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# New Perspectives for Comparative Investigations on Identity in Protestant Missions in 18th-Century South India

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*Religiöse Gemeinschaften und die Frage nach dem Fundament ihrer Identität sowie dem Identitätsverständnis ihrer Mitglieder bilden den Kern dieses Beitrages. Ausgangspunkt dafür ist der Konflikt innerhalb des deutschen Pietismus. Das 300-jährige Jubiläum des Beginns einer organisierten protestantischen Missionstätigkeit wird genutzt, um einen Überblick über die Literatur zur Dänisch-Halleschen Mission und der Mission der Herrnhuter Brüdergemeine in Südindien im 18. Jahrhundert zu geben. Das Ziel ist es, neuere Forschungsansätze für eine vergleichende Betrachtung nutzbar zu machen, um die Identitätsgrundlagen der beiden Missionen unter besonderer Beachtung ihrer gegenseitigen Wahrnehmung mit dem Prozess der Aufklärung in Beziehung zu stellen. Zu diesem Zweck werden mehrere Themenkomplexe miteinander verknüpft.*

*An Hand der Historiographieggeschichte wird die unterschiedliche Bewertung der beiden Missionen erörtert. Dabei ist eine eklatante Vernachlässigung bzw. pauschale Verurteilung der Herrnhuter Brüdergemeine als Folge der Missionsapologetik des späten 19. Jahrhunderts zu erkennen. Die Bewertung des Unterganges der Dänisch-Halleschen Mission ist eng verknüpft mit der Debatte um das Verhältnis zwischen Aufklärung und Mission innerhalb des Pietismus. Diese Problematik wird an Hand mehrerer Beiträge zum Schulwesen der Dänisch-Halleschen Mission diskutiert. Sie alle verfolgen den neuen Ansatz, Mission als die Begegnung zweier unterschiedlicher Kulturen zu verstehen, um vor allem die wechselseitigen Aneignungsprozesse zu fokussieren. So kann z. B. gezeigt werden, dass indische Intellektuelle durch ihre Prägung im Schulwesen der Mission zu Beginn des 19. Jahrhunderts pietistische Vorstellungen von Frömmigkeit und Wissenschaftlichkeit des frühen 18. Jahrhunderts mit den neuesten naturwissenschaftlich rationalistischen Erkenntnissen verbanden. Damit ist nicht nur die herkömmliche Dichotomie von „Glauben und Wissenschaft“ in Frage gestellt; auch die gängigen Annahmen hinsichtlich des Selbstverständnisses der Missionare sind dahingehend zu überprüfen.*

*Der Unterschied zwischen der „Halleschen Theologen-Mission“ und „Herrnhuter Handwerker-Mission“ verweist nicht nur auf unterschiedliche Identitätsgrundlagen der beiden Gemeinschaften, sondern offenbart verschiedene Missionskonzepte. Ihre Veränderungen in Folge der Aufklärung und die Verknüpfung mit hegemonialen Zivilisationstheorien zeigen ihre Bedeutung für Untersuchungen über Identität und Fremdwahrnehmung am Beginn der europäischen Moderne.*

## INTRODUCTION

For nearly two millennia, Christianity has been a firm component of European history. Its changes in the course of time have led to a variety of confessions which have often stood, and still stand, in conflict with each other. The world-wide preaching of the gospel reflects these tensions and raises the question, ‘What shaped the identity of the carriers of this Christian mission?’ Was it their affiliation to their special denomination, the overall uniting community of the faith in Jesus Christ, the contrary effects of the Enlightenment, or the reference to one, at least culturally and politically relatively similar origin – Europe? Investigations into these subjects promise interesting insights into the current discussions about identities within a European framework and their relationship to Christianity and Enlightenment, as well as the process of the variation of identities.

The year 2006 marks the 300th anniversary of the beginning of organised Protestant missionary work. Personally carried out and ideologically inspired by the Halle Pietism, the *Dänisch-Hallesche Mission* [Danish-Halle Mission (thereafter DHM)]<sup>1</sup>, also known as the *Tranquebarmission* [Tranquebar Mission], started its work in the Danish colony Tranquebar [Tarangambadi] in South India in June 1760. In a tension-loaded relationship, it had to compete there again with the other Protestant, and likewise Pietistic, missionary community of the 18th century – the *Herrnhuter Brüdergemeine* [Moravian Brethren (thereafter MB)]<sup>2</sup>. As a result, conflicts within European Pietism, obvious in the radical demarcation in relation to differing theological doctrines, were transformed into an intercultural context, gaining expression in different concepts of mission.

Developments in the science of history, the so called “performative turn”, in connection with the question about the contribution of religion to identity in multi-denominational and multi-ethnic societies, open a broad field of investigation<sup>3</sup>. Two aspects are therefore of interest. Martschukat convincingly carries out the “productive and meaning-constituent power of human behaviours in history” can be followed with the help of performative theoretical approaches<sup>4</sup>. Through such human behaviour, the “changing of cultural configurations” can be investigated<sup>5</sup>. Assuming, in addition, that the generation of meaning takes place *in actu*, it seems possible to attain access to this process and its change through the reconstruction of identity<sup>6</sup>. Applied to the members of both missions, it is possible on the one hand to examine the secular effects of the Enlightenment and its rationalism on religious communities and their identity, and on the other hand their reaction to it. This seems to be more interesting for the two missionary communities, as the duration of their activities coincides with the appearance of arguments based on theories of civilisation in the perception of the cultural ‘other’ and the theory of mission, which were some of the bases for the colonial policy of the 19th century, and thus also for the formation of the European modernity<sup>7</sup>.

This chapter discusses new approaches within the research literature of both missions with regard to the points mentioned above and attempts to make them useful for further investigations on identity. To produce a history of historiography in the given

framework would be an almost presumptuous intention. Whereas a multiplicity of monographs and special investigations exist for the history of the DHM, it is a different matter with the MB's mission in Tranquebar, about which, surprisingly, very few texts exist. Furthermore, comparative research on both missions with regard to investigations about their mutual perception is almost non-existent. However, special attention is given to this point in the review of the literature undertaken here, because it can provide information about the identity of the missionaries. While only the most important works from the older literature can be briefly highlighted, a few recent works and a short comparative analysis of both missions indicate developments over the last few years. Finally a comment on recent research on the Moravian autobiographies is given. As an example, performative concepts are presented here with emphasis on writing, community formation and identity in their functional mode for the constitution of the Moravian Brethren as a world-wide missionary community.

## THE DANISH-HALLE MISSION AND THE MISSION OF THE MORAVIAN BRETHERN IN SOUTH ASIA IN CONFESSIONAL HISTORIOGRAPHY

### Danish-Halle Mission

Shortly after its foundation in 1706, the DHM came to the attention of the European public<sup>8</sup>. The most important reason for this was the publication of the *Hallesche Berichte* [Halle Reports]<sup>9</sup> by the *Frankeschen Stiftungen* [Francke Foundation] of Halle – one of the intellectual centres of German Pietism, and supporting institution of the mission. With Bartholomäus Ziegenbalg (1682-1719), known through Erich Beyreuter as “Pioneer of the World Mission”, stands as an example for later generations of Protestant missionaries<sup>10</sup>.

In 1843, Ferdinand Fenger wrote the first complete history of the mission in Danish, which is a classic on the subject<sup>11</sup>. His critical approach to the sources is remarkable, even though he only had access to Danish archives. The first person who was able to work with the material held at the archives of the Francke Foundation in Halle (hereafter AFS), as well as the documents from Tranquebar itself, was William Germann. Having worked himself as a missionary in Tamil Nadu in South India, he edited source publications and published a few works which represent not only the results of the evangelisation, but also the linguistic and scientific achievements of the most important missionaries<sup>12</sup>. Representing the 20th century, it is necessary to mention the works of Arno Lehmann, himself a former missionary in the region of the old *Tranquebarmission* and a known dravidologist<sup>13</sup>. Because of the incompleteness of the aforementioned studies, the work by Anders Nørgaard has to be examined in more detail, which, even without a special focus on the Tamil culture and its interaction with the mission, marks a new beginning in the research of DHM history<sup>14</sup>.

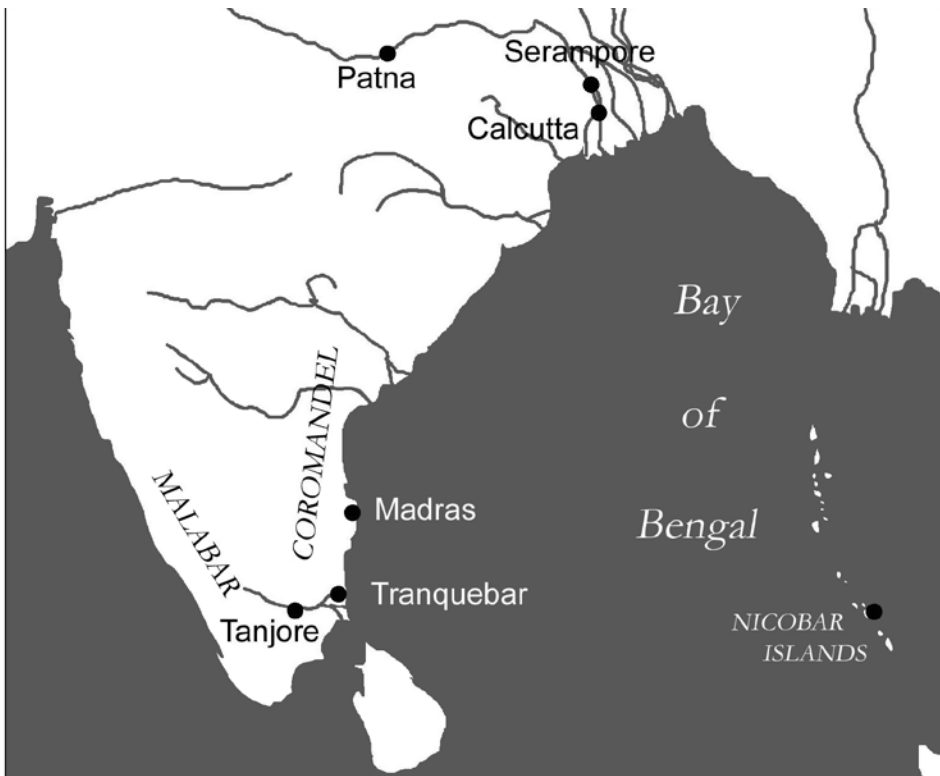
Nørgaard brings the fundamental incompatibility of mission and trade into discussion, thus characterising the DHM by the pragmatic use of the Lutheran *Zwei Reiche*

*Lehre* [Two-Empire Doctrine] as standing in a reserved relationship with the colonial authorities. This became the model for many later Protestant missionary societies<sup>15</sup>. He describes the general history of the DHM in three phases: foundation, established mission and fall<sup>16</sup>. Nørgaard, like Lehmann and previous analysts, describes the end of the DHM as a decay. According to this interpretation, the inspired missionary fervour, so apparent at the beginning, changed to a rationalistically diminished attitude towards preaching the gospel, focusing only on general public education through which “the entire mission sermon [should be] replaced”<sup>17</sup>. The rationalism of the last missionaries, particularly Johann Peter Rottler (1749-1836), Christoph Samuel John (1746-1813) and August Friedrich Caemmerer (1767-1837), seems to have caused the decay of the mission from this point of view<sup>18</sup>. Indeed, the relationship between Pietism and Enlightenment in the DHM is far more complex, and still requires a comparative analysis of the beginning and the end of the mission<sup>19</sup>. Gita Dharampal-Frick takes the attitude of the already mentioned Ziegenbalg as an “acknowledgment of a relative historical simultaneousness between pre-industrial Germany and India before the beginning of the *British Raj*, a diagnosis which differs remarkably from the hegemonial theories and the assumption of a strictly different timing in the later colonialistic discourse”<sup>20</sup>. Andreas Nehring points out that the condemnation of these missionaries is due to the apologia of the 19th century mission, and is connected with the take-over of this mission field by the successor to the DHM, the *Leipziger Mission* [Leipzig Mission], which was committed to the New Lutheranism, and mostly engaged in the historiography of the DHM. Indeed, the final stage of the DHM needs further consideration in the contextualisation of its theology, thereby including the “challenges which the Enlightenment drew upon the theological thinking of the outgoing 18th century”<sup>21</sup>. Missionary John, for example, understood mission activities as a basic contribution to social change. On one hand “the best means to improve the local inhabitants [would be] if one wins its heart by instruction for Jesus”, on the other hand, he thereby expected a social and economic improvement for all castes<sup>22</sup>. Also in accordance with this premise, the ecumenical expansion of the activities of the mission took place in the form of intensification of the collaboration with the SPCK, already in existence since 1710, especially in educational matters, and with the East India Company, the prevailing power in South India at this time<sup>23</sup>. The educational work carried out by the missionaries, and by native catechists and schoolmasters<sup>24</sup>, was decried as a waste of power and time by the critics in the early 19th century, as well as by confessional historiography later on. Even in direct connection with the beginning of the DHM, it had changed in substance. The old Pietist concept of sin was no longer the reason for the ‘depravity’ of the Indians and therefore the initial point for Christian introduction, but a social category, differentiating between Christian and Indian society<sup>25</sup>. As a result, Christianity became part of a theory of civilisation, positioning itself to the fore<sup>26</sup>. Consequently, the mission itself became an instrument of civilisation, and the Christian education system, although with narrow reference to domestic tradition, the means by which it was carried out.

## Mission of the Moravian Brethren

Literature about the history of the MB in Tranquebar, also known as *Nikobarenmission* [Nicobar Mission], is rare, although unique ethnological, linguistic, as well as missiological material exists<sup>27</sup>. One comprehensive work was written by Hermann Römer in 1921<sup>28</sup>. On the basis of the sources of the UA, it describes the history of the efforts to preach the gospel on the Nicobar Islands in the Bay of Bengal. At the same time, it discusses the conflicts with the DHM over the set up and the maintenance of the necessary South Indian mainland station, the *Brüdergarten* near Tranquebar, from the arrival of the first Moravians in 1760 up to their final departure in 1803. Unfortunately, this account contains almost no references, but does provide some important sources.

Römer's description of the relationship between MB and DHM is based on a mission understanding which existed at the beginning of the 20th century. He states that "today the Moravian missionaries would have... strong doubts... if Anglo-Saxon Methodists were to set up a community somewhere in one of their old mission fields"<sup>29</sup>. Hereby, he uses a concept of mission which is linked to the confessions, and assumes a mutual competition with one another which does not cover the impetus of the beginnings



Map 1.  
Protestant Missions in 18th-Century India

of the Protestant mission<sup>30</sup>. From that, his negative evaluation of the establishment of the Moravian mission in an already existing Protestant mission field arises. With this opinion Römer repeats the contemporary statements and views of some of the DHM members, that the MB should not have operated a mission in Tranquebar, which had caused fundamental problems to the existence of the *Brüdergarten*, despite a differently-phrased Royal Reskript dated January 12th 1759<sup>31</sup>.

Arno Lehmann, 30 years later, used the statements of Römer for his own negative judgments of the Moravian mission in Tranquebar, which appeared to him to be only a wilful interference in the Halle activities in Tranquebar<sup>32</sup>. These old evaluations of the Moravian activities are examples of the way the conflict between the Pietism of Moravian and Halle was handled, which continued in the mission historiography. So far no research has been carried out that would cover all available sources as well as the self-perception of the missionaries of both sides. Therefore, it is difficult to compare both missions in their shared field of activity adequately. Greater insight could be gained from the examination of the waning, limited successes in the evangelisation of the heathens by the MB<sup>33</sup>, compared to the considerable successes of the DHM, in the 18th century in South India, in contrast to the healthy survival of the MB mission worldwide, together with the downfall of the DHM, in the 19th century<sup>34</sup>.

## BETWEEN CULTURAL HISTORY AND MISSIOLOGY

### The Education System of the DHM – European Impact and its Effects

In the following section, more recent works with a focus on the relationship between the mission and the native population will be discussed. They have a similar approach in their emphasis on the changes of social spheres and social mobility through the expansion of Christianity and the development of the education system introduced by the DHM and continued in the time of British colonial rule<sup>35</sup>. At the same time, the mission is understood to be a convergence of different cultures with increasing awareness of the differentiated indigenous achievements in the appropriation of western values in relation to the intended transfer interests<sup>36</sup>.

Daniel Jeyaraj tries to remedy the fact that most European works had no reference to the way of life of the Tamil people by using, to a large extent, the existing Tamil sources. He succeeds in clarifying the process of adoptions between European missionaries and the South Indian population, in displaying the communication of these meetings, where he illustrates the clash of different identities, and shows their variation and/or the development of the new identity of the Tamil Lutheran Christians from these identities<sup>37</sup>. The analysis of this process, with a focus on the intercultural dimension, illuminates the identity structures of the DHM missionaries further and provides insights into the mission methods when the mission started. At the same time, Jeyaraj also works out details of the missionaries' perception of the Tamil people and culture, without explicitly focusing on that particular aspect.

The significance of the mission schools as “important social areas of intercultural encounter and communication”, beyond the purpose of implementing the Christian faith and recruiting a new generation of native assistants, is shown by Heike Liebau<sup>38</sup>. She regards “education and upbringing in the missionary context as processes of dealing with norms, traditions, knowledge and experiences of different cultural and religious origin”<sup>39</sup>. Liebau explains the educational policy of the DHM as resulting from their dependence on the pedagogic principles of August Hermann Franke (1663-1727), the founder of the Franke Foundation: “The bringing up of pious, virtuous and hard working young people, who lived and worked in the Pietist sense” with “religious education in the foreground”<sup>40</sup>. There was no special institution for training the missionaries. Their own study of theology at the University of Halle, as well as their teaching activity at one of the schools of the Franke Foundation, was fundamental to their way of teaching in India and for their identity as missionaries of the DHM. With August Hermann Niemeyer (1754-1828) as the head of the Franke Foundation since 1784, “also the ideas of the Enlightenment became a component of the educational policy”<sup>41</sup>. These changes became a challenge for future missionaries, who had to combine Pietist devoutness and scientific interpretation of the world, especially through the close connection with the University of Halle<sup>42</sup>. Missionary John was able to say with missionary fervour: “science and its spread are, as I take it, a part of religion and mission and its promotion is my liability”<sup>43</sup>. The introduction of scientific subjects into the curriculum of the mission schools since the 1770s has to be seen in this context, whereas religious content dominated further. With the plans to introduce a mixed European-Indian school, a change can also be observed in the social status of the students in relation to the missionaries, and to each other: “The European children stand with the teacher, the Malabarian children must kneel and serve the European during the meal”<sup>44</sup>. This expression of ‘European superiority’ shows the beginning of the adoption of elements of a theory of civilisation within the mission.

On the basis of the mission education system, Indira Viswanathan Peterson examines the development of a new Christian and European scientifically-educated social group in South India<sup>45</sup>. With the example of the Tamil Poet Vedanāyakaṁ Sāstri (1774-1864) and King Serfoji II of Tanjore [Thanjavur] (1777-1832), both students of the famous DHM missionary Christian Friedrich Schwarz (1726-1798)<sup>46</sup> and of John, Caemmerer and Rottler, the adoption of “‘natural theology’ ... as an integral aspect of Franke’s Pietist theology” into South Indian literature and the intellectual life of the early 19th century is illustrated<sup>47</sup>. For this purpose, an analysis of the bases of Francke’s conception of education and science has been undertaken. “Halle Pietists became leaders in the Enlightenment enthusiasm for pushing back the frontiers of scientific learning, and the *HKNK* [(*Hallesche Kunst- und Naturalienkammer*) Halle Cabinet of Objects from Nature and Art] was emblematic of their commitment to this ideal”<sup>48</sup>. Considering, in the contemporary context, the very modern pedagogic methods (here we may mention the *Realienunterricht* [Instruction on Objects]), it becomes clear that Francke used the idea of the European *Kunst- und Wunderkammer* [Cabinet of Objects from Art and

Curiosities], strongly questioned by the Enlightenment, for his own purposes to clarify empirically the omnipotence of the one creator God<sup>49</sup>. At the same time, it appears that the “ideology of natural theology or physico-theology” remained a basic concept during the entire existence of the DHM, but was nevertheless absorbing elements of the changing sciences in the course of the further Enlightenment<sup>50</sup>. This is apparent, for example, in the adoption of the Linnéi classification scheme for the famous plant collection of missionary Rottler<sup>51</sup>. Nehring suggests that it is wrong to locate this appropriation of enlightened scientific concepts, like the former mission historiography, under the “dichotomy of faith and science”<sup>52</sup>. Rather, the structural order of nature reveals the organizing God, and proves the plausibility of the Christian faith in discussions with the heathens<sup>53</sup>. The works of the two protagonists illustrate that the rationalistic scientific achievements reached India through the instruction of the German missionaries. At the beginning of the 19th century, the two South Indian intellectuals reproduced an “early-18th century Pietistic vision of science”<sup>54</sup> connected with the “reception of European models of classification and epistemology”<sup>55</sup>. The criticism of having subordinated the mission to the ideas of the Enlightenment, ignores not only the benefit which the missionaries hoped to gain from the scientific interpretation of the world for the propagation of the glory of God, but also the missionary impetus while transmitting these scientific insights. Consequently, it becomes clear why the works of Sāstri, the “Evangelical poet of Tanjavur”<sup>56</sup>, “based on the coherent universe of Pietist Christianity”, encompassed the newest geographical and astronomical achievements of Europe at that time<sup>57</sup>.

### The Moravian Brethren in the Social Structure of Tranquebar

Martin Krieger is the first to use documents of the Rigsarkivet Copenhagen [National Archives of Copenhagen], in addition to sources from Herrnhut, for his work on the MB in Tranquebar and on the Nicobar Islands, which is, as far as I can see, the only one in recent decades<sup>58</sup>. The declared emphasis lies on an investigation of the relevance of the dichotomy between the mission and the authorities. Its argument follows Nørgaard and comes to the conclusion that this opposition is recognisable for the DHM. Contrary to this, regarding the MB, he points out that “such a conflict was not institutionalised, but resulted from the subjective attitude to life of the respective missionaries”<sup>59</sup>. At this point it is important to look at Römer’s valuation regarding the points of conflict around the agency of the MB. “On the part of the Danish government and the *Asiatisk Kompagni* [Asiatic company] the station of the MB in Tranquebar was meant only as a base for the Nicobar Islands and should not become a mission field of the MB, as the Danish mission [DHM] had already been active there for 50 years”<sup>60</sup>. The exact interpretation of the interests and intentions of all involved in the settlement of the MB is a controversial matter. Krieger imputes, unlike Römer, that the *Asiatisk Kompagni* had a large, economically based interest in a long-term agency of the MB, not only on the Nicobar Islands, but also in Tranquebar<sup>61</sup>. Convincingly, he describes the rapid integration of the small MB community into the colonial Indo-European social structures, their religious tolerance contributing significantly to it<sup>62</sup>. Their practice-oriented

attitude to life brought both the population and the company substantial profit and medical care. As Krieger shows, after brief contacts at the beginning, no further communication took place with the missionaries of the MB and the DHM. The Moravians were anxious to defuse “every potential upcoming conflict”<sup>63</sup>. Unfortunately, their exact relationship with the DHM and the decades of the inevitability of living together with the DHM missionaries and their Lutheran protégés does not lie in his focus.

The moment of the mutual benefit of the mission-willing Moravians and the colonist-seeking *Asiatisk Kompagni* appears clearly in the departure to the Nicobar Islands in 1768. Here, in addition, the one-sided dependence of the MB on the company leadership and its governors became clarified. In the case of the cancellation of the company ships, no contact between the islands and the mainland existed partly for years, which means the Moravians on the Nicobar Islands had “no further economical value for the Danish Asia trade”<sup>64</sup>. Nevertheless, later on the company obligatorily appointed some Moravians as royal residents to maintain the Danish claims on the Nicobar Islands. Their desperate economic situation, connected with the lack of success in their attempts to preach the gospel to the natives, in connection with the high loss of human life caused by unfavourable climatic conditions, forced the Moravians to give up their mission station *Tripjet* on the Nicobar Islands in 1786. The Moravians did not apply for new mission concessions for Danish or other territories in India after that. Therefore the *Brüdergarten* lost its function as a basic station. In Tranquebar itself, as a result of their complicated relationship with the DHM and the *Asiatisk Kompagni*, which was not interested in conversion activities, the Moravians never did implement their missionary work to any great extent. In 1795, the European authorities came to a decision regarding its solution. Krieger comprehensively describes the MB as liberating itself from the position of being an instrument of the *Asiatisk Kompagni*, and constructing its own identity, especially on the basis of its independent gainful occupation<sup>65</sup>.

### The Concept of Mission and Identity

Hermann Wellenreuther analyses the relationship of Pietism and mission as well as the continuity of Pietist traditions in the Protestant mission until the beginning of the 20th century<sup>66</sup>. He points out a basically different characterisation of the missions of the MB and the DHM. Whereas mission was “one of many enterprises but never the central component of the Halle self understanding”, it was the main target of the worldwide activities of the MB<sup>67</sup>. The fundamental difference between the “*Halleschen Theologen-Mission* [Halle theologian-mission], and the *Herrnhuter Handwerker-Mission* [Moravian craftsman-mission]” with their obligation for general priesthood, is reflected in the strictly Lutheran understanding of their position as priests and theologians of the first in opposition to a shared intention to live and work in a community in order to give an account for one’s own conversion to God in expression of the ideal of serving as an example and model with one’s own life brought about by *Zeugtrieb* [witness impulse]<sup>68</sup>. Thus Wellenreuther describes the fundamental characteristics of identity of the two missions. These differences also appear in the concepts of mission and the term of penance, so controversially discussed

on both sides. The generally long training period for catechumens illustrates that, within the DHM, conversion was understood as a process, shaped according to the *Frankisches Bußkampfmodell* [Franke's model of struggle of penance]<sup>69</sup>, whereas the MB set theological instruction aside and expected, in contrast to this, a spontaneous emotional acceptance of Jesus Christ. Wellenreuther obtains this concise characterisation mainly from the comparison of the DHM in Tranquebar with the North American Indian mission of the Moravians under the well-known missionary David Zeisberger<sup>70</sup>. Therefore, he is not able to make statements about effects and implications of these differences in a shared local context, or draw conclusions as to the success of the missionary work. However, he provides an outstanding insight in order to place the theological background of the different concepts of oneself and of the others of both missionary communities in relation to the change in the course of the Enlightenment. "At the end of the 18th century, the Moravian mission theology was surprisingly in conformity with intellectual and cultural currents that were to determine European thinking at the beginning of the 19th century, whereas on the contrary, the theological thinking of Halle Pietism, because of the rationality of the Enlightenment, was pushed to the theological and intellectual periphery"<sup>71</sup>. His statement gains importance in consideration of the worldwide longevity of these two characteristic types of Protestant mission. Likewise, the process of the *Bußkampf* appears within the guise of a theory of civilisation, "since a strict break with the heathen religious world forced the adoption of a European-civilised religiosity"<sup>72</sup>.

### The Moravian Brethren – Autobiographies and Identity

A characteristic feature of the MB since the 1750s is the *Lebensläufe* [autobiographies] of its members<sup>73</sup>. These personal records only recently came to the notice of the scientific research of a most different provenance<sup>74</sup>. Slowly, the rush judgment of uniformity and "typically Pietistic" begins to be revised, corresponding to the complexity and the extent of the archive material<sup>75</sup>. Irina Modrow concludes, "that the Pietist attestations of self should be recognised as important documents of individual self-depiction and religious reflection"<sup>76</sup>. However, she holds the view that only to a small extent can the self-perception of the group be derived from this representation of the so-called *innere Welt* [inner world]. According to this opinion, the "value of the autobiographies in the course of reconstruction of the production of identity is limited"<sup>77</sup>. On the contrary, Susanne Hose emphasised the "communicative function" of the autobiographies and their role for the constitution of the community, pointing out "the high information value" for, and the "model effect" on, the MB as a worldwide community<sup>78</sup>. In doing so, she accentuates the pedagogic and thus the *Werte-Kodex* [value-code] of the community-conserving effect of the *Lebensläufe*, arguing implicitly against Modrow, whose article she does not seem to have noticed<sup>79</sup>.

An article by Christine Lost stresses the connection between a life as service to the community and at the same time as a model for the other community members<sup>80</sup>. Consequently, the autobiographies are placed within a narrow functional connection to those "educational principles and community mechanisms, which have ensured the specific form of

existence of this community up to the present”, providing a “reservoir for the stability and the developmental capacity of the community”<sup>81</sup>. Hence, they serve as “*Lehrtext*” [training text]. They are “example, account, experience and apprenticeship” with an “as clear as possible connection between the individual and the community”<sup>82</sup>. In this context, two special aspects are mentioned. First of all, the learning of reading and writing was a basic component of the life of the MB, through which a high level of communicative capability was achieved. Secondly, Lost stresses the aspect of “disciplining the community members” which, in connection with the basic demand to make all individual power available for the community, constitutes the “total community” as the normative frame for the development of personality and identity<sup>83</sup>. “The individual biography becomes the internalised community and thereby is given back to the community as accountability and experience”<sup>84</sup>. Thus, the autobiographies offer the possibility of tracing the changes which the MB underwent in the course of the Enlightenment. And thus should provide statements about the concepts of mission and the modi of perception of the other as well as their changes, and help to demonstrate the self-perception of the South Indian community of the MB in the context of the conflict with the DHM.

## CONCLUSION

The examination of the present state of research on the Moravian Brethren and the Danish-Halle Mission in South Asia reveals a fundamental lack of a comparative investigation, which is remarkable, considering their historic importance as the first Protestant missions. However, various single investigations offer long-range approaches to the constitutions of both mission organisations, to the identity of their members, to their perception of the Indian culture and of their “mission objectives”, as well as placing these perceptions in relation to the changes in the course of the Enlightenment. The conflicts within Pietism, which found their continuation in partially one-sided representations by the confessional mission historiography, were transferred into a multicultural context. Together with different ways of means of subsistence, they form the foundation for the identity of the missionaries. On the basis of the education system of the DHM as well as the *Lebensläufe* of the MB, the effects of the changes in Europe on the missionaries in India can be detected. Therefore, it becomes clear that simple opposition of Pietism versus Enlightenment makes it difficult to focus on the changes in the identity and the self-perception of the missionaries as well as their perception of the Indian culture. On the contrary, a direct confrontation of the beginning and the final phase of the two missions seems to provide a solid foundation in order to examine the identity of religious communities and their perception of the cultural other in their relationship with the emergence of hegemonic theories of civilisation at the beginning of the European modernity.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> For names of Indian people and places, I have adopted the spelling common in the mission records. Where possible, the modern common version is given in square brackets. All translations from the German in this

chapter are mine. When necessary, the original text is given in footnotes. German proper names are written in italics and, when possible, followed by an English translation in square brackets the first time. Abbreviations are given in round brackets.

- <sup>2</sup> Other German names are *Unitas Fratrum* or *Brüder-Unität*. Names in English are also *The Moravian Church* and *The Church of the United Brethren*.
- <sup>3</sup> J. Martschukat - S. Patzold (eds.), *Geschichtswissenschaft und "performative turn". Ritual, Inszenierung und Performanz vom Mittelalter bis zur Neuzeit*, Köln-Weimar-Wien 2003.
- <sup>4</sup> ["Produktiven und bedeutungskonstituierenden Kraft von menschlichen Handlungsweisen in der Geschichte"]: J. Martschukat - S. Patzold, *Geschichtswissenschaft und "performative turn": Eine Einführung in Fragestellung, Konzepte und Literatur*, in Martschukat - Patzold (eds.), *Geschichtswissenschaft und "performative turn"* cit., pp. 1-31, p. 11.
- <sup>5</sup> ["sich wandelnden kulturellen Figurationen"]: *ibid.*, p. 11.
- <sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 10ff.
- <sup>7</sup> H. Wellenreuther, *Pietismus und Mission. Vom 17. bis zum Beginn des 20. Jahrhunderts*, in H. Lehmann (ed.), *Geschichte des Pietismus Bd. 4: Glaubenswelt und Lebenswelten*, Göttingen 2004, pp. 166-193.
- <sup>8</sup> H. Obst, *Missionsberichte aus Indien im 18. Jahrhundert: Eine Einführung in den missionsgeschichtlichen Kontext*, in M. Bergunder (ed.), *Missionsberichte aus Indien im 18. Jahrhundert: ihre Bedeutung für die europäische Geistesgeschichte und ihr wissenschaftlicher Quellenwert für die Indienkunde*, Halle 1999, pp. 1-6.
- <sup>9</sup> *Der Königlich Dänischen Missionarien aus Ost-Indien eingesandte ausführliche Berichte* [Reports of the Royal Danish Missionaries from East-India], 9 vol., 108 cont., Halle 1710-1767 (thereafter HB) and continuing: *Neuere Geschichte der evangelischen Missions-Anstalten zu Bekehrung der Heiden in Ostindien aus den eigenhändigen Aufsätzen und Briefen der Missionarien herausgegeben* [New Reports from the Protestant Attempt to Convert the Heathens in East-India], 8 vol., 95 cont., Halle 1776-1848 (thereafter NHB).
- <sup>10</sup> E. Beyreuter, *Ziegenbalg, Bahnbrecher der Weltmission*, Stuttgart 1968.
- <sup>11</sup> J.F. Fenger, *Geschichte der Trankebarschen Mission*, Grimma 1845.
- <sup>12</sup> W. Germann, *Die wissenschaftliche Arbeit unserer alten Tamuln=Missionare mit Berücksichtigung neuerer Leistungen*, "Missionsnachrichten der Ostindischen Missionsanstalt zu Halle", 17, 1865, pp. 1-26, 53-81, 85-119; the same, *Ziegenbalg und Plütschau. Die Gründungsjahre der Trankebarschen Mission. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des Pietismus nach handschriftlichen Quellen und ältesten Drucken*, Erlangen 1868.
- <sup>13</sup> A. Lehmann, *Es begann in Tranquebar: Geschichte der ersten evangelischen Kirche in Indien*, Berlin 1955.
- <sup>14</sup> A. Nørgaard, *Mission und Obrigkeit: Die Dänisch-hallische Mission in Tranquebar 1706-1845*, Gütersloh 1988.
- <sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 243 f.
- <sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 10.
- <sup>17</sup> ["die ganze Missionspredigt ersetzt"]: Lehmann, *Es begann* cit., p. 300. Cf. Nørgaard, *Mission* cit., pp. 229 ff.
- <sup>18</sup> Lehmann, *Es begann* cit., pp. 293 ff. Cf. also Nørgaard, *Mission* cit., p. 29. Their periods of residence in India: Rottker 1776-1803, from 1803-1833 he served as a missionary for the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (thereafter SPCK); John 1771-1817; Caemmerer 1791-1937. The dates according to the biographical database of the AfS ([www.francke-halle.de](http://www.francke-halle.de)).
- <sup>19</sup> A. Nehring, *Orientalismus und Mission: Die Repräsentation der tamilischen Gesellschaft und Religion durch Leipziger Missionare 1840-1940*, Wiesbaden 2003, p. 59.
- <sup>20</sup> ["Anerkennung einer relativen geschichtlichen Gleichzeitigkeit zwischen dem vorindustriellen Deutschland und Indien vor dem Beginn des *British raj*, in einer Diagnose also, die sich von hegemonialen Theorien und von der Annahme einer strikten Ungleichzeitigkeit im späteren kolonialistischen Diskurs bemerkenswert unterscheidet"]: G. Dharampal-Frick, *Malabarisches Heidenthum: Bartholomäus Ziegenbalg über Religion und Gesellschaft der Tamilen*, in Bergunder (ed.), *Missionsberichte* cit., pp. 126-152, pp. 126f.

- <sup>21</sup> ["Herausforderungen, die die Aufklärung an das theologische Denken des ausgehenden 18. Jhd. stellte"]: Nehring, *Orientalismus und Mission* cit., p. 80.
- <sup>22</sup> ["das beste Mittel, die hiesigen Einwohner zu verbessern, [...] wenn man ihr Herz durch Unterricht für Jesum gewinnt"] John in "NHB", 1827, 6, 62, p. 189. Cf. Nehring, *Orientalismus und Mission* cit., p. 67.
- <sup>23</sup> The handing over of the country communities from the DHM to the SPCK in 1820, and the following transfer to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (SPG) in 1825 in connection with their conversion to the Church of England, is one reason for the negative judgements of this ecumenical collaboration, and also casts a shadow on the evaluation of the education system of the late DHM. Lehman, *Es began* cit., p. 301.
- <sup>24</sup> H. Liebau, *Country Priests, Catechists, and Schoolmasters as Cultural, Religious and Social Middlemen in the Context of the Tranquebar Mission*, in R.E. Frykenberg (ed.), *Christians and Missionaries in India: Cross-Cultural Communication since 1500*, Cambridge 2003, pp. 79-92.
- <sup>25</sup> Nehring, *Orientalismus und Mission* cit., p. 72.
- <sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 77 ff.
- <sup>27</sup> So to mention the diaries of the different mission stations, letters and autobiographies and probably the first Nikobaren – German dictionary as well as a translation of the gospel of Mathew in Nikobar. Thanks to Dr. Köger, director of the *Unitätsarchiv Herrnhut* [Moravian archives, thereafter UA], for his enormous help.
- <sup>28</sup> H. Römer, *Geschichte der Brüdermission auf den Nikobaren und des ‚Brüdergartens‘ bei Trankebar*, Herrnhut, 1921.
- <sup>29</sup> ["Dass heut zu Tage die Brüdermissionare ... schwere Bedenken ... hegen würden, wenn irgendwo in eines ihrer alten Missionsgebiete angelsächsische Methodisten eine Gemeinde setzten"]: *ibid.*, p. 15.
- <sup>30</sup> For the ecumenical tendencies at the beginning of both missions. Cf. Nehring, *Orientalismus und Mission* cit., p. 63.
- <sup>31</sup> Second Reskript of Settlement for the Moravian Brethren by King Friedrich V of Denmark, 12. 01. 1759, UA, R.15.T.a.1.20.
- <sup>32</sup> Lehmann, *Es begann* cit., pp. 281-290.
- <sup>33</sup> Note that the mission of the MB, even in the 18th century, had quite a number of proselytes, but not in South Asia. Cf. D. Meyer, *Zinzendorf und Herrnhut*, in M. Brecht - K. Deppermann (eds.), *Geschichte des Pietismus Bd. 2: Der Pietismus im achtzehnten Jahrhundert*, Göttingen 1995, pp. 34-40, 68-74.
- <sup>34</sup> Wellenreuther, *Pietismus und Mission* cit., p. 172.
- <sup>35</sup> H. Liebau, *Über die Erziehung "tüchtiger Subjekte" zur Verbreitung des Evangeliums: Das Schulwesen der Dänisch-Halleschen Mission als Säule der Missionsorganisation*, in A. Bogner - B. Holtwick - H. Tyrell (eds.), *Weltmission und religiöse Organisationen. Protestantische Missionsgesellschaften im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert*, Würzburg 2004, pp. 427-458; H. Liebau, *Country Priests, Catechists, and Schoolmasters* cit. and I.V. Peterson, *Tanjore, Tranquebar, and Halle: European Science and German missionary education in the lives of two Indian intellectuals in the early nineteenth century*, in Frykenberg (ed.), *Christians and Missionaries in India* cit., pp. 93-126.
- <sup>36</sup> D. Jeyaraj, *Inkulturation in Tranquebar: der Beitrag der frühen dänisch-halleschen Mission zum Werden einer indisch-einheimischen Kirche (1706 – 1730)*, Erlangen 1996, p. 39; H. Liebau, *Tamilische Christen im 18. Jahrhundert als Mitgestalter sozialer Veränderung: Motivation, Möglichkeiten und Resultate ihres Wirkens*, in P. Heidrich - H. Liebau (eds.), *Akteure des Wandels: Lebensläufe und Gruppenbilder an Schnittstellen von Kulturen*, Berlin 2001, pp. 19-44, pp. 19 f. To the indigenous appropriation of the Gospel cf. R.F. Young, *Singer of the 'Sovereign Lord': Hindu Pietism and Christian Bhakti in the Conversions of Kanapati Vattiyar, 18th-century Tranquebar Tamil 'Poet'*, contribution at the 2nd International Congress for Pietism studies in Halle 2005 (to be published).
- <sup>37</sup> Jeyaraj, *Inkulturation* cit., pp. 37ff.
- <sup>38</sup> ["Wichtige soziale Räume interkultureller Begegnung und Kommunikation"]: Liebau, *Erziehung* cit., p. 427.

- <sup>39</sup> [“Bildung und Erziehung im missionarischen Kontext als Prozesse des Aufeinandertreffens von Normen, Traditionen, Wissen und Erfahrungen unterschiedlicher kultureller und religiöser Provenienz”]: *ibid.*, p. 446.
- <sup>40</sup> [“Die Heranbildung von frommen, tugendhaften und arbeitsamen jungen Menschen, die im pietistischen Sinne lebten und arbeiteten”, “Religionsunterricht im Vordergrund.”]: *ibid.*, pp. 433f.
- <sup>41</sup> [“Würden auch die Ideen der Aufklärung zu einem Bestandteil der Bildungspolitik der Frankeschen Stiftungen”]: *ibid.*, p. 434.
- <sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 432; Peterson, *Tanjore, Tranquebar, and Halle* cit., pp. 96 f.
- <sup>43</sup> [“Wissenschaft und die Ausbreitung derselben halte ich für einen Theil der Religion und Mißion und deren Förderung als meine Pflicht”]: cf. Liebau: *Erziehung* cit., p. 437.
- <sup>44</sup> [“Die europäischen Kinder stehen mit dem Lehrer, die Malabarischen Kinder müssen Knien und bedienen die europäischen beim Essen...”]: NHB, 1790, 3, 30, p. 707. Cf. Liebau, *Erziehung* cit., p. 440.
- <sup>45</sup> I.V. Peterson, *Science in the Tranquebar Mission Curriculum: Natural Theology and Indian Response*, in Bergunder (ed.), *Missionsberichte* cit., pp. 175-220.
- <sup>46</sup> Period of residence in India: 1750-1778, from 1778-1798 he served as a missionary for the SPCK.
- <sup>47</sup> Peterson, *Science in the Tranquebar Mission Curriculum* cit., p. 186.
- <sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 188 f. cf. also Peterson, *Tanjore, Tranquebar, and Halle* cit., pp. 97 ff.
- <sup>49</sup> Peterson, *Science in the Tranquebar Mission Curriculum* cit., pp. 119, 216, 218.
- <sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 185.
- <sup>51</sup> C.S. Mohanavelu, *German Tamilology: German contribution to Tamil language, literature and culture during the period 1706-1945*, Madras 1993, p. 151.
- <sup>52</sup> [“Dichotomie von Glauben und Wissenschaft”]: Nehring, *Orientalismus und Mission* cit., p. 76.
- <sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 70, 76 ff.
- <sup>54</sup> Peterson, *Science in the Tranquebar Mission Curriculum* cit., p. 203.
- <sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 196.
- <sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 178.
- <sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 218; Cf. Peterson, *Tanjore, Tranquebar, and Halle* cit., pp. 105 ff.
- <sup>58</sup> M. Krieger, *Vom ‘Brüdergarten’ zu den Nikobaren. Die Herrnhuter Brüder in Südasiens*, in S. Cornermann (ed.), *Der indische Ozean in historischer Perspektive*, Hamburg 1998, pp. 209-244.
- <sup>59</sup> [“daß ein derartiger Konflikt eben nicht institutionalisiert war, sondern daß er sich aus der subjektiven Lebenseinstellung der jeweiligen Missionare ergab”]: *ibid.*, p. 209.
- <sup>60</sup> [“Von Seiten der dänischen Regierung und der Asiatischen Kompanie war die Niederlassung der Brüder in Trankebar nur als Stützpunkt für die Mission auf den Nikobaren gemeint, nicht aber sollte auch Trankebar ein Missionsfeld der Brüder werden, weil dort schon die dänische Mission seit 50 Jahren tätig war”]: Römer, *Geschichte* cit., p. 14.
- <sup>61</sup> Krieger, *Vom ‘Brüdergarten’ zu den Nikobaren* cit., pp. 221, 229. Römer does not really extend the economic issue to Tranquebar itself: Römer, *Geschichte* cit., pp. 71 f. But Nørsgaard already mentioned this fact: Nørsgaard, *Mission und Obrigkeit* cit., p. 179.
- <sup>62</sup> Krieger, *Vom ‘Brüdergarten’ zu den Nikobaren* cit., p. 227.
- <sup>63</sup> [“Jedes sich bietende Konfliktpotential zu entschärfen”]: *ibid.*, p. 231, see also pp. 229 ff.
- <sup>64</sup> [“Keinen ökonomischen Wert mehr für den dänischen Asienhandel”]: *ibid.*, p. 237.
- <sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 241.
- <sup>66</sup> Wellenreuther, *Pietismus und Mission*, cit.
- <sup>67</sup> [“Als eines von vielen Unternehmungen... nie zentraler Bestandteil des halleischen Selbstverständnisses”]: *ibid.*, p. 168.

- <sup>68</sup> ["Halleschen Theologen-Mission... Herrnhuter Handwerker-Mission"]: *ibid.*, p. 170.
- <sup>69</sup> For the differences between Franke and the MB regarding the *Bußkampf* cf. E. Geiger, *Zinzendorfs Stellung zum Halleschen Bußkampf und zum Bekehrungserlebnis*, in "Unitas Fratrum", 49/50, 2002, pp. 13-22.
- <sup>70</sup> Wellenreuther, *Pietismus und Mission* cit., p. 170, notes 22, 23.
- <sup>71</sup> ["Am Ende des 18. Jahrhunderts war die Herrnhuter Missionstheologie erstaunlicherweise im Einklang mit geistigen und kulturellen Strömungen, die zu Beginn des 19. Jahrhunderts europäisches Denken bestimmen sollten, während umgekehrt das theologische Denken Halles wegen der Rationalität der Aufklärung an die theologische und intellektuelle Peripherie gedrängt wurde"]: *ibid.*, p. 172.
- <sup>72</sup> ["Denn Bruch mit der Heidnisch religiösen Welt erzwang die Annahme einer europäisch-zivilisierten Religiosität"]: *ibid.*, p. 182.
- <sup>73</sup> 23,000 autobiographies are accessible in the database at the UA (01.07.2004).
- <sup>74</sup> M. Friedrich, *Herrnhutische Lebensläufe als Quellen der Sozial- und Mentalitätsgeschichte: Ein Hinweis auf neuere schwedische Forschungen*, in "Unitas Fratrum", 2002, 49/50, pp. 202-213.
- <sup>75</sup> ["typisch pietistisch"]: I. Modrow, *Religiöse Erweckung und Selbstreflexion. Überlegungen zu den Lebensläufen Herrnhuter Schwestern als einem Beispiel pietistischer Selbstdarstellung*, in W. Schulze, *Ego Dokumente: Annäherung an den Menschen in der Geschichte* Berlin 1996, pp. 121-129, p. 121.
- <sup>76</sup> ["Daß die pietistischen Selbstzeugnisse als wichtige Dokumente individueller Selbstbetrachtung und religiöser Schau Beachtung finden sollten"]: *ibid.*, p. 128.
- <sup>77</sup> ["Rekonstruktion der Produktion von Identität... ihr Aussagewert... eingeschränkt"]: *ibid.*, p. 128.
- <sup>78</sup> ["Kommunikative Funktion", "den hohen Informationswert", "Vorbildwirkung"]: S. Hose, „Für die Stunde meines Begräbnisses“: Zur kommunikativen Funktion von Lebensbeichten in der Herrnhuter Brüdergemeine; Ein Beitrag zum Zinzendorf-Jahr, "Lëtöpis", 47/2, 2000, pp. 78-94, 78, 91.
- <sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 91.
- <sup>80</sup> C. Lost, *Die Herrnhuter Tradition der Lebensberichte – Das Leben als Dienst und Lehre*, in "Mitteilungen & Materialien, Zeitschrift für Museum und Bildung", 53, 2000, pp. 24-36.
- <sup>81</sup> ["Erziehungsprinzipien und Gemeinschaftsmechanismen, die die spezifische Existenzform dieser Gemeinschaft bis zur Gegenwart gesichert haben", "ein Reservoir für Bestandserhaltung und Entwicklungsfähigkeit der Gemeine"]: *ibid.*, pp. 25 f.
- <sup>82</sup> ["Lehrtext", "Beispiel, Rechenschaft, Erfahrung und Lehre", "möglichst klaren Verbindung zwischen dem einzelnen und der Gemeinschaft"]: *ibid.*, pp. 24 ff.
- <sup>83</sup> ["Disziplinierung der Gemeinschaftsmitglieder", "totale Gemeine"]: *ibid.*, p. 30. To the term "total community" see: H.-W. Erbe, *Erziehung und Schulen der Brüdergemeine*, in M.P. van Buijtenen - C. Dekker (eds.), *Unitas Fratrum: Herrnhuter Studien*, Utrecht 1975, pp. 315-351, p. 319.
- <sup>84</sup> ["Die individuelle Biographie wird zur verinnerlichten Gemeinschaft und an die Gemeinschaft als Rechenschaft und Erfahrung zurückgegeben"]: Lost, *Herrnhuter Tradition der Lebensberichte* cit., p. 32.

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