) the ex-missionaries had to adapt themselves to a new situation. Those who were still young enough were able to do pastoral work, mostly as rector in a hospital or nursing home. Those who were aged retired to a life of "*otium cum dignitate*".

In the last section of his book the author describes the definitive establishment of Berne in India. During the Madras-period they had dreamt of a "*domus filialis*", but after moving to Jabalpur this dream faded. After World War II a discussion arose between India and abbot Ondersteijn, which was to develop into a lingering question: what was the most appropriate place, how much would it cost, and who would be the first inhabitants? Already in 1951 a countryseat was purchased by the Order in the neighbourhood of Jabalpur on condition that the abbey would not have to put up with the financial consequences; bishop Dubbelman for many years had another place in mind, which he had acquired for the diocese. In 1961 abbot Haselager cut the knot, and the countryseat of the Order became the definite location for the new foundation. The Dutchman Fr. Rooymans was appointed as the first prior. Together with two Dutch friars and some Indian confreres, who had been trained in the Netherlands, he became responsible for the building and the organisation of Jamtara as well as for the education of new candidates. Because the prior in 1965 already left more or less for good to the U.S.A. to raise funds, the responsibility was with the Indian confrere Ambrose, who was still rather young and had little experience. The main problems for St. Norbert's Priory, which opened in 1963, were, besides the completion of the buildings, the education of young men and the specialization in the working environment.

In 1966 the Bernenses started a new and large-scale project in Bombay, at a distance of over 1000 km from Jabalpur, where an existing parish had to be provided with a church, presbytery, educational centre, and high school. This meant that there were activities on two fronts,

which again raises the question in how far this matter had been considered fundamentally. In 1973 the buildings had been completed, and the project was then entrusted to Indian confreres. In spite of ardent attempts the priory did not succeed in starting its own seminary due to the lack of competent staff. It was then decided to decentralize education, and after a two years' noviciate in the priory students were sent to seminaries in Bombay, Pune, and Nagpur respectively. The newly ordained priests of the priory hardly found any work in the diocese, where the secular clergy had in the mean time increased considerably. The confreres had to look further afield, to places such as Benares and later on in the South of India. This latter preference would certainly have been influenced by their places of origin, which were mainly situated in that region. In 1984 the Indian confreres, who until then belonged to Berne, received the status of independent canonry with a prelate of its own. Since then, many more or less dependent houses have been established, mainly in the South of India, where a number of confreres is living together and working in parishes and schools as well as taking special care of the socially weak. Jamtara is the central governing body.

With his book *De Vijftig van Berne* the author has contributed in an important way to the knowledge of the missionary activity of the abbey. This work calls for a deeper study. One may consider the role of procurator and later abbot-general Noots, his successors, and their co-operators with respect to the Norbertine missions in general and those of the individual canonries or circaries in particular. A comparative study of diverse missions started by Norbertines in the 19th and 20th centuries need not remain a pious wish; *De Vijftig van Berne* seems to be a solid foundation for this purpose.

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